



SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

PUBL 201 – INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC POLICY

2005 PAPER OUTLINE (First Trimester Paper – 22 points)

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Lecture Timetable:	Mon, Wed, Thu 1.30 – 2.30 RH LT 2	Tutorials:	Wed 12.30 – 1.30 RLWY 221 Thu 2.30 – 3.30 RH G03 Thu 3.40 – 4.30 RLWY 224

TUTORIALS

Tutorial groups will be arranged in the first lecture. There are maximums of students per tutorial class so if the list is full, do not add your name to the bottom. Confirmation of your tutorial group will be posted on Blackboard on *Friday 25 February*. Tutorials will begin on Monday 28 February. If you have any serious problems about the allocations please contact the course coordinator.

The attached schedule includes questions to guide discussion in each tutorial.

ELECTRONIC ACCESS

Notices, marks for assignments (by student ID number), and selected course materials will be posted on the Blackboard website. Only students who are registered for PUBL 201 will have access. If you have problems with Blackboard, please contact the ITS help desk.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

public, adj., Of or pertaining to the people as a whole; that belongs to, affects, or concerns the community or nation; common, national, popular.

policy, n., A course of action adopted and pursued by a government, party, ruler, statesman, etc.; any course of action adopted as advantageous or expedient.

Public policy encompasses everything from building roads in Auckland to influencing world trade talks. Although the main subject is the decisions and actions taken by governments, many other actors – including international bodies like the UN and World Bank, businesses, trade unions, community groups, church leaders, website hosts, journalists, celebrity activists, suicide bombers, computer hackers, etc – often play key roles in setting policy agendas, formulating and marketing proposals, implementing decisions, and stirring public support and/or indignation for the outcomes. Three big questions motivate most work in the public policy field: (1) How and why do governments choose specific policies at specific times and under specific circumstances? (2) What makes particular policies good or bad? (3) How can the policymaking process be improved?

This course will explore these three questions both from the perspective of various theoretical approaches, which offer more or less tidy explanations of policymaking behaviour, and through exposure to several episodes of real New Zealand policymaking. Throughout the course, students will be asked to consider whether and how the real-world cases do, or do not, fit the theories.

Students who pass the course should be able to:

- a) Understand and explain what public policy is;
- b) Identify and explain the major components of the public policymaking cycle as described generically in the readings;
- c) Demonstrate familiarity with the theories and cases being presented and applied in class;
- d) Understand important issues regarding Maori and public policymaking, including the role of Treaty frameworks;
- e) Discuss how the course's major themes and concepts apply to particular policy questions;
- f) Express ideas clearly, succinctly, and persuasively in written form.

TEXT AND READINGS

Each assignment contributes to all of these objectives.

See the course schedule for times, names of lecturers, associated readings and tutorial questions for each topic. Please note that lecture attendance is particularly important in this course, because the cases cannot be understood solely from the readings.

Readings should be completed prior to lectures. (See attached schedule).

There is no textbook. The readings are available in two sets. The first set of readings will be distributed in class, and there will be no charge. A second set of bound case readings, plus readings for the final class lectures, will be available from the Student Notes Distribution Centre.

Note: If you fall behind on your reading for one week, don't despair and don't succumb to the 'domino effect' of getting further and further behind the more you try to catch up. Read the material for the *upcoming class first*, before trying to catch up on previous material. Don't read for facts. Instead, focus on the main conceptual point or argument of each article, and think about how it informs your understanding of public policy.

ASSESSMENT

ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE	WEIGHT
1 st Essay (2,000 words)	Mon 21 March	25%
2 nd Essay (2,000 words)	Mon 16 May	25%
Final exam	Check schedule	50%

Essays are due by 5pm on the date specified. They can be submitted to:

- The lecturer in class, or
- The reception desk on the 8th floor of Rutherford House, where they must be stamped with the date and time received.

The essays must be typed, with the exact word count (excluding references) indicated on the cover sheet. Your essays should integrate the theoretical and case material (with careful referencing, please). They should seek to make sustained, well-supported, and cogent arguments. Do not present a series of disconnected observations about particular cases or particular stages of the policymaking cycle. Weave your ideas together

Essays will be marked according to the depth of understanding of the topic, the cogency of the arguments being made and the degree to which they are supported by evidence, the aptness of examples, and the originality of insights, as well as the usual standards of correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar, appropriate formatting and overall tidiness. All ideas that have been borrowed from something you read (book, journal, magazine, newspaper, or website) or a conversation with another person or a television show or a speech, etc, etc should be referenced thoroughly and accurately. Sources should be listed at the end of the paper in a bibliography.

FIRST ESSAY

In a recent article Peter Bridgman and Glyn Davis write, “No policy model can claim universal application since every policy process is grounded in particular government institutions” (p99). Discuss some of the strengths and limitations of using models (including cycles) and theories as “tools” to explain public policy.*

**Bridgman and Davis, 2003, “What use is a policy cycle? Plenty, if the aim is clear” Australian Journal of Public Administration 62(3), Sept, pp 98-102. (This article is available online through the library. However, reading it is not needed for this assignment.)*

SECOND ESSAY

Draw on the realities of New Zealand central government policymaking, as presented in the class cases, to assess how well various models and theories help us explain aspects of public policy. You need to be selective, as you can only make and support about 5 or 6 different points within the specified word limit. However, do not present these points as a series of disconnected observations about particular cases or theories or stages in the policy process. Weave your ideas together. Be sure to reference carefully. Draw supporting evidence from at least three classroom cases.

FINAL EXAM

The registry-conducted, three-hour exam will cover the whole course. Students should consult the final examination timetable, available later in the term on the University website.

MANDATORY PAPER REQUIREMENTS (Terms)

To fulfil the mandatory paper requirements for this paper you must:

1. Attend eight of the scheduled tutorial sessions.
2. Submit all written assignments by the due date. A late assignment will have its mark reduced by 3% (percent) for each day it is overdue unless there is a very good reason why it was late. Assignments will not be accepted that are over a week late. Assignments exceeding the word limit will have 5 marks deducted.

Students who fail to satisfy the mandatory requirements for passing this paper, other than the requirement to obtain a C grade overall, will not receive a graded result, and their records will show an ungraded fail.

To pass the course, you must obtain a 50% mark or higher overall.

ACCESS TO COMPUTERS

Computing facilities are located at all three campuses, including within the libraries, and some Schools provide specialist computing resources for their students. The main SCS facility is the Cyber Commons on level 2 of Kirk and Murphy buildings on the Kelburn Campus. A SCS Helpdesk is located on level 2 of Murphy Building and the Law Library. Additional information for students is available online (<http://distance.scs.vuw.ac.nz>).

STUDENT CONDUCT AND STAFF CONDUCT

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures.

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect.

The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint. For queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor. This Statute is available in the Faculty Student Administration Office or on the website at: www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct. The policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at: www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances.

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the Associate Dean (Students) of your Faculty. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievances Policy which is published on the VUW website: www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is **prohibited** at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students of staff, information from the Internet, software programmes and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.

Plagiarism is not worth the risk

Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct (www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct) and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- suspension from class or university
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

Find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, on the University's website at: www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities and equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Co-ordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available. Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, or phoning 463-6070, email: disability@vuw.ac.nz. The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant or the School Prospectus.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, please contact the relevant Course Co-ordinator, or Associate Dean who will either help you directly or put you in contact with someone who can.

The Student Services Group is also available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/ or email student-services@vuw.ac.nz.

VUWSA employs two Education Co-ordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building, phone 463-6983 or 463-6984, email education@vuwsa.org.nz.