VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Te Whare Wananga o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui

SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

THEORY AND METHODS OF POLICY ANALYSIS - PUBL 306

2005 PAPER OUTLINE (First Trimester Paper – 24 points)

Course Coordinator: Dr Karen Baehler
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Lecturer: Dr Antong Victorio
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Lecture Timetable: Tue 12.40 – 2.30
                         Fri   1.40 – 2.30
                         All lectures in RLWY 129

Administrator: Francine McGee
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Tutorials: Wed 2.30 – 3.30 RLWY 221
                 Thu 12.30 – 1.30 RLWY 223

TUTORIAL ALLOCATION PROCEDURE

Tutorial groups will be arranged in the first lecture. There is a maximum of 15 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.* If you have any serious problems about the allocations please contact the course coordinator.

The attached schedule includes descriptions of tutorial activities. Please prepare accordingly.

Karen and Antong will facilitate all tutorials.

ELECTRONIC ACCESS

The Blackboard website will be your first port of call for notices, marks for assignments (by student ID number), and selected course materials. Only students who are registered for PUBL 306 will have access. If you have problems with Blackboard, please contact the ITS service desk.

Copies of material handed out in lectures will be made available on Blackboard if an electronic version is available.

> "…speaking truth to power remains the ideal of analysts who hope they have truth, but realize they have not (and, in a democracy, should not have) power."

Aaron Wildavsky, *Speaking Truth to Power* (1987), p 13

The general study of public policy invites students to perform three different but intertwining roles: scholar, analyst, and citizen. The scholar seeks knowledge largely for its own sake and for the influence it may have on long-term social progress. The analyst seeks knowledge in order to advise current public officials to pursue promising policies and avoid potentially disastrous ones. The citizen (in a democracy) seeks knowledge in order to govern, for although voters do not choose policies directly, they choose the policy makers.

This course focuses (but not exclusively) on the second role – that of analyst and advisor – in three ways: (1) by exposing students to the chief tools of policy analysis and advising, including both theories and techniques, (2) by helping students apply these tools to a contemporary ('live') policy issue of their choosing, and (3) by encouraging dispositions and habits of mind found in the best policy analysts.

What are the policy analyst's tools? In the words of public policy scholar Aaron Wildavsky (1987, p 3), these must include: "Qualitative political theory, for refining our picture of where we want to go; quantitative modelling, for systematizing guesswork on how to get there; microeconomics, for disciplining desire with limited resources; and macro-organisation theory, for instilling the will to correct errors: each has its place." We will focus on a combination of hard and soft tools including values clarification, programme evaluation, systems analysis, scenario writing, regression modelling, Treaty frameworks, and common sense.

How are the tools applied? Again quoting Wildavsky (1987, p 3), "there can be no fixed program, for policy analysis is synonymous with creativity, which may be stimulated by theory and sharpened by practice, which can be learned but not taught." Each student will use a slightly different set of tools for his or her project, and some of you may invent new tools.

What are the desired dispositions and habits of mind of the policy analyst? A preliminary list would include: curiosity, ingenuity, imagination, openness to varied perspectives, healthy respect for evidence (but not blind acceptance), a desire to question commonly held assumptions, a knack for connecting theory with reality, a strong appetite for argument and debate, a taste for clarity of communication, capacity to learn from both success and failure, high tolerance for uncertainty and delayed gratification, political dexterity, and willingness to make oneself unpopular when necessary (but those inclined to martyrdom need not apply).

Students who pass the course should (1) make progress in acquiring the analyst's dispositions and habits of mind; (2) demonstrate a working knowledge of the analytical tools presented in the course (see attached schedule for details); (3) understand the key features of a selected policy issue and how the analytical tools can be used to illuminate that issue; and (4) be able to express ideas clearly, succinctly, and persuasively in both written and oral form.

Readings correspond with **lectures**, so please have a look at the related readings before each lecture (as indicated on the attached schedule). Tutorials will be devoted to hands-on practice of the techniques being introduced, often using the students' own research topics (as indicated on the attached schedule).

The text for the course is Eugene Bardach, *A Practice Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving.* Chatham House. 2001. It is available from the Book Centre.

Bardach is a simple, elegant, and easy-to-read introduction to the basics of policy analysis, but more information is needed to complete his framework and illuminate its strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, additional readings are contained in a bound packet available from Student Notes Distribution Centre.

The course depends heavily upon the readings. If you get 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, or the technique being demonstrated, and think about how it relates to your policy topic (see *policy memo assignments*, below). If you don't have time to read an assigned item from start to finish, try reading the introduction, conclusion and subheadings only. In the last resort, just skimming the text for key words is better than nothing.

ASSESSMENT

ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE	WEIGHT	WORD LIMIT
Indicative topic proposal (not marked)	Friday 25 February	None	3 paragraphs
1st memo	Friday 11 March	20%	2,500
2nd memo	Friday 15 April	20%	2,500
Terms test	Friday 13 May	30%	
3rd memo	Friday 10 June	30%	3,000

Written assignments are always 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.

All written assignments (except the test) must be typed, with the exact word count indicated on the cover sheet. Please note that word limits are maxima: You may write *less*, so long as you thoroughly cover the topic.

Terms Test will cover the material presented in section H of the course (Antong's lectures, tutorials, and readings on Modelling). It will be 50-minutes, in-class, Friday 13 May.

Policy Memo Assignments
- You will write three memos on various aspects of a single, contemporary policy issue. Each memo builds on the preceding memos.
- These are policy memos rather than essays, which means that they should go straight to the point and present only essential information and arguments, including proper referencing to sources of information. Be succinct. Be informative. Choose your words carefully to

express your meaning. Explain the logic behind your statements. Support assertions with facts and sources.

- The chief purpose of the memos is to provide an opportunity for students to apply the course material to a 'live' policy issue. High-quality memos will demonstrate a firm understanding of the course material, creativity and innovation in connecting course material with the policy topic, critical thinking about conventional approaches to the topic, careful use of evidence to support arguments wherever possible, and clear and cogent writing. Students are expected to canvass available information about the policy topic in New Zealand and internationally, where relevant. Key sources will be government documents, many of which are available on the web, and academic literature, which can be found by searching the catalogue and electronic journal databases in the VUW library. If you are not familiar with the electronic journal databases, please ask a librarian for help. Each memo should include a list of at least 5 external sources of information (not including course materials).
- All memos must be typewritten, with the final word count indicated on the cover page.
- Please submit the memos cumulatively in a folder. This procedure will allow me to follow the writer's development from memo to memo.

Here is the scenario for the policy memos:

First, select a policy topic that interests you – an existing policy proposal, a problem that is currently being reviewed, or something that has been trialed in another country, perhaps. Good places to hunt for NZ topics are newspapers, websites of various government departments, or party websites. To get started, you can try the main portals to NZ government: http://www.govt.nz or http://www.beehive.govt.nz. Party URLs generally take the form: www.partyname.org.nz. For international topics, you might surf the websites of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (http://www.oecd.org), the United Nations (http://www.un.org), the Asian Development Bank (http://www.adb.org), World Bank (http://www.worldbank.org), or other international organisations.

Write 2 or 3 paragraphs describing the policy topic and why it interests you and submit it to the lecturer by Friday 5 March. The lecturer will check these to make sure the topics are of manageable size (i.e., 'poverty' or 'species loss' or 'terrorism' are too big). The topic proposals will not be marked.

Now, imagine that you are a policy analyst working in the New Zealand Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). The head of the department has asked you to complete the following three policy memos related to your chosen topic. (In addition to the information provided here, you should check the course site on Blackboard for further tips on preparing high-quality policy memos.)

Memo #1 Problem Definition and Criteria
- Present a preliminary definition of the policy problem behind your topic. This definition should address the following questions: What are the symptoms of the problem? What evidence do you have to support these? For whom is it a problem? Is there any controversy about how the problem should be defined? Can you place the problem within a 'system'? Is it largely a failure of markets, or previous government actions, of society/community, or of distribution systems, etc? Why is it a public problem rather than a private problem?
- Describe the values involved in this problem; they may be social, economic, environmental, humanitarian, etc. Whose values are they and why should public policy be concerned with them?
- Discuss criteria for measuring these values.
- 2,500 words maximum, due 5pm, 11 March.

Memo #2 Options
- Summarise the status quo (current policy) related to your topic. What is government's current involvement in the issue?
- Present three or more policy options (in addition to the status quo) for addressing the problem described in the first memo.
- For each option, describe the type of policy instrument or institutional process involved, using the categories discussed in lecture.
- Explain why these policy options fit the policy problem. Do they miss out any important aspects of the problem?
- 2,500 words maximum, due 5pm, 15 April.

Memo #3 Outcomes Matrix and Evaluation
- Restate the problem definition from memo #1. You may alter or refine or further explain the definition if you wish.
- Present the shell of an 'outcomes matrix' to address your policy problem. The shell should include (1) a carefully selected set of policy options from memo #2 to be compared (the *status quo* plus two or more additional options) and (2) a carefully selected set of criteria from memo #1 for evaluating outcomes.
- Finally, choose one of the policy options and present a *plan* for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of that policy, were it to be chosen. Include as much detail as possible in your evaluation plan, including what data would be gathered and how it would be analysed.
- 3,000 words maximum, due 5pm, 10 June.

Tutorial contribution may be taken into account in the assessment of final grades, mainly in cases of marginal grade differences.

MANDATORY PAPER REQUIREMENTS (Terms)

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

1. Sit the terms test.

2. Submit all assignments by the due date. A late assignment will have its mark reduced by 3% (of the total mark) 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.

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.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

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.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND STAFF CONDUCT

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 the 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 Statue 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/StaffConduct.

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 Academics 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 or 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.

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).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. They 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 Coordinator 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 Coordinator, 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 Coordinators 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.

PURCHASING OF TEXTBOOKS

This year Victoria University will be selling textbooks for Stage 2, 3 and Post Graduate Students at the Law School as well as at the bookshop on Kelburn Campus. They will be in the Old Government Buildings for 4 weeks at the beginning of Trimester 1. Information on their hours and where they will be located will be posted on noticeboards at Rutherford House and the Old Government Buildings.

They are also happy to receive orders via their website www.bookcentre.co.nz and by email Victoria-book-centre@bookcentre.co.nz. They can send books out or have them ready to be picked up from their bookshop on campus.