

School of Government

## **PUBL 401 METHODOLOGY IN PUBLIC POLICY**

Trimester Two 2006

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

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#### **Contact Details**

Course Co-ordinator: Dr. Rachel Simon-Kumar RH 829  
[Rachel.simon-kumar@dia.govt.nz](mailto:Rachel.simon-kumar@dia.govt.nz)

Administrator: Francine McGee RH 821 (Reception)  
04 463 – 6599  
[Francine.McGee@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Francine.McGee@vuw.ac.nz)

#### **Class Times and Room Numbers**

Thursday 10.30am – 12.20pm RWW501

Office Hours 9.00am – 10.00am RH

#### **Aims and Overview**

*To extend, apply, and critically assess the basic methodologies of policy analysis using case studies of New Zealand topics.*

**Methodology in Public Policy** focuses on the practice of public policy analysis. The topics introduced in this course cover the strategies or approaches that analysts adopt when they design, implement or evaluate policy. At a fundamental level, a policy analyst's work involves collecting and interpreting information that feeds into the policy cycle. The methodologies of policy analysis, however, are as diverse as the policy issues analysts confront. In studying methodology, this course offers students an opportunity to (a) examine practitioners' toolkit of select methods used in everyday policy analysis, and (b) develop critical insights into these methods, and the practice of policy analysis generally.

The learning outcomes for this course are as follows:

1. *Understand the practice of policy analysis.* A central aim of this course is to expose students to various facets of what policy analysts really do.

2. *Skill acquisition for policy practice.* The methods and exercises covered in the classroom will arm students with some of the “techniques” of policy analysis used in the NZ public sector. The assignments also focus on exposing students to the “style” of writing for government.
3. *Critical thinking about policy analysis.* The course encourages students to think about assumptions underlying the ‘doing’ of policy analysis – what it reveals about the values and assumptions that policy makers are influenced by, and broader questions about policy practice in democracies.
4. *Familiarity with NZ policy arena.* Where possible, the methods and techniques are tied to current NZ policy concerns (examples include, lowering the drinking age, the Vietnam Veterans, DPB benefit reform, ethnic and migrant issues, etc.) and the climate of public sector in New Zealand.

The class will explore these questions through readings and seminar discussions, hands-on class exercises, joint consideration of a selection of cases, and individual critical reflections on the practice of policy analysis.

### Course Content

Please refer to the separate schedule, for details of topics and readings for each session.

### Readings

There is no set text for this course. A reading packet is available from Student Notes. A number of the readings are available on the internet; refer to the schedule for URLs. Please ensure that you have completed the readings for each session prior to the session. We recommend that if you are a newcomer to public policy at VUW, that you read the text normally used in stage 3 (PUBL 306), Eugene Bardach’s *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem-Solving* (Chatham House, 2000). This book is short and readable.

### Assessment

Assignment	Due Date	Weight	Output Guidelines
Reflective summary	17 Aug & 28 Sept	25%	250-400 words (best 5 chosen for final grade)
Class exercises	One week turn around	25%	As decided in class (best 5)
Term assignment	12 Oct	40%	3,000 – 4,000 words
Contribution to discussion	Ongoing	10%	Balance of quality and appropriate quantity

#### (a) Reflective summary, due in class on 17 August and 28 September

This assignment requires you to submit a short reflective summary of the readings assigned for the class each week. The final grade for this assignment will be based on the best five entries you submit; you are, however, expected to submit **at least eight entries** during the course of the trimester.

There are two dimensions to your reflective summary: the first is a brief summary of the key arguments in the readings for the day. This should not take more than a paragraph. The second part is your analysis of the argument – any insights, new learnings, comparisons and contradictions with other readings, current events or ideas that emerge from class discussion are welcome. Tie your reflections around the key outcomes of this course.

The reflective summary is almost like a journal and tracks your thinking through the semester (whilst earning credits!). Ideally, you will gain most if you “journal” both before and after class sessions. The marking criteria for the reflective summary are as follows:

- Clear statement of key argument/s
- Ability to critique/compare/contrast arguments, and ability to substantiate your critique
- Relevance of the aspect selected to critique in relation to the overall them of the class

**(b) Term assignment due in class on October 12**

The end-of-term assignment requires you to choose one of the following topics and respond to it in approximately 3,000 – 4,000 words (or two of them at 1,500 – 2,000 words each).

1. *The Minister requires policy advice on lowering the age of jail sentencing for young offenders.* Assemble a systematic review of relevant research and other literature putting forward your advice for or against this policy. Make sure that your report has the following structure: introduction, context in New Zealand, the purpose of your report, your methodology (including a rationale for systematic reviews and its limitation), summarised finding for and against, your advice and justification for this advice. Add a concluding section, and references too.
2. *The Smoke-Free Amendment (2003) extended restrictions on smoking in public. Prepare a plan to evaluate whether this legislation is effective.* For this assignment, obtain a copy of the directive, draw out the intervention logic, determine the evaluation framework that you will employ, and the means of measuring effectiveness. Your report should have at least the following structure: an introduction, background to the issue, literature on evaluations, the intervention logic, your evaluation plan, your methods for conducting the evaluation, risks and assumptions that you are making in this plan and potential sources of data. Would your framework apply to people of Maori and Pacific Island origin? If not, how would you address issues for them?
3. *Is the government’s Working for Families package likely to have gender impacts (both positive or negative)?* As a policy analyst, you are to design a plan to undertake gender analysis, focusing on assumptions that the policy makes about particular groups of people. Your report should be a project plan and should also refer to relevant literature on methodology and issue.

4. Select any policy advice from contemporary New Zealand debates. Critically evaluate the methodology underpinning the advice, analyse the structure of evidence or argument, the various assumptions about populations and interventions that it makes (or does not highlight) and develop an argument about policy analysis in New Zealand. Would you support the advice? If not, what would you do differently?

**General Notes for Assignments:** Note that all assignments are to be handed to the lecturer in class on the day that they are due. Please type your assignments, and indicate the word count on the cover sheet. Do not email assignments.

Extension may only be granted to those who meet the University's aegrotat rules, viz. medical certificate or personal bereavement, or critical personal circumstances involving the health of a close relative, or exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control.

**Late** work must be handed to the Course Coordinator, or to Francine McGee, Administrator, School of Government (Rutherford House, RH 821, Reception), who will record the date and time it was received before giving it to the Course Coordinator. Late work will have a mark out of 100 reduced by 5% for each late day. Work handed in more than 5 days after the due date, or after the date of extension, will not normally be accepted.

### **Mandatory Course Requirements**

Students must (a) complete the assignments as specified about; **and** (b) attend most (at least 9) of the weekly classes. Students who fail to satisfy these mandatory course requirements will receive a K grade.

### **Workload Guide**

The course meets in twelve weekly two-hour seminars. All members are expected to contribute to discussion each week and to prepare themselves adequately to that end. The course comprises one eighth of a full-time Honours student's yearly load, and students should plan their efforts accordingly.

### **Notices and Announcements**

Announcements will be made at the beginning of classes, or by email if required.

### **Electronic Access**

The Blackboard website will not be used in this class.

### **Availability of Course Organiser**

Dr Rachel Simon-Kumar holds a visiting lecturer position in the School of Government. She is available for consultation between 9.00am and 10.00am on Thursdays during term time. You can also email her for an appointment time outside of these hours.

## **Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices**

### Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

### Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building - it includes the ground floor reception desk (EA005) and offices 125a to 131 (Level 1). The office is available for the following:

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

## **General University Policies and Statutes**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at [www.vuw.ac.nz](http://www.vuw.ac.nz).

## **Student 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 are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct](http://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](http://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; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in 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 at [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances](http://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. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other student or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalised severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

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

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

### **Students with Impairments**

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as 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, 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 (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, telephone (04) 463 6070, email [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz). The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the School Office or DSS.

## **Student Support**

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each Faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Māori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

In addition, the Student Services Group (email [student-services@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:student-services@vuw.ac.nz)) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at [www.vuw.ac.nz/st\\_services/](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/).

VUWSA employs 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 (tel. 04 463 6983 or 04 463 6984, email [education@vuwsa.org.nz](mailto:education@vuwsa.org.nz)) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

## **Manaaki Pihipihinga - Maori and Pacific Mentoring Programme (Faculty of Commerce and Administration)**

This is a mentoring service for Maori and Pacific students studying at all levels. Weekly one hour sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade, and Room 210 and 211, Level 2, Railway West Wing. Sessions cover drafting and discussing assignments, essay writing, and any questions that may arise from tutorials and/or lectures. A computer suite networked to Cyber Commons is available for student use.

To register with Manaaki Pihipihinga, please contact one of the following:

Puawai Wereta  
Room 210, Level 2  
Railway West Wing  
Tel. (04) 463 8997  
Email: [Puawai.Wereta@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Puawai.Wereta@vuw.ac.nz)

Fa'afai Seiuli  
Room 109 B  
14 Kelburn Parade  
Tel. (04) 463 5842  
Email: [Faafoi.Seiuli@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Faafoi.Seiuli@vuw.ac.nz)

## Schedule and Readings

### 13 July Introduction and Overview

*Description:* General introduction to course and learning outcomes; overview of key concepts used in the course, overview of the context of policy analysis in New Zealand.

*Readings:*

Bardach, Eugene (2000 or 2004). *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*. Chatham House Publishers: New York. (review all; pages xiii – xvi in packet).

Torgerson, D. (1986) “Between knowledge and politics: Three faces of policy analysis”, *Policy Sciences* 19, pp. 33 – 59.

### 20 July Evidence-Based Practice

*Description:* Covers the recent moves towards EBP, its history, what is ‘evidence’, what does it deliver, usual methods/techniques to obtain evidence, purpose of evidence, is evidence objective and neutral? Methodological focus on research and systematic reviews.

*Readings:*

Davies, H., Nutley, S. and Smith, P (2000) “Introducing evidence-based policy and practice in public service” in Huw Davies, Sandra Nutley and Peter Smith (eds) *What Works? Evidence-based policy and practice in public services*, Policy Press: Bristol, UK, pp. 1 – 12 (packet).

Young, K., Ashby, D., Boaz, A. and Grayson, I. (2002) “Social Science and the Evidence-based Policy Movement”, *Social Policy & Society*, 1:3, 215 224 (packet).

Sherman, L. W. (2003) “Misleading Evidence and Evidence-led Policy: Making Social Science more experimental”, *Annals, AAPS*, September, pp. 6 – 19 (packet).

Ministry of Youth Affairs, *Lowering the Drinking Age: An Issues Paper*, June 1999, New Zealand Government (packet).

*Recommended:*

Strategic Policy Making Unit (1999) *Professional Policy Making for the Twenty-First Century*, Cabinet Office, United Kingdom at:  
<http://www.policyhub.gov.uk/docs/profpolicymaking.pdf>

### 27 July Intervention Logic and Indicator Development

*Description:* Understanding the concepts underlying intervention logic and monitoring indicators. Why are they relevant in policy analysis. How to develop logic models and indicators for programmes/policies.



*Readings:*

Baehler, Karen (2002) "Intervention logic: A user's Guide" *Public Sector* 25(3): 14 – 20 (packet).

State Services Commission (2003) *Outcome Indicators: Building Block 2*, Pathfinder Series (packet).

World Bank (1996) *Performance Monitoring Indicators: A handbook for task managers*, Operations Policy Department, Washington, D.C. (packet).

### **3 August                      Outcomes Evaluation**

*Description:* Introduction to evaluation and types of evaluation. How to develop an evaluation plan. Case example of community development evaluations.

*Readings:*

Queensland Government (2004) *Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating Community Engagement*, Department of Communities: Queensland Government.

The Magenta Book at [www.policyhub.govt.nz](http://www.policyhub.govt.nz). Under "Evaluating Policy".

*Recommended:*

*Getting Better at Managing for Shared Outcomes – A Resource for Agency Leaders*, SSC document found at:

[http://www.ssc.govt.nz/display/document.asp?docid+4125&pageno+8#P562\\_57216](http://www.ssc.govt.nz/display/document.asp?docid+4125&pageno+8#P562_57216)

### **10 August                      Gender Analysis**

Hawkesworth, M. (1994) "Policy Studies within a feminist frame" *Policy Sciences*, 27: 97 – 118 (packet).

Ministry of Women's Affairs (1996) "The Full Picture: Guidelines for Gender Analysis" (packet).

Mazur, A. (2002) "Towards Solving the Feminist Policy Formation Puzzle" in *Theorizing Feminist Policy*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, pp. 25 – 46 (packet).

### **17 August                      Methodologies in Diversity Paradigms**

*Description:* What is exclusion, methods and methodologies for inclusion (drawing on Maori and ethnicity epistemologies), and looks at practical ways to ensure inclusion in policy design.

*Readings:*

Kukutai, T. (2004) "The problem of defining an ethnic group for public policy: Who is Maori and why does it matter?" *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, Issue 23, available at <http://www.msd.govt.nz/publications/journal/23-december-2004/index.html>.

Spoonley, P. et al. (2005) "Social cohesion: A Policy and Indicator Framework for Assessing Immigrant and Host Outcomes" *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, Issue 24, March, pp. 85 – 110. <http://www.mds.govt.nz/publications/journal/24-April-2005/24-pages85-110.html>.

Office of Ethnic Affairs (2002) *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy*, Office of Ethnic Affairs: Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington available online at the Office of Ethnic Affairs website.

*Recommended:*

Smith, L. T. (2001) "Towards Developing Indigenous Methodologies: Kaupapa Maori Research" in *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*, University of Otago Press: Dunedin (packet).

Durie, M. (2005) "Race and Ethnicity in Public Policy: Does it Work?" *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, Issue 24, March, pp. 1 – 11. <http://www.msd.govt.nz/publications/journal/24-April-2005/24-pages1-11.html>.

## **MID TERM BREAK**

### **7 September                      Partnerships, Participation and Policy Analysis**

*Description:* Overview of partnerships. Methodological focus on participatory policy design and consultations. Policy issue of local government-central government partnerships.

*Readings:*

Craig, D. and Courtney, M. (2004) The Potential of Partnership: Key Learnings and Ways Forward, Chapter 1 and 2, *Local Partnerships and Governance Research Project*, Auckland. [www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/lpg/pp.23-44](http://www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/lpg/pp.23-44) (packet)

Peter Sterne, with Sandra Zagon (1997) *Public Consultation Guide: Changing the Relationship Between Government and Canadians*. Canadian Centre for Management Development, pp 1 – 16; appendix B (full report on [http://www.ccmd\\_ccg.ca](http://www.ccmd_ccg.ca).)

### **14 September                      Stakeholders and Target Populations**

*Description:* Looks at framework for social construction of targets populations in policy and attendant policy tools.

*Readings:*

Schneider, A. L and Ingram, H. (1997) *Policy Design for Democracy*, University Press of Kansas: Kansas, Chapter 5, pp. 102 – 149.

DPB reforms (excerpts from 1999/2002 reform acts)  
<http://www.dol.govt.nz/PDFs/DPBreform.pdf> pp. 4 – 17.

*Recommended:*

Schneider, A. L and Ingram, H. (1997) *Policy Design for Democracy*, University Press of Kansas: Kansas, Chapter 6, pp. 150 – 185.

**21 September                      Argument as Methodology**

*Description:* Reviews the place of argument in policy analysis, from both “consumer” and “producer” perspectives; considers how to make a good argument.

*Readings:*

Majone, Giandomenico (1989) “Policy analysis in public deliberation” in *Evidence, Argument, and Persuasion in the Policy Process*, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp 1 – 20 (packet).

Dunn, William N (1994) “The functions of policy argument”, in *Public Policy Analysis: An Introduction*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp 89 – 133 (packet).

Mayer, I S, C E van Daalen, and P W G Bots (2001) “Perspective on policy analyses: A framework for understanding and design”. Presented at the APPAM Conference, Washington DC, November (packet).

**28 September                      Critical Thinking as Methodology**

*Description:* What is critical thinking? History of thought in policy analysis. Schools of critical policy sciences. Implication of critical thinking for methodology in policy analysis.

*Readings:*

Fischer, F. (2003) “Policy Analysis as Discursive Practice: The Argumentative Turn” in *Reframing Public Policy*, Oxford University Press: Oxford. pp. 181 – 202 (packet).

Jennings, B. (1987) “Interpretation and the Practice of Policy Analysis” in Frank Fischer and John Forester (eds) *Confronting Values in Policy Analysis: The Politics of Criteria*, Sage: California. pp. 128 – 152 (packet).

MacDonald, C. (2003) “The value of discourse analysis as a methodological tool for understanding a land reform program” *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 36, Iss. 2, pp. 151.

*Recommended:*

Rein, M. (1989) “Frame-Reflective Policy Discourse” in Lionel Orchard and Robert Dare (eds) *Markets, Morals and Public Policy*, The Federation Press: Sydney, pp. 232 – 244 (packet).

**5 October**                      **Case Analysis of Vietnam Veterans**

*Description:* Viewing of *Jungle Rain*. Discussion of implications for policy analysis methodologies.

*Readings:*

House of Representatives (2004) *Inquiry into the exposure of New Zealand defence personnel to Agent Orange and other defoliant chemicals during the Vietnam War and any health effects of that exposure, and transcripts of evidence*. Forty-seventh Parliament (packet).

New Zealand Government *Response to the Report of the Health Select Committee* (2004) (packet).

**12 October**                      **Course Summary: Critical Reflections**