

School of Government

PUBL402
ASPECTS OF PUBLIC POLICY: THEORY

Trimester 1 2008

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

Course Co-ordinator:

Cath Wallace RH 826

Tel 04-463-5713

Cath.Wallace@vuw.ac.nz *

Office hours 3.45-5.00pm, most Wednesdays in term time; call by or make appointments for other times, but I will be at the Kelburn campus Mondays and Thursdays (463-6115) and contactable those mornings.

*Email: Cath.Wallace@vuw.ac.nz. **Please ensure that any email has PUBL 402 first in the subject line** followed by your subject because I delete without reading any unfamiliar emails with addresses I do not recognise, or with very generic subject titles. I only check email once or twice a day, so for urgent communications, use the phone.

Administrators:

(Appointment pending) RH821 (Reception)
04 463 – 6599

Class Times and Rooms

Wednesdays 1.40-3.30pm RWW 315, Railway West Wing

Timetable

The course will meet in the first semester, from Wednesdays 1.40-3.30pm RWW 315, Railway West Wing. Classes run from Monday 27 February to 28 May (except for the Easter break from 21-25 April, mid term break of 14-27 April) and are followed by examinations in the period 6-25 June inclusive. **You must make yourself available for examination.**

Library database training session **Wednesday 12 March 3.30 to 4.30pm in RWW 202**
Some collaborative out-of-class meetings and other activities will be required.

Course Aims

This course considers selected theoretical issues, methodologies and practice issues related to the study of policy analysis and public policy processes. Particular emphasis will be given to the role of some aspects of theoretical underpinnings of public policy, and to multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to policy analysis and to comparative policies and theories. The course examines aspects of policy making at a national level and international level.

Course Objectives

PUBL 402 is designed to give students a chance to explore theory, methodology and case study work and to develop scholarship and research skills. The course selects some of the core theories, methods and practice issues with wide relevance in public policy. The course examines economic theory of efficiency and choice, compares economic theories, explores debates between disciplines on the nature of human motivation, public versus private choices, rationality and the role of the individual and the state. Theories of democracy, public participation, globalisation and international policy making are explored. Student projects are designed to allow students to explore particular areas of public policy of interest to them and explore and/or apply theory and practice issues.

Students can expect to develop skills in unravelling complex policy problems, of recognising disciplinary perspectives on these and to be aware of some of the theoretical and methodological issues in public policy analysis.

Students will be expected to have developed their analytical skills and to have enhanced their capability of going to a new policy area with confidence and ability to search out the issues and to think through the pros and cons of various approaches, and to put these forward as coherent policy advice.

The first essay is a chance to consolidate, extend and reflect on the questions relating to the first few sessions. This essay relates to questions in political theory and economic schools of thought that underpin many public policy debates and much of the theoretical arguments. As such it is designed to stimulate critical & independent thinking about core issues while requiring scholarship.

In-class work is designed to ensure that students have read and understood methodological and theoretical material and examined some of the core debates about the underpinnings of public policy. Applications of theory to empirical and case study material are also to be covered.

The final examination is designed to test the capacity of students in their understanding of all this, and policy arguments, the scholarly debates, methods and methodological problems. The capacity of students to synthesise and think critically, independently and imaginatively from a scholarly basis and their knowledge of the literature and ability to cite the arguments and contributions of key contributors will be tested by the examination. Calculators will not be needed for the examination.

The extended essay – policy advice paper is designed to give students a chance to show and apply their scholarship and understanding (and possibly application) of theoretical issues and

to give students experience in doing policy and in managing their own time and research project.

Student Performance

Honours courses are different from undergraduate courses. The sessions will be based on what the students bring to the class and the discussion of the issues and readings set. You are expected to work hard: honours is more demanding than undergraduate work. The results you earn will be used by the outside world as an indicator of your capacity for many years, so try to set this as your first priority. Get the rest of your life under control and dedicate yourself to this honours programme. Pace yourself, making sure that you keep up with the work from the beginning. Repeat, make sure that you work hard from the beginning.

Set yourselves high standards, contribute with articulate written and verbal skills and confidence in presentation of high quality scholarly work. Independent and critical thinking and creative approaches to policy issues are encouraged.

Assessment tasks, weightings (see table for deadlines).

Your performance in this paper will be determined by:

15% on the first essay **2,500 words**.

10% on your contributions to the weekly classes and your final presentation.

35% on a policy advice project or extended essay (4,000-4,500 words) and timely submission of drafts.

40% on a 2 hour registry conducted final examination some date between **6-25 June 2008 (inclusive)**. **Please ensure that you are available during this time. We will let you know the actual date as soon as this has been issued.**

Note: Your in-class performance for the weekly assignments, preparation and performance will influence our assessment of your overall performance and the award of honours. Of course it will also influence how interesting and rewarding you find the course. You will get out of it what you put in.

Assignments should be handed into box 79 on the Mezzanine level of Rutherford House, or if late, handed to staff at Rutherford House level 8 reception for the date and time to be recorded. All assignments should also be emailed. Electronic copies may be used to check for plagiarism.

Readings

A two-volume set of readings has been prepared, is required, and can be purchased from the Students Notes Centre in the Pipitea Campus. There is no set text. Prescribed readings will be supplemented by other material as described in the session outlines and in class. Prices of the Readings are Vol 1 - \$29.41, Vol 2 - \$34.89.

Assignment Deadlines, tasks weightings and submission details:

Deadline	Time	Task	Weighting	Delivery/place
Weekly class during term	1.40pm-3.30pm	Preparation for and participation in class	10% with presentation	RWY 315
By Tuesday 11 March, 4.30pm	You arrange with Cath – see availability sheet	Make and attend an appointment to discuss research topic with Cath Wallace	Part of research essay.	RH 8.26
Thursday 13 March	3.00pm	2 – 3 page Research essay topic proposal.	Part of research essay	Box 79 AND email to Cath.Wallace@vuw.ac.nz
Monday 31 March	1.00pm.	Essay 1	15%	Box 79 AND email as attachment.
Tuesday 8 April	5.00pm	Developed research project with full outline including some well-formed sections including theoretical lenses, and methods, analytical aspects and initial bibliography.	Part of research essay tasks	Box 79 AND email attachment and to nominated peer reviewers
Thursday 1 May	4.00pm	Draft research project supplied to class mate reviewers; review of two classmate's drafts within 1 week of receipt.	Part of research essay tasks	Email to Cath.Wallace@vuw.ac.nz and share with nominated classmate reviewers Box 79 & email.
Tuesday 13 May	4.30pm	Final submission of research essay.	35%	Box 79 & email to Cath Wallace
Monday 21 or 28 May	10.30-12.20am	Research essay presentation + 2-3 page handout.	Part of in-class performance grade of 10%	RWY 315

There is more information on the requirements for these tasks under the heading Assignment Tasks and Topics below.

ASSIGNMENT TASKS & TOPICS

Assignment 1: the First Essay: 2,500 words. Monday 31 March 3.00pm

Topic

Explain and discuss the moves towards sustainable development and how different kinds of capitals (social, cultural, economic and environmental) that provide the foundations for well-being are increasingly gaining attention. What does this mean for traditional preoccupations with GDP and for reporting information about national social, economic, cultural and environmental data?

Reading: See references for Session 2.

Assignment 2: Policy Advice Paper / Extended Essay – 4,000 – 4,500 words

Component parts, milestones and deadlines: see also box page 2

Thursday 13 March 2 – 3 page Topic proposal (see Honours Research Essay guide, reading 2 of Vol 1).

Tuesday 8 April 5.00pm Developed Project draft, including outline, literature review, methods, analytical criteria and developed bibliography and other sections fleshed out. Email draft research project for circulation to nominated class mates and to Cath Wallace.

Tuesday 13 May: Extended Essay due 4.30pm (4,000 – 4,500 words)

Topic: The project will be chosen by you in consultation with Cath Wallace. It may be an exploration and analysis of some aspect of theory related to public policy or an actual public policy issue that you find interesting. **Students must discuss their topic choice with Cath Wallace prior to submission of their project outline.**

It might be comparative, but does not have to be. It could be an analysis of different disciplinary approaches to a subject or issue in public policy or policy analysis such as motivation, evaluation, etc, etc, or it may be about how a substantive policy “problem” (of your choice) came to be defined, with a description of the policy options considered and, if it has got to that stage, the influence of policy intervention on the “problem”. It could look at problems of implementation of policy. If it is comparative, the spectrum of comparison chosen might be between nations, within regions of districts in New Zealand or abroad, across sectors, across time or from different schools of thought or disciplines. There are guides to research, policy analysis, policy memos and policy practice in the readings.

Students will be expected to consider methodological issues. Each student will present their work to the class as a whole, with a 2 – 3 page handout. It is essential that you begin preparation for this work immediately the semester opens and that you do considerable work in the early stages to acquire source material.

Component Milestone Projects which you must supply as part of the Extended Essay include:

The Research Essay proposal: A two-three page outline is required of the core topic or research question posed, sub-topic contents, likely theoretical lenses that you can think of on a first cut, likely sources, and some references. It should cover what you see as the key problem definition, the subsidiary issues, applicable theory, methodology, the scope and subsidiary questions that flow from the main research hypothesis. Give your estimation of the sources and any particular methodological and other issues. Provide a contents outline with sections or chapters if you can see the topic clearly enough to do this.

For yourself and for circulating to classmates by 8 April: Research Essay draft, literature review, methods, section outlines.

The research essay draft outline should contain a worked-up and fined-down problem definition, and exploration of the dimensions of the issues, a clear skeleton and framework, an account of the sources that you are using or will use (and how far you have got in obtaining these), a partially completed theoretical section that shows what theoretical “lenses” apply, and sketched out or partly written sections.

The Draft:

This will be reviewed by two nominated class mates. The draft should convey a clear sense of the final copy, with a full contents and skeleton clear; most sections written but with notes on areas to be followed up, citations and facts to be found and so on. Include a clear section on the issue to be covered, applicable literature and theories, methodologies and empirical content. The theories and methodology should be clear and the theory sections mostly worked up. Cath Wallace will not mark or read this, but supply of your draft to the nominated class mates, and review of those supplied to you are part of the tasks for the course.

Any use of human subjects in interviews or surveys must be subject to human ethics committee approval – and this takes time and will need at least a month for its preparation and submission. Human ethics committee guidelines are available on the Victoria website: http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/publications/hec_guidelines.doc

Notices

Most notices will be given in class and may also be posted by email or on the PUBL 402 site on Blackboard.

Mandatory Course Requirements:

In order to pass this course, as well as obtaining an overall pass mark or grade, students must attend and contribute to a minimum 10 of the 12 seminar sessions, complete the essay, the research essay and the presentation to the class, and sit the examination as well as undertaking prescribed weekly tasks and peer review duties, unless excused by the course coordinator.

Session Topics

A detailed handout with weekly session topics and readings relevant to and for those sessions will be handed out to course participants. Topics include:

Session	Date	Topic
1	27 Feb	Introduction to the course and each other. Public policy and public policy extended essay, research or policy paper development; Overarching policy goals including sustainability, national indicators and aggregate measures for public purposes.
2	5 March	Overarching policy goals including sustainable development; national indicators and aggregate measures for public purposes. Theory and practice.
3	12 March	Disciplinary foundations and schools of thought: disciplinary and sub-disciplinary views of the individual; rationality and individual choice, motivation, political and bureaucratic motivation, and the role of the state. Library and database training 3.30 to 4.30pm in RWW 202 with Janet Keilar, Commerce Faculty Librarian.
4	19 March	Comparative economic theory.
5	26 March	Democracy, deliberation, deliberative democracy & institutions. Democratic and political science views of public policy v rational choice, utilitarian and public choice approaches to policy. Crafting public policy with the public: consultation and public participation. Theoretical perspectives, purposes, methods, how do and not to do it.
6	2 April	Public Policy – issues in theory and practice. Comparisons and mis-comparisons, public policy path dependency, case studies, evaluation, multiattribute analysis.
7	9 April	Globalisation and public policy; globalisation and democracy.
8	30 April	Democracy and international policy making.
9	7 May	Policy when there is risk, uncertainty or indeterminacy.
10	14 May	Topics above continued, student research presentations
11	21 May	Student research presentations
12	28 May	Student research presentations, course evaluations, wrap-up.
	6-25 June inclusive.	Examination on a date to be set.

Participation and Performance

Students are expected to attend (virtually) all sessions and to contribute to the intellectual life of the course articulately with rigour, vigour and clarity. We expect you to come well prepared and to treat your obligations in this regard seriously. We are looking for critical and incisive thinking and writing. We want you to develop your depth of understanding and analysis beyond the descriptive and the regurgitative, to show not only an ability to analyse but also to synthesise.

Students will be asked to write up an account of the key material for each session for distribution to the class. Sometimes this will be in advance, sometimes after the class in time for the next class. Some of this will be done in groups.

Group Session Topics

Sessions will be conducted as seminars and students are expected to have read the assigned materials, to be prepared to raise the issues for discussion and be prepared to offer responses to questions raised by others. You will be asked to work in small groups, sometime in advance, sometimes during the sessions.

Assessment Criteria

In-course work and examinations are intended to assess the student's capabilities in terms of:

Scholarship

Overall, what depth of knowledge and understanding of the field, including an understanding of the leading lines of schools of thought and the main contributors, is displayed? Are sources properly documented, arguments well constructed and is evidence suitably considered?

Coverage of topic

Has the material been covered comprehensively, but with discrimination of what is important and relevant?

Depth and coherence of analysis

Does the work indicate that the student has accurately interpreted the information available, has considered critically the various viewpoints, understands the topic? Does the analysis done "hang together".

Quality of argument

Is the work logical, coherent, rigorous and internally consistent? Are arguments clearly put and counterarguments anticipated, examined, accepted or rebutted? Does the reader have confidence that the analysis and conclusions drawn are reliable and accurate? Are assertions supported by argument, authority or evidence (or all three?)

Clarity of expression

Can the student convey ideas and conclusions clearly and with concision and precision? Is the writing lucid, so that the reader does not have to re-read or re-interpret it to understand it?

Use of readings and supplementary materials

Does the work draw on readings supplied or recommended by the lecturer, and on other material located by students at their own initiative?

Technical presentation

Is the student able to write good English, spell correctly, lay out work clearly, and make effective use of graphics and tabulations? Are instructions followed regarding format? Is referencing accurate and complete to a standard format?

“Quality of mind” and thinking

Is there evidence of original, independent and critical thinking on the part of the student, in addition to merely reporting the views of others, describing or summarising? What is the “quality of mind?”

Intellectual honesty

A high standard of intellectual honesty is required in all the work in this course, and indeed the programme as a whole.

Presentation of work

All in-course written assignments should be typed, with 1.5-2 line spacing and with a 4 cm margin for comments. Ensure your name and the course is clearly marked on the front. **Please do not use presentation folders or bindings.** Please staple pages at the top left. Ensure that your name, the course name and code are on the paper along with the title of the work.

Workload

This is a 400 level course, so you should expect to spend at least 10-12 hours per week, throughout the academic semester. With 2 contact hours in class a week, you should be doing a weekly total of 8-10 hours on reading and assignments, researching and writing material required of you and preparing for the exam. Make sure that you do steady work throughout the semester. Do not leave it all until the end. Getting really stressed and overtired is a short route to sickness and to doing less than justice to yourself.

Late Work, Penalties and Extensions

Work handed in late without extensions and extenuating circumstances may be penalised by the subtraction of 5 percentage points per day late. **If you become sick do not come to class** but please notify Cath Wallace and, if the absence is for an important deadline, examination or for a protracted period, supply a medical certificate. If you have a bereavement, or some other disaster strikes, please notify Cath Wallace, and if the absence is for an important deadline, examination or more than one class, supply a medical certificate. If the circumstances permit, please give advance notice of any absence.

Study Accommodation and Building and Computer Access

Honours students have study space (but not computers) in Railway West Wing room 301A, (past cybercoms over “bridge”). The room is for study. Please respect the rights of others to a good quiet study environment. Do make a point of interacting with fellow students and testing ideas and discussing course materials with each other. Our experience (and the literature on learning) suggests that you will all benefit from this considerably.

After hours access to Railway West Wing and Rutherford House will require cards. Take care not to allow entry to unauthorised people after hours. You will need to take your card with you if you use the stairs in Rutherford House: exit from the stairs requires a security card.

Blackboard & Your Email

Announcements will be posted on Blackboard, made in class and, at times sent by email. Please ensure you have email and that you give your email address to Cath Wallace and that you check for messages. Email accounts can be set up. The course administrator (appointment pending) at the reception desk on level 8 of Rutherford House can give you the required form and can explain what you need to do.

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 on the ground floor (EA005). This counter is the first point of contact for :

- 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.

Notice of Turnitin Use

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. *At the discretion of the School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.* You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

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 or go to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/default.aspx

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website www.victoria.ac.nz/fca under Important Information for Students:

- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 6015. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5842.