

School of Government

PUBL 402
ASPECTS OF PUBLIC POLICY: THEORY

Trimester One 2010

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

Course Co-ordinator: Cath Wallace
Room: Rutherford House, Level 8, Room 826
Phone: (04) 463 5713
Email: Cath.Wallace@vuw.ac.nz

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

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.

Administrator: Mara Robertson
Room: Rutherford House, Level 8, Room 821 (Reception)
Phone: (04) 463 6599
Email: Mara.Robertson@vuw.ac.nz

Trimester Dates

Teaching Period: Monday 1 March to Friday 4 June 2010
End of Year Study Period: Monday 7 June to Thursday 10 June 2010
Examination Period: Friday 11 June to Wednesday 30 June 2010 (inclusive)

Class Times and Room Numbers

Lecture Timetable: Thursday 1.40pm – 3.30pm RWW 414

The semester runs from Monday 1 March to Friday 4 June. The Easter and mid term break is from 2 – 18 April.

A library database training session will be arranged. Some collaborative out-of-class meetings and other activities will be required.

Withdrawal from Courses

Information available via

Withdrawal dates: Late withdrawals with Associate Dean (Students) permission
(See Section 8: Withdrawals - from the Personal Courses of Study Statute)

<http://policy.vuw.ac.nz/Amphora!~policy.vuw.ac.nz~POLICY~000000001743.pdf>

Withdrawal dates: refunds:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

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 Learning 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 and 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.

Course Delivery

This course meets weekly for two 50 minute sessions, plus, if needed a library training session at a time to be agreed, and occasional extra sessions for presentation of student work. Students are to prepare for and fully participate in all meetings of the class.

Expected 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 yourself less than justice.

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	Thursday Date	Topic
1	4 March	Introduction to the course and each other. Assessment and documentation for the course. Caveats. Possible research essay topics. Overarching policy goals and paradigms of progress.
2	11 March	Overarching policy goals including sustainable development; national indicators and aggregate measures for public purposes. Theory and practice.
3	18 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.
4	25 March	Comparative economic theory.
5	1 April	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	22 April	Theories of motivation and policy interventions.
7	29 April	Intertemporal decisions with intertemporal implications, discounting, precautionary principle. Policy when there is risk, uncertainty or indeterminacy.
8	6 May	International policy and law. Democracy and international policy making.
9	13 May	Roles in policy of non-state actors. NGOs, business.
10	20 May	Topics above continued as required, student research presentations.
11	27 May	Student research presentations.
12	3 June	Student research presentations, course evaluations, wrap-up.
	11 – 30 June inclusive	Examination on a date to be set.

A bibliography will be provided to allow you to begin your exploration of the literature relevant to each topic.

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 to offer responses to questions raised by others. You will be asked to work in small groups, sometime in advance, sometimes during the sessions.

Readings

Readings are available on a CD and on the internet or in the library, some of it on electronic reserve. The CD has been prepared, is required, and can be purchased from VicBooks, Students Notes Centre, Pipitea Campus. There is no set text.

Assessment Tasks, Weightings (see table for deadlines)

Your performance in this paper will be determined by:

20% on the first essay (2,000 words).

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

30% on a policy advice project or extended essay (3,000 words).

40% on a 2 hour registry conducted final examination, which will be scheduled at some time during the period from **Friday 11th June – Wednesday 30th June 2010 (inclusive)**. We will let you know the actual date as soon as this has been issued.

Students who enrol in courses with examinations are obliged to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period.

Note: Your in-class performance for the weekly assignments, preparation and performance will contribute to your in-class mark for this course, but it will also influence our assessment of your overall performance for 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.

Note: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCA programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Assignment Deadlines, Task Weightings and Submission Details:

Deadline	Time	Task	Weighting	Delivery/place
Weekly class during term	Thursdays 1.40pm – 3.30pm	Preparation for and participation in class	10% with presentation	RWW 414
By Wednesday 17 March, 3.00pm	You arrange with Cath – see availability sheet	Make and attend an appointment to discuss research topic with Cath Wallace	Part of research essay.	RH 826
Friday 19 March	1.00pm	2 – 3 page Research essay topic proposal.	Part of research essay	Box 79 AND email to Cath.Wallace@vuw.ac.nz
Wednesday 24 March	1.00pm	Essay 1	20%	Box 79 AND email as attachment.
Friday 23 April	1.00pm	Developed research project with full outline including some well-formed sections including theoretical lenses, and methods, analytical aspects and draft bibliography.	Part of research essay tasks	Box 79 AND email attachment and to nominated peer reviewers
Tuesday 18 May	4.30pm	Final submission of research essay.	30%	Box 79 & email to Cath Wallace
20, 27 May and 3 June	1.40pm – 3.30pm	Research essay presentation + 2 – 3 page handout.	Part of in-class performance grade of 10%	RWW 414

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

Submission of and Cover sheets for Assignments

All assignments must be submitted in hard copy and electronic form (unless any variation is arranged by email with Cath Wallace). It is a requirement of the School of Government for a completed cover sheet to accompany all pieces of work submitted for assessment. A copy of the form is included at the end of this course outline and will also be placed on Blackboard.

Assignment Tasks and Topics

Assignment 1: Essay 1 – 2,000 words. Due Wednesday 24 March 1.00pm

Do **ONE** of the following (avoid topics you have done before for Cath Wallace).

Ensure you indicate at the beginning of the essay which topic you are writing on. Please leave at least a 4 cm left hand margin and set your line spacing at 1.5 or 2 lines. Please do **NOT** provide any covers or bindings, but do put your name on the paper. You are welcome to submit double sided printing.

Topic 1:

Explain the rationales for discounting. Drawing on the academic and policy literatures, discuss the methodological and policy issues and dilemmas relating to intertemporal allocations and discounting when there are issues of uncertainty and risk of irreversible impacts on the environment.

OR

Topic 2

Explain and discuss the frameworks for focussing public policy on sustainable development and well being and making these central to our national measures of progress. What does this mean for traditional preoccupations with GDP and for national reporting of social, economic, cultural and environmental data?

OR

Topic 3 – Explain and discuss different theories of human motivation and behaviour as they relate to public policy and attempts to alter private behaviour. You may wish to discuss this in the context of some particular policy issue.

References – see the Bibliography.

Assignment 2: Extended Essay – 3,000 words. Due Tuesday 18 May 4.30pm

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

Topic and proposal: 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 proposal.**

Topics: 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.

Discuss your proposed topic with Cath Wallace by Wednesday 17 March 3.00pm.

Friday 19 March: 2 – 3 page research proposal due.

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 (eg review of the ... literatures in respect of ... in xxx place over YYY dates, or some such); the scope and subsidiary questions that flow from the main research hypothesis. Give your estimation of the sources and any particular methodological or other issues. Provide a contents outline with sections or chapters if you can see the topic clearly enough to do this. Provide an indicative bibliography including journal and policy literatures.

Friday 23 April: Developed Project draft, including outline, literature review, methods, analytical criteria and developed bibliography. Some sections will be fleshed out or written, others will be in note form indicating the nature of the material to come.

The Draft:

This may be reviewed by two nominated classmates. 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 this, but supply of your draft is 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
Email draft research project for circulation to nominated classmates and to Cath Wallace.

Tuesday 18 May: Extended Essay due 4.30pm (4,000 – 4,500 words)

Presentation: At the end of the course, in the final sessions, 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 research essay immediately the semester opens and that you do considerable work in the early stages.

Late Work and Penalties

Course members are to complete and hand in assignments by the due date. Marks may be deducted where assignments are submitted late. Work handed in late without extensions and extenuating circumstances may be penalised by the subtraction of 5 percentage points per day late.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal emergencies prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply for and may be granted an extension to the due date. Note that this applies only to extreme unforeseen circumstances and is not necessarily awarded. You should let your Course Co-ordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline if you are seeking an extension.

If you become sick do not come to class but please notify Cath Wallace

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.

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.

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.

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, but not in this room. 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 your ID card. 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.

Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the course coordinator, and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the course coordinator on behalf of the students.

Communication of Additional Information

Announcements will be posted on Blackboard, made in class and, at times sent by email. Please ensure you keep your email up to date with both Cath Wallace and Student Records, and that you check for messages.

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and the use of Turnitin

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, you must still acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- material from books, journals or any other printed source
- the work of other students or staff
- information from the Internet
- software programs and other electronic material
- designs and ideas
- the organisation or structuring of any such material.

Acknowledgement is required for *all* material in any work submitted for assessment unless it is a 'fact' that is well-known in the context (such as "Wellington is the capital of New Zealand") or your own ideas in your own words. Everything else that derives from one of the sources above and ends up in your work – whether it is directly quoted, paraphrased, or put into a table or figure, needs to be acknowledged with a reference that is sufficient for your reader to locate the original source.

Plagiarism undermines academic integrity simply because it is a form of lying, stealing and mistreating others. Plagiarism involves stealing other people's intellectual property and lying about whose work it is. This is why plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria.

If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you may be penalised under the Statute on Student Conduct. You should be aware of your obligations under the Statute, which can be downloaded from the policy website (www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx). You could fail your course or even be suspended from the University.

Plagiarism is easy to detect. The University has systems in place to identify it.

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 compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. 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.

There is guidance available to students on how to avoid plagiarism by way of sound study skills and the proper and consistent use of a recognised referencing system. This guidance may be found at the following website <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

If in doubt seek the advice of your course coordinator.

Plagiarism is simply not worth the risk.

For the following important information follow the links provided:

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

General University Policies and Statutes

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

AVC (Academic) Website: information including: Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/>

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/



School of Government

Assignment Cover Sheet

Instructions

Please complete and sign this form and attach it as the cover page to your assignment.

Student Name (Please print) _____

Student ID _____ Course Code _____

Course Coordinator/Tutor/Supervisor _____

Due Date _____

Plagiarism Declaration

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria. Plagiarism is presenting (without due acknowledgement) someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. Plagiarism takes many forms and includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students or staff, information from the internet and other electronic material. You are expected to adhere to the VUW Statute on Student Conduct and its references to plagiarism. The Statute may be accessed at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx>.

I have read and understand the University's policy on plagiarism outlined above and declare that this assignment is my own work and that all source material used in this assignment is accurately acknowledged.

Signed: _____ Date: _____