TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

School of Government

MAPP 526
POLICY METHODS AND PRACTICE
(15 Points)

Trimester Two / 2011

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

Course Coordinator:	**Dr. Amanda Wolf**
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School Office Hours:	8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday

Trimester Dates

From Thursday 7 July to Monday 31 October 2011

Withdrawal from Course

Notice of withdrawal must be in writing / emailed to the Masters Administrator. Ceasing to attend or verbally advising a member of staff will NOT be accepted as a notice of withdrawal.

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before **Friday 22 July 2011**.

2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is **Monday 26 September 2011**. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must

apply for permission on an '*Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late'* including supporting documentation. The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

Class Times and Room Numbers

Module One:	Thursday 7 July 2011	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Two:	Thursday 1 September 2011	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Three:	Thursday 20 October 2011	8.30am – 6.00pm

Attendance is <u>required</u> at all three modular teaching days

Locations: Classes will be held on the Pipitea Campus of Victoria University in Wellington and you will be advised of your classroom one week prior to each module by email.

Course Overview

Policy analysis is designed to force one to think ahead in order to identify and organise the information which both defines a given problem and appears to be necessary to fully explore solutions. . . . Policy analysis is not a discipline. Rather, it chooses the analytic methods, theories, and substantive knowledge generated by other fields that are useful to integrate into its own framework for application to particular problems at hand. (Joel Fleishman in *Divided Knowledge: Across Disciplines, Across Cultures*, (Easton, D. & Schelling, C. S. Eds., 1991, p 235–6).

This course introduces the methods analysts use to describe, understand, explain, or predict policy-relevant changes in behaviours, conditions, outcomes, and aspirations. It covers the applications of a range of methods in the policy decision-making environment.

Policy analysis is not a technocratic practice – our understanding of policy has moved on from one in which 'problems' had 'solutions' (if this ever was the perception). For example, we have witnessed a diversification of the roles of the policy analyst, and are now accustomed to thinking of policies in systemic terms, thinking of many policy problems as 'wicked' (or at least very uncertain and complicated) and policy behaviours as complex and unpredictable. Knowledge is always incomplete, multiple and provisional. Accordingly, policy inquiry is specific to a policy-decision environment. A primary emphasis throughout the course is on understanding how to best respond to the challenges that confront the analyst. That, in turn, requires reflective practice and an effort to continually develop sensitivity to unique configurations of policy tasks and their place in improving policies.

MAPP 526 is a companion course to MAPP 525, Policy Analysis and Advising. Participants who have not already done so are strongly encouraged to read the MAPP 525 text, C. Scott and K. Baehler, *Adding value to policy analysis and advice* (UNSW Press, 2010).

The course considers the contexts of policy analysis practice and a variety of methods policy analysts use. The aim is to improve skills for working with information and 'evidence' and to gain critical understanding of how policy contexts bear on the deployment of those skills. There are far more topics of interest to policy practitioners than time to consider them. Likewise, there is not

time for in-depth treatment of any one method. In your own work, you may use some and not others, and depth and understanding develops with time and practice, like any higher-order skill.

There are many skills and abilities we admire in policy professionals. Some of these are person characteristics, like attentive listening and the ability to stay focused. Others are responsive to the institutional settings of policy work, such as the abilities to draw on institutional knowledge and to work well with operational people as well as political players. These important aspects of policy practice are outside our scope. Instead, the focus is on ways that you can think more clearly and nimbly as you engage in the various information and evidence tasks of policy work.

Course Learning Objectives

This course has three main objectives. As indicated, the various assignments contribute to your achievement of these objectives.

At the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Ascertain what constitutes 'evidence' in diverse, and often complex and uncertain, contexts. (Assignments 1 and 3)
2. Determine the usefulness of different types of policy-relevant information according to the policy purposes and the strengths and limitations of some analytic methods for generating and using information in specific policy applications. (Assignments 1, 2A and 3)
3. Construct and critically assess policy arguments. (Assignment 2B)

Course Content and Readings

The first two modules cover:

- the overarching concepts of evidence-based policy (EBP) practice, challenges to good practice in the EBP framework and responses to those challenges; and
- the specific qualities of a selection of methods that are used to develop and present policy-relevant research findings.

The readings for these modules include academic 'texts', examples, and academic or practitioner commentary.

The third module, and your preparations for it, is designed to draw together and apply the earlier material (and your existing knowledge and experience) to an examination of topics that stem from government/the public sector interest in *happiness/wellbeing/flourishing*. An extended focus allows individual tailoring plus the benefits of learning from others.

There is no textbook for this course. A reading packet will be supplied, with contents as described below. In addition, you may be directed to some internet sites as part of your preparation for class sessions and you will need to make use of some additional sources to complete your assignments.

Module 1: Thursday 7 July 2011

- Evidence-based policy and its challenges
- Introduction to qualitative and quantitative methods
- Syntheses

1. Banks, G. (2009). Evidence-based policy-making: What is it? How do we get it? ANZSOG/ANU Public Lecture Series, 2009, Canberra, Feb 4. Available at: www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/85836/20090204-evidence-based-policy.pdf

2. Head, B. W. (2008). Three lenses of evidence-based policy. *The Australian Journal of Public Administration, 67*(1), 1–11.

3. Schön, D. (1983). From technical rationality to reflection-in-action. *The reflective practitioner* (pp. 21–69), NY: Basic Books.

4. Sanderson, I. (2009). Intelligent policy making for a complex world: Pragmatism, evidence and learning. *Political Studies, 57*, 699–719.

5. Greene, J. C. (2009). Evidence as 'proof' and evidence as 'inkling'. In S. I. Donaldson, C. A. Christie, & M. M. Mark, (Eds.). *What counts as credible evidence in applied research and evaluation practice?* (pp. 153-167). Los Angeles: Sage.

6. Hall, R. (2009). Qualitative research methods. In Argyrous, G. (Ed.) *Evidence for policy and decision-making: a practical guide* (pp. 218–239), UNSW Press.

7. Buchan, D. (2006). The views of recent immigrants on the issues of adjusting to life in New Zealand. In J. Boston, P. Callister, & A. Wolf. *The policy implications of diversity*. (pp. 196-200). Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies.

8. Gifford, H., Parata, K. & Thomson, G. (2010). Māori challenges and crown responsibilities: Māori policymaker ideas on smokefree policy options. *The New Zealand Medical Journal, 123* (1326): 68-76.

9. Tufte, E. R. (1974). Introduction to data analysis. In *Data analysis for politics and policy* (pp. 1-30). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

10. Mukherjee, C. & Wuyts, M. (2007). Thinking with quantitative data. In A. Thomas, & G. Mohan, (Eds.) *Research skills for policy development: how to find out fast* (pp. 231–253), Sage Publications.

11. Strogatz, S. (2010). Chances are. Blogpost. *New York Times*, April 25.

12. Fergusson, D. M., Horwood, L. J., & Boden, J. M. (2008). Abortion and mental health disorders: Evidence form a 30-year longitudinal study. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 193*: 444-451, and commentaries from Casey, P. (pp. 452-453) and Oates, M. (pp. 453-454).

13. Pawson, R. (2006). *Evidence-based policy: a realist perspective* (pp. 73–104), London: Sage.

14. Gomm, R. (2008). Systematic reviews, meta-analysis and syntheses from diverse sources, in *Social research methodology: A critical introduction*. (2nd ed.) (pp. 344-364). Palgrave Macmillan.

15. Smith, K. A. & Cordery, C. (2010). *What works? A systematic review of research and evaluation literature on encouragement and support of volunteering*. A paper commissioned by the Lottery Grants Board. Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs. Access via www.dia.govt.nz/lotterygrantsboard .

Module 2: Thursday 1 September 2011

- Cost-benefit analysis
- Uncertainty
- Policy argument

16. Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. (1999). Benefit-cost analysis. In *Policy analysis: Concepts and practice* (pp. 331-381). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

17. Moore, T. J., Ritter, A. & Caulkins, J. P. (2007). The costs and consequences of three policy options for reducing heroin dependency. *Drug and Alcohol Review, 26*, 369–378.

18. Farber, D. A. Uncertainty (February 18, 2010). UC Berkeley Public Law Research Paper No. 1555343. Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1555343

19. Head, B. W. (2010). Water policy – evidence, learning and the governance of uncertainty. *Policy and Society, 29*, 171–180.

20. Dunn, W. N. (2008). Developing policy arguments. In *Policy analysis: an introduction* 4th Ed., (pp. 377–419). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Module 3: Thursday 20 October 2011

- Happiness/wellbeing/flourishing

21. Mackey, R. (2010). Britain to measure happiness. *The New York Times* (15 November).

22. Forgeard, M. J. C., Jayawickreme, E., Kern, M. L., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). Doing the right thing: Measuring wellbeing for public policy. *International Journal of Wellbeing, 1*(1): 79-106.

23. Duncan, G. (2005). What do we mean by 'happiness'? The relevance of subjective wellbeing to social policy. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand, 25*: 16-31.

24. Morrison, P. S. (2010). Local expressions of subjective well-being: The New Zealand experience. *Regional Studies* (First published on 11 August 2010 on iFirst).

25. Boulanger, P.-M., Lefin, A.-L., Bauler, T., Prignot, N., Van Ootegem, L., Spillemaeckers, S., & Defloor, B. (2009). *Toward theoretically sound and democratically legitimate indicators of well-being in Belgium.* Final report, Phase 1. Science for a Sustainable Development Report SD/TA/09A. Brussels: Belgian Science Policy.

Course Delivery

This course is delivered in a modular format, which includes a minimum of 24 hours contact. The 24 hours are broken up into three separate days of eight hours each (a 'module'). There are three modules in the course with approximately seven weeks between each module. **Attendance is required at all three modular teaching days (8.30am – 6.00pm).**

Expected Workload

The learning objectives set for each course are demanding and, to achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to reading, studying, thinking, and completion of assessment items outside of contact time. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and learning before the first module. Regular learning is necessary between modules (students who leave everything to the last moment rarely achieve at a high level).

Expressed in input terms, on average, the time commitment required usually translates to approximately 150 hours for a 15-point course.

Group Work

All work is assessed individually. However, you may want to team up with one or two others as you work on your 'happiness' project. Due to the numbers in the class, the presentations will be clustered and students in a cluster are strongly advised to jointly devise a presentation.

Assessment Requirements

Assignment	Details		
1. Evidence and methods essay	Due Monday 15 August 2011	1,500 – 2,000 words	30%
2. Methods exercises A and B	Due Monday 19 September 2011	A: 1,250 – 1,500 words B: 500 – 1,000 words	40%
3. Project report	Due Monday 31 October 2011	2,000 words	30%

Assignment details

All assignments will be discussed further in class.

1. **Evidence and methods essay**

   Select a ***policy aim***, such as "moving toward a smoke-free Aotearoa" or "encouraging and supporting volunteering" (Note that these examples are reasonably 'discrete' and are also the subject of assigned readings. Your selection *must* have a similar scope and concreteness – avoid, for example, "reducing climate change"; you may use one of the provided examples or you may choose your own).

   Next, select ***TWO 'baskets' of research methods*** from these three: (a) qualitative methods; (b) quantitative methods; and (c) syntheses.

   Demonstrate your understanding of the strengths and limitations of methods in your selected baskets for informing the development and/or implementation of policies consistent with your selected aim, with attention to the demands (as you see them) for 'evidence-based policy'.

2. **Methods exercises**

   This assignment entails two distinct exercises, A and B:

   A. Critically discuss one of the examples below (or an approved substitute) demonstrating your understanding of cost-benefit/cost-effectiveness analysis OR uncertainty:

      o Moore, T. J., Ritter, A. & Caulkins, J. P. (2007). The costs and consequences of three policy options for reducing heroin dependency. *Drug and Alcohol Review, 26*, 369–378. (reading 17)

      o Head, B. W. (2010). Water policy – evidence, learning and the governance of uncertainty. *Policy and Society, 29*, 171-180. (reading 19)

   B. Find a short policy argument (press release, editorial or similar) and assess it based on Dunn's (reading 20) method (please attach the full text of the argument).

3. **Project report**

   Details to follow once class interests in specific topics are ascertained. In general, the project will entail applying class learning (and your existing knowledge and experience) to a collective effort to look at a large area of policy interest from a number of angles. The idea is to allow individual choice of an aspect of particular interest to you, while enabling the class as a whole to learn a little from many directions. We will have some guest presenters and you will have a chance to present your ideas to the class. The follow-up report will document what you have learned and your reflections on policy methods and practice.

Please submit ALL assignments IN HARD COPY to:

> Post Experience Programmes,
> School of Government,
> Victoria University of Wellington,
> Level 8 Reception,
> Rutherford House,
> 23 Lambton Quay,
> P.O. Box 600,
> Wellington 6140.

> Assignments submitted by post are given two days grace to allow for delivery time, while assignments that are submitted in person should be placed in the secure box at School of Government reception (Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus, office hours = 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday) by the due date/time. The assignment box is cleared daily, and assignments will be date stamped.

Quality Assurance 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.

Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

Class Attendance

Attendance is <u>required</u> at all three modular teaching days.

If, before enrolment for a course, you are aware that you will not be able to attend a module, you must notify the Director of Master's Programmes when you enrol explaining why you will not be able to attend. The Director of Master's Programmes will consult with the relevant course coordinator. In such circumstances, you may be declined entry into a course.

If you become aware after a course starts that you will be unable to attend a module or a significant part of a module (i.e. more than two hours in any given day), you must advise the course coordinator before the module explaining why you will be unable to attend. The course coordinator may excuse you from attendance and may also require you to complete compensatory work relating to the course content covered during your absence.

Penalties

The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and public management. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair on students who do submit their work on time. It is expected therefore that you will complete and hand in assignments

by the due date. Marks will be deducted at the rate of five per cent for every day by which the assignment is late and no assignments will be accepted after five working days beyond the date they are due. For example, if you get 65% for an assignment, but you handed it in on Monday when it was due the previous Friday, you will get a mark of 50%.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal circumstances beyond your control 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. You should let your course coordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline (if circumstances permit) if you are seeking an extension. Where an extension is sought, evidence, by way of a medical certificate or similar, may be required by the course coordinator.

Mandatory Course Requirements

Submit all assignments required for this course.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information may be provided in class, by post, by email or via Blackboard.

Blackboard is Victoria University's online environment that supports teaching and learning by making course information, materials and other learning activities available via the internet through the myVictoria student web portal.

To access the Blackboard site for this course:

1. Open a web browser and go to www.myvictoria.ac.nz .
2. Log into myVictoria using your ITS Username (on your Confirmation of Study) and password (if you've never used the Victoria University computer facilities before, your initial password is your student ID number, on your Confirmation of Study, Fees Assessment or student ID card – you may be asked to change it when you log in for the first time).
3. Once you've logged into myVictoria, select Blackboard (from the options along the top of the page) to go to your Blackboard homepage.
4. The "My Courses" section displays the courses you have access to – select the appropriate link to access the course-specific Blackboard site. Please note that only courses that are actually using Blackboard and have been made available to students by their respective course coordinator will be displayed.

NOTE: Information emailed to you via Blackboard can only be sent to your @myvuw.ac.nz email address (the free email address created for you when you enrol and accessed via the myVictoria student web portal). If you want to receive these emails at your preferred email address (e.g. your home or work email address), it is **essential** that you activate your @myvuw.ac.nz email address before the start of the course and you modify the settings so all emails sent to it are automatically forwarded to your preferred email address. Please go to www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/FAQs.aspx#Email_Forward for more information.

You are recommended to ensure that your computer access to Victoria University's computer facilities, such as myVictoria, Blackboard and email, is working BEFORE your course starts. If you have any problems, you should contact the ITS Helpdesk on (04) 463 5050 or its-service@vuw.ac.nz , or visit the Helpdesk on level 2 of the Railway West Wing, Pipitea Campus. See www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/ for more information.

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 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: 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
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

General University Policies and Statutes
Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study

Find out about academic progress and restricted enrolment at
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.aspx

The University's statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Further information about the University's academic processes can be found on the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/default.aspx

AVC (Academic) Website: information including: Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices
www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/

Te Pūtahi Atawhai
Maori and Pacific Mentoring Programme
www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/tpa/index.aspx