

Course POL 203 A
Course Title American Public Policy
Professor Whitney Manzo
Term Spring 2019
Meetings T/Th 12:30-1:50 PM



Professor's Contact Information

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Office Hours	1-2 PM MW, 2-3 PM T/Th, or by appointment

General Course Information

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions	None
Course Description	<p>A study of public policies and the political processes that support them. Models and methods used by policy analysts will be studied.</p> <p>*This Course meets the Ethical Perspectives requirement for General Education.</p>
Learning Outcomes	<p>This course will explore what the American government actually does as opposed to how it is structured. The course learning outcomes are for you to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand public policy- what it is, how it is shaped, and why some choices are made over others. 2. Learn how to analyze and evaluate public policy. (Social Science learning outcome #3) 3. Demonstrate knowledge of the broader ethical theories, principles, and codes of conduct that inform and guide decision making in American public policy. (Ethical Perspectives learning outcome #1) 4. Analyze the ethical dimensions of public policies through relevant disciplinary methods (Ethical Perspectives learning outcome #2) 5. Examine how diverse ideologies and cultures shape controversies in American public policy.
Required Texts & Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>American Public Policy: An Introduction</i> (11th ed) by Cochran, Mayer, Carr, Cayer, McKenzie, and Peck. ISBN-13: 9781285869773. 2. <i>\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America</i> by Kathryn J. Edin and H. Luke Shaefer. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016. ISBN-13: 9780544811959. 3. Additional material will be placed on Brightspace. <p>You will also need access to the internet, a word processing program, and Meredith gmail (you should check this every morning).</p>

Assignment Weight and Descriptions

<p>Grade Breakdown</p>	<p>100 points Attendance 250 points Class Participation 150 points Ethical Reasoning Quizzes (3) 100 points Ethical Analysis Paper 300 points Policy Report Project (4 parts) 100 points Policy Report Presentation 1000 points Total</p>
<p>Attendance</p>	<p>Attendance is expected at all class meetings, and I will be taking attendance each class period. However, I also understand that life happens and I really do not want you coming to class unable to focus or sick. You have one free absence, no questions asked. After that, each additional absence will deduct 10 points from your attendance grade. You can have the 10 points restored if you provide evidence you got notes from a classmate and/or took written notes over the assigned reading from the day you missed. (School-sponsored activities are exempt from this policy.)</p>
<p>Class Participation</p>	<p>This grade includes but is not limited to contribution to class discussion and debates, active participation in group work/group assignments, and short papers/briefs we will do to practice policy analysis for the policy report project. Part of this grade will also include writing notes over each assigned reading and asking discussion questions. At the beginning of each class with an assigned reading (marked by * in the course calendar), you will turn in at least one FULL page of notes from the reading. The notes may be typed or handwritten. On the second page, ask 2-3 questions you have about the reading. I will randomly call on students to ask their questions in class to kick off our discussion.</p>
<p>Ethical Reasoning Quizzes</p>	<p>These papers will be written in class following discussion of a specific policy. You will use ethical frameworks we have discussed to analyze the policy and write a recommendation for the US government to follow. You will NOT be able to use notes, so you should prepare for these quizzes in advance. It is important that your recommendations are written as an unbiased policy analyst, which means personal political feelings are immaterial. Each paper will follow the same format:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the differences between the 2 ethical frameworks I post on the board 2. Explain what a proponent of each framework would say about the policy at hand 3. List at least one pro and one con of each framework 4. Thinking of the pros and cons, recommend the ethical course of action for the US government and explain your reasoning <p>Your grade will be based on the correct description of the ethical frameworks and their pros/cons, and the quality of reasoning in your recommendation. There will be 4 ethical reasoning quizzes; only 3 will count toward this grade (so you can miss one without hurting your grade). If you write all 4, you may receive extra credit.</p>

Ethical Analysis Paper	Throughout the first part of the semester, we will all read <i>\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America</i> by Edin and Shaefer. You are to write a minimum 3 page analysis of the ethical issues contained in the book, answering questions posted to Brightspace. This will be due at class time on March 19, and then in class that day we will discuss the book. Your participation in the discussion will count toward your overall participation grade. I encourage you to begin reading early; though the book is not difficult to read, it is lengthy, and you won't be able to read it all in a week without significantly harming your work in this and other classes.
Policy Report Project	The main project of this class is to complete a policy report on a current policy issue of your choosing. There will be 4 parts to this project, listed below with how many points each part is worth. Specifics on the assignment requirements may be found on Brightspace. The due date for each part may be found in the Course Calendar. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policy Report Topic and Sources- 50 points 2. Policy Report Background- 75 points 3. Policy Report Paper- 100 points 4. Policy Report Brief- 75 points
Policy Report Presentation	At the end of the course, each student will present her policy brief. Your Senator has limited time, so you will need to adjust your written brief into an engaging but concise presentation; simply reading your policy brief will result in a 0 for this grade. The presentation must be less than 5 minutes and you should have everything you want to say memorized as much as possible. You should also be prepared for at least one question from your Senator (the professor). The rubric for this presentation will be posted to Brightspace.

Course Calendar

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments
January 10	Introduction to the class	
January 15	What is public policy?	
January 17	No class, professor at conference	Pew Typology Quiz (Brightspace)
January 22	Values and public policy	Simon Ch. 3 (Brightspace)*
January 24	Policy analysis	Cochran, et al Ch. 1*
January 29	Practicing policy analysis	Choose policy paper from Brightspace
January 31	Fairness and ethics in public policy	Brightspace folder*
February 5	Cont.	Ethical Reasoning Quiz #1
February 7	Microeconomic Policy	Cochran, et al Ch. 3*
February 12	Cont.	Practice Brief Due
February 14	Library session	
February 19	Macroeconomic Policy	Cochran, et al Ch. 4* Policy Report Topic and Sources Due
February 21	Cont.	Ethical Reasoning Quiz #2
February 26	Energy and Environmental Policy	Cochran, et al Ch. 5*

February 28	Criminal Justice Policy	Cochran, et al Ch. 6*
March 5	Cont.	
March 7	Practicing policy analysis	Policy Report Background Due
March 12-14	No class, Spring Break	
March 19	Poverty in America	Ethical Analysis Paper Due
March 21	Social Security and Welfare	Cochran, et al Ch. 7*
March 26	Health care policy	Cochran, et al Ch. 8*
March 28	Legal and Social Equality	Cochran, et al Ch. 10*
April 2	Cont.	Ethical Reasoning Quiz #3
April 4	No class, professor at conference	Policy Report Paper Due by 5 pm
April 9	Education Policy	Cochran, et al Ch. 9*
April 11	No class, CSA Day	
April 16	Foreign Policy	Cochran, et al. Ch. 12*
April 18	TBA+	
April 23	TBA+	Ethical Reasoning Quiz #4
April 25	Policy Report Presentations #1	Policy Report Brief Due
Monday, April 29 from 1-4 pm	Policy Report Presentations #2	

+ TBA Days

On April 18 and 23 we will discuss policy topics that the class is interested in. We will choose these topics on March 28 so I have enough time to prepare for them. Here is a list of possible topics, though I am open to other ideas:

1. Guns: should we make this a national, instead of a state issue?
2. Nuclear policy: are we comfortable with nuclear power plants? Do we need so many nuclear weapons?
3. Agricultural policy: subsidies?
4. Food policy: GMOs?
5. Abortion and birth control
6. Religion in the public sphere
7. LGBTQ issues (trans people in the military, adoption, blood donation, etc.)
8. Immigration and/or refugees

Also, there may be policies within topics that we don't get to; for example, when we talk about health care, we likely won't get to vaccinations or euthanasia. Therefore, we could also use these extra days to go deeper into a topic we've already touched on.

Course Policies

Letter Grade Requirements	A: 900-1000 points B: 800-899 points C: 700-799 points D: 600-699 points F: 599 or fewer points I moved to a point system in order to offer clarity at all times in the course as to what you need to do to achieve the grade you want. This also means
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	there will be NO rounding; the points you get = the letter grade listed here, period.
Extra Credit	Any extra credit will be offered at my discretion.
Makeup Work	Papers and reading notes may be turned in late, and will lose 10% each day they are late. Ethical Reasoning Quizzes and other in-class activities cannot be made up. Similarly, the Policy Report Presentations will be done on our final class day and exam period, so they cannot be made up.
Inclement Weather	You can expect for us to hold class unless the school closes due to unsafe conditions. You can check your Meredith email and/or the Meredith website or Facebook page for school closure messages. However, I do not want you to risk your life to get to class- final judgment on this matter rests in your hands.
Food, Drink, Laptops, Cell Phones	Food and drink will be allowed so long as they do not become distracting. Laptops will be allowed for note taking, but I reserve the right to ask you to put it away if you clearly are not taking notes or otherwise working on class work. Cell phone usage is banned during class time except for extreme emergencies.
Classroom Citizenship	We will have lots of discussion in this course, and politics is by nature highly contentious. However, it is essential that every student be polite and courteous to other students, even if they are expressing views that offend or anger you. I will encourage scholarly debate of justifiable opinions, but not disparaging remarks or personal attacks. If I feel you have crossed the line, you will be asked to leave class and your participation points will be marked down.
Course Drop Dates	If you decide you cannot complete this course for whatever reason, you may withdraw. You must initiate this process with the Registrar's Office, I cannot do it for you. If you fail to meet the last drop date, you will receive a grade for this course, usually an "F". Last day to drop without a "W": Tuesday, January 15, 2019 Last day to drop with a "W": Wednesday, March 27, 2019
Meredith Honor Code	We, the Meredith Community, are committed to developing and affirming in each student a sense of personal honor and responsibility. Uncompromising honesty and forthrightness are essential elements of this commitment. The Honor System is a method by which individual honors are protected and maintained. Any dishonorable action will be regarded as a violation of this commitment, and corrective action will be taken. If I am in violation of the Honor Code, to prevent jeopardizing the Honor System or weakening our system of self-government, I have an obligation to report myself to the proper authorities. If I am aware of a violation of the Honor System by another student, I shall call this matter to the attention of that student as a violation of responsibility to the community. In choosing Meredith College, I am accepting the Honor System as a way of life. As a Meredith student, I am responsible for insuring that the Honor System is at all times carried out.

Disability Statement	Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. In order to receive accommodations, students must go through the Counseling Center/Disability Services office. Disability Services is located in Carroll Hall and can be reached at (919)760-8427 or disabilityservices@meredith.edu . For additional information see the Disability Services website .
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The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.