

**PUBP501: Policy and Organizational Analysis**  
**Fall 2003**  
**Professor Mayer**  
**jmayer4@gmu.edu**

**Course Objective**

What are the basic skills necessary for the analysis of public policy? How does one go about acquiring them? The answers to these two questions form the core of this course. Analysis of policies and organizations requires a multiplicity of skills. Students in this course will be exposed to a broad array of them at the basic level. Students will also be expected to be deft oral and written presenters of the results of their analyses. Finally, while the emphasis will be on understanding quantitative analysis more than upon performing it, students will be expected to master basic numeric techniques in Excel, in an accompanying on-line course.

**Case Study Pedagogy**

Students will be expected to learn using the case study method as well as the more traditional lecture method. The core text, *Public Policy Praxis*, is a case study book, containing several assignments. Case study pedagogy can involve simulation, creativity, and teamwork. Students must be willing to work independently. The case of tobacco policy, as outlined in the book *Up In Smoke*, will also serve as a large case to be examined. Finally, a group project involving the entire class focusing on a hot topic in local public policy will also be used.

**Books:**

Analyzing Public Policy, by Dipak Gupta (Hereafter G)  
Public Policy Praxis, by Clemons and McBeth (Hereafter CM)  
Up In Smoke, by Derthick (Hereafter D)

**Course Topics**

Each course topic is expected to take up approximately one week's worth of lecture and reading. Some will naturally run longer, others a bit less, depending on the class. The instructor will make clear at the end of each week's class what readings will be expected for next time. For this reason, you should remain in email contact with another student if you miss a class, so that you know the reading assignment.

I. Introduction to Public Policy and Organizational Analysis

Ch 1, G

Ch 1 CM

II. The Policy Process

Ch 3 G

Ch 4 CM

III. Tools of Basic Economic Analysis

Ch 2 G

Ch 1 D

IV. Cost Benefit and “Rational” Analysis

Ch 14 G

Ch 2-3 D

V. Bureaucratic Politics and Organizational Theory

Ch 4-5 D

VI. Basic Statistics

Ch 5, G

Excel Modules

Ch 6-7 D

VII. Probability and Hypothesis Testing

Ch 6, G

Ch 8-9 D

VIII. Data Sources (Tobacco Case)

Ch 7, G

Derthick—Finish

IX. Survey Research: Limits and Benefits

274-286 CM

149-164 G

X. Presenting, Projecting and Other Tools of Analysis

Ch 8-9 G

Ch 8 CM

XI. Non-Quantitative Methodologies

Ch 6 CM

XII. The Policy Analysis Process: Five Steps

Ch 5 CM

XIII. Game Theory and Rational Choice Modeling

Ch 13 G

XIV. Presentations

Assignments:

Assignment. Drug Policy in Waterville  
2-3 pages

Assignment: Stakeholder Analysis in Rural America  
2-3 pages

Assignment: Second Bite Analysis  
2-3 pages

### **Group Policy Analysis and Advocacy**

Students in the course will be asked to join one of two groups studying the recent controversy over placing a baseball stadium in Northern Virginia. Each group will be the hypothetical public policy consulting team for one side of the controversy. The pro-stadium side will be working for the consortium of investors who want to bring the team to Northern Virginia. The anti-stadium side will be working for a coalition of civic groups, activists, and environmentalists who oppose baseball in Northern Virginia (for a diversity of reasons).

Each side will be responsible for producing a 15 page study of the issue, which will use public policy methods studied in this class to make the case for their side. The report should be accompanied by a 1 page executive summary. There should also be a 20 minute presentation of the report, in front of the class, as well as an invited guest. The project director should also complete a description of the process used, from 3-5 pages in length, including a discussion of the challenges faced at each of the five steps of the policy making process.

The pro side should produce a report giving the major reasons a stadium will be an asset to Northern Virginia. They should also rank order the five sites under consideration, and defend their choices.

The anti-side should produce a report explaining why a stadium is not in the region's interest. They should also specifically address the adequacy of the five sites under consideration.

It will probably be helpful for the advocacy teams to divide up the work into roles. This is not to say that a member's role limits their participation. Everyone should be expected to pitch in to the various components as necessary.

Researchers—responsible for acquiring sufficient data on the local sites, the status of the bids from other localities, the interests of Major League Baseball, the players, the owners, the various counties, any polling data that has been done in the area. They are also responsible for acquiring general and historical information on stadium financing plans in other areas and other sports, as well as the whole question of what counties and cities

gain from sports franchises. Remember that a good researcher will have mastered the data that supports the opposing side as well as the material that support their own side.

Writers—responsible for the sections of the report, and the executive summary.

Presenters—responsible for the 20 minute presentation. It will be graded for professionalism, astute and seamless use of technology, persuasiveness, and content.

Project Director—responsible for deciding how many members each team needs, coordinating the work, setting deadlines, and making sure that they are met. This will require management skills and diplomacy. Remember that the work has to be done sequentially: nothing can be written until the research is well underway, a presentation cannot be designed until the content is at least somewhat known, etc.

Other assignments: There will be exercises assigned from the Gupta book, as well as possible assignments on the Excel module.

## Grades

Your grade will be computed based on the following formula:

*Midterm:* 20%  
*Final* 30%  
*Case Studies* 10%X3=30%  
*Stadium Case* 10%  
*Participation* 10%

Participation will include the instructor's subjective assessment of your attendance and grasp of the readings, your work on the smaller homework assignments, and your demonstrated desire to master the fundamentals of policy and organizational analysis.

## Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Students are expected to obey the standard norms of academic integrity. All work should be their own, and should be appropriately cited. Any violations of these norms will result in a zero on the assignment at question, at a minimum. Other penalties are also possible.

## Deadlines

Work that is late will be lowered a grade for each day it is delayed. However, no matter how late, an assignment will not receive a zero; it will always be better to turn in an assignment late than to accept a zero on an assignment.