

**Barnard College**  
**Dept. of Political Science**

Power, Politics and Policymaking  
BC3210x  
Spring 2008

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Office Hours: Tuesday 12-2 PM, and by appointment.

**Course Description**

This course investigates the question of government performance by examining the intersection of people, organizational structure and politics. How is the *public will* translated into public policy by the individuals who make up government? How do choices in organizational structure affect the implementation of policy? Why is government failure (of people, policies or organizations) hard to predict, and sometimes harder to fix? Using readings, policy exercises and case studies, the class will critically analyze the question of why some government policies and programs work, while others do not. While this class serves as an introduction to theories of public policy, bureaucracy and organization, the focus of the class is on understanding the exercise of public power and the policy outcomes that are produced.

**Class Participation**

An overview of the readings for the week will be covered at the beginning of each class. The rest of the class time will focus on answering the questions for the week, as well as the broader questions and themes that are our focus for the semester. Please keep in mind that these questions are a start, not an end, to our discussion. Students share a responsibility in ensuring that class time is used productively. You must prepare for class by reading the assignments and thinking about the issues and questions they raise before coming to class.

**Work Product Requirements**

**Reading summary**

Each student will produce a summary of at least two readings that compares/contrasts one reading with another. The summary will be at least 3 pages long.

**Policy Memos**

Two 3 to 5 page policy memos are required for this class. Each policy memo will discuss a policy program or organization from two out of the three case study areas covered in class: *Crime and Criminal Justice Policy*; *Poverty and Social Welfare Policy*; or, *Cities and Urban Renewal Policy*. Instructions for preparation of the memos will be distributed in class.

**Oral Presentation and Final paper**

The last three class sessions will be spent on student presentations. Each student will give an oral and written presentation of a policy memo of her or his choice. Instructions for this oral presentation will be given to students by the instructor. A final paper 10 page paper based on your oral presentation and policy paper will also be required.

## Grading

|                                       |             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Class Participation                   | 10%         |
| Reading Summary                       | 15%         |
| Due February 23 <sup>rd</sup>         |             |
| Policy Memos                          |             |
| 2 @15% each                           | 30%         |
| Memo #1 due by March 11 <sup>th</sup> |             |
| Memo #2 due by March 30 <sup>th</sup> |             |
| Oral Presentation                     | 20%         |
| Final Examination Paper               | <u>25%</u>  |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>100%</b> |

## Course Learning Objectives

At the end of the course you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the American public policy process, including the structure of political decision making, the role of institutional and organizational structure, and the impact of individual behavior.
- Discuss how the public policy process is shaped and contributes to an understanding of current policy issues.
- Analyze current policy challenges in with regard to political and institutional context and understanding.
- Apply theories of political behavior and structure to compare, distinguish and evaluate public policy.
- Synthesize reading materials and lecture notes to write two short policy memos, which will increase your discursive and critical thinking skills.

## Course Readings

Books available at BookCulture bookstore, and at Barnard Reserves. Other readings available on CourseWorks course site as indicated by (CW). If necessary, reading assignments may be modified by instructor.

Margo Anderson, *The American Census* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998)

Fred R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, *Agendas & Instability in American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993)

Anthony Flint, *Wrestling with Moses* (New York: Random House, 2009)

Michael Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse* (New York: Basic Books, 1996)

Kenneth Jackson and Hillary Ballon, *Robert Moses and the Modern City: the Transformation of New York* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008)

Steven Maynard-Moody & Michael Musheno, *Cops, Counselors and Teachers*

Lisa Miller, *The Perils of Federalism: Race, Poverty and the Politics of Crime Control* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2008)

Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare* (New York, Vintage Press, 1993)

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998)

## Course schedule - Summary

- Section 1                      January 21<sup>st</sup>/26<sup>th</sup>  
What is Power?
- Section 2                      January 28<sup>th</sup> & Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>  
Setting the Scope of Conflict
- Section 3                      Feb 9<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>  
Agenda setting
- Section 4                      Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> & March 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Urban Renewal
- Section 5                      March 4<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup>  
Implementing Policy – individuals
- Section 6                      March 23<sup>rd</sup>/25<sup>th</sup>/ 30<sup>th</sup>  
Social Welfare
- Section 7                      April 6<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>  
Implementing Policy - organizations
- Section 8                      April 12<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup>  
Crime and Criminal Justice
- Section 9 (April 22<sup>nd</sup>/27<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup>)  
Oral Presentations & Class Conclusion

## Course Schedule – Detail

- Section 1                      January 21<sup>st</sup>/26<sup>th</sup>**  
What is Power?  
Bachrach and Baratz, “The Two Faces of Power” (CW)  
Mills, *The Power Elite* (CW)  
Nelson W. Polsby, “How to Study Community Power: The Pluralist Alternative,” *Journal of Politics*, 22 (3): 474-484

- State power  
Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, Chapter 1 and 2  
Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, “Panopticism” (CW)  
Anderson, *American Census*, chapters 1, 4-7

- Section 2                      January 28<sup>th</sup> & Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>**  
Setting the Scope of Conflict  
Schattschneider, *The Semi-sovereign People*, Chapters 1, 2 & 4 (CW)  
Baumgartner & Jones, *Agendas & Instability*, Part 1

- Section 3                      Feb 9<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>**  
Agenda setting  
Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives*, Chapter 1 (Overview) and Chapter 3 (Outside In) (CW)  
Baumgartner & Jones, *Agendas & Instability*, Part 2  
Miller, *Perils of Federalism*, Chapters 1-4

No Class – February 18<sup>th</sup>

Reading Summary - Due February 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Section 4**                      **Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> & March 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Urban Renewal

Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, Chapters 3 to 5

Cases Study: New York

Flint, *Wrestling with Moses*, TBA

Jackson, *Robert Moses*, TBA

The case of Albany, NY

<http://www.bluffton.edu/~sullivanm/empiresp/empiresp.html>

**Section 5**                      **March 4<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup>**

Implementing Policy – individuals

Maynard-Moody, *Cops, Teachers, Counselors*, TBA

Lipsky, *Street Level Bureaucrats* (selections) (CW)

Arendt, "Eichmann in Jerusalem" (CW)

No Class - March 11<sup>th</sup>

Policy Memo Due – March 11<sup>th</sup>

No Class - March 16<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> (Spring break)

**Section 6**                      **March 23<sup>rd</sup>/25<sup>th</sup>/ 30<sup>th</sup>**

Social Welfare

Michael Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*, TBA

Piven and Cloward, *Regulating the Poor*, TBA

Case Study: Foster Care

Dennis Saffran, "Fatal Preservation" *City Journal*

[http://www.city-journal.org/html/7\\_3\\_fatal.html](http://www.city-journal.org/html/7_3_fatal.html)

Bernstein *The Lost Children of Wilder* (CW)

Leslie Kaufman and Benjamin Weiser, "A History of Neglect, *New York Times*, November 2007

Policy Memo Due - March 30<sup>th</sup>

**Section 7**                      **April 6<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>**

Implementing Policy - organizations

Pressman & Wildavsky, *Implementation*, Chapters 3-5 (CW)

Adams, *Unmasking Administrative Evil*, Chapters 1 and 6 (CW)

**Section 8**                      **April 12<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup>**

Crime and Criminal Justice

Miller, *Perils of Federalism*, Chapters 5-7

Case Study: Broken Windows

George Kelling and James Q. Wilson, "Broken Windows," *Atlantic Monthly*, 1982 (CW)

Timothy Lynch, "We Own the Night: Amadou Diallo's Deadly Encounter with New York City's Street Crime Units." Cato Institute Briefing Papers #56  
<http://www.cato.org/pubs/briefs/bp56.pdf>

"The New York City Police Department's 'Stop & Frisk' Practices: A Report to the People of the State of New York From The Office Of The Attorney General"

[http://www.oag.state.ny.us/press/reports/stop\\_frisk/stop\\_frisk.html](http://www.oag.state.ny.us/press/reports/stop_frisk/stop_frisk.html)

COPS Program Spurs Community Policing Nationwide, According to New Urban Institute Evaluation, The Urban Institute

<http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=900043>

**Section 9 (April 22<sup>nd</sup>/27<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup>)**

Oral Presentations & Class Conclusion

**Final Paper Due – TBD**