

Public Policy Analysis and Design

Basic Information

Instructors	Martin Nekola (course leader, nekola@centrum.cz), Arnošt Veselý
Semester	Fall 2010
Class hours	Monday, 11:30 – 14:15

Course Description

This course is designed to help you learn how to write policy-analytic report in order to identify some public policy problem and prepare, design and select public policy or program to mitigate or solve it. The course will focus mainly on analytical approaches and methods that are intended to guide policy design and structure policy choice. You will hone your ability to work in team, analyze policy issues and develop concise reports of your findings and recommendations.

Traditional policy analysis starts with a careful definition of the policy problem, proceeds through the set of steps listed below, and culminates with the policy report. The course will spend time on each of these steps.

- 1) Define and frame a policy problem.
- 2) Assemble evidence, identify the key stakeholders.
- 3) Identify or construct alternatives.
- 4) Identify and select the relevant criteria for assessment.
- 5) Project and assess the outcomes for each alternative.
- 6) Confront the trade-offs.
- 7) Recommend the best alternative.
- 8) Tell your story – communicate your recommendation and the reasoning behind it to a client/decision-maker.

At the end, the course will also give attention to the implementation, monitoring of policy outcomes and impact evaluation.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Policy analysis is the art, craft, and science of providing problem-solving advice to managers, policy-makers, or citizens. Policy analysis requires several distinct sets of skills: technical understanding of analytical tools, understanding the policy context, and the ability to produce and communicate practical advice. Overall aim of the course is to increase your capacity to contribute in identifying, analyzing and assessing policy problems and options and help you to generate arguments for alternative policy options.

Students will gain experience in:

- Defining, assessing, and describing policy problems.
- Identifying policy goals and criteria to assess possible strategies.
- Crafting appropriate policy options by borrowing, adapting, and creating.
- Analyzing and predicting the effects of alternative policy options.
- Communicating policy advice in written and oral presentations.
- Considering barriers to policy implementation.
- Designing evaluation of policy/program impact.

Readings (main textbooks of the course)

- Bardach, E. 2000. *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*. New York : Seven Bridges Press.
- Dunn, W. 2004. *Public Policy Analysis*. 3rd edition. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Patton, C. V. and Sawicki, D. S. 1993. *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning*. 2nd Edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Extracts from these books and all other required readings listed in the schedule will be provided in the course electronically. Students will also be provided with individual readings related to its project topic.

Assignments and Grading Policy

The course project is designed to allow you to gain experience by completing an individual policy analysis project. Projects (covering a policy issue and hypothetical client) will be randomly assigned to students at the first session. Based on the project statement, each student will **define a policy problem till 5th session** (4.10.) at the latest. Before he/she can continue with the project, the definition has to be approved by course leader.

Each student is required to write an interim project report and a final project paper. Students are also expected to continuously report its progress to instructor, especially in case of any difficulties. Several sessions will be devoted to review of progress in teams' project and discussion of practical issues (see course schedule).

1. **Interim project report** (5-8 pages); due 25th October 2010 by e-mail.

Paper summarizes the important background information necessary to understand chosen problem. You should provide appropriate theories, statistics, and political context that will allow your (imaginary) client to assess the nature and severity of the problem. It also should provide a list of the policy goals and criteria and possible policy solutions (options or strategies). It does not need to include an assessment of how well each policy option would meet the criteria (that will be included in that final paper).

2. **Final project paper** (approx. 15-20 pages); draft summary due 27th November 2010 by e-mail; final version due 13th December 2010; both print copy and electronic file (CD, e-mail).

The final paper should incorporate a new version of the problem definition and description of the policy goals, criteria, and options. In addition, the final version includes a full assessment and prediction of how each policy option might fare by the criteria. The heart of your analysis is assessment of which policies and measures would be most effective and the trade-offs inherent in choosing one option over another. Do not forget to include concise 1 page executive summary.

Requirements not completed on time will automatically receive a grade off unless: a) there is sufficient reason for the lateness; b) course leader have been consulted prior to the time that the requirement is due; and c) course leader agree to the lateness and the time the requirement will be fulfilled. All three conditions must be present.

In the **interim oral presentation** (1st November 2010), you should briefly summarize the problem, objectives, policy goals and criteria and possible policy solutions. In the **final oral presentation** (6th December 2010), you should briefly summarize the problem, objectives, options, and the results of your analysis. The oral presentation is strictly limited to 15 minutes and participation of all team members is expected.

Students should actively participate on all sessions. The texts listed in the course schedule should be read **before each session**. The sessions have the form of a combination of lecture and seminar. Two absences are tolerated during the semester, but the instructor should always be informed about the reasons for absence.

Important deadlines

- 4.10. – Problem definition (approved by course leader)
- 25.10. – Interim project report
- 27.11. – Draft of final project paper
- 13.12. – Final project paper

Grading

Activity / Outputs	Weight
Interim project report (and oral presentation)	20%
Final project paper	40%
Final oral presentation	20%
Home exercises (written reports)	10%
Class participation	10%
Total	100

Course Schedule

#	Date	Topic / Assignment
		Analyzing public policy – the policy process and the framework for policy analysis
1.	6.9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patton and Sawicki 1993, Chapter 2 – The Policy Analysis Process (46-69) - Jann and Wegrich 2007 – Theories of the Policy Cycle - Akindele and Olaopa 2004 – A Theoretical Review of Core Issues on Public Policy and its Environment - MacRae 1992, Chapter 4 – Policy Advice and Political Science <p><i>In-class exercise: Introduction, expectations and problems</i> <i>Assignment: Policy projects</i></p>
		Aims of policy analysis; Type of policy analysis and analyst roles; Clients and products of policy analysis
2.	13.9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walker 2000 – Policy Analysis: A Systematic Approach to Supporting Policymaking in the Public Sector - Mayer, van Daalen and Bots 2004 – Perspectives on policy analyses: a framework for understanding and design - Musso, Biller and Myrtle 2000 – Tradecraft: Professional Writing as Problem Solving - Dunn 2004, Appendix 1 – The Policy Issue Paper

#	Date	Topic / Assignment
		<i>In-class exercise: Advice vs. research; Types of clients</i>
3.	20.9.	Problem definition and structuring (AV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bardach 2000, Chapter 1 – Define the Problem (p. 1-7) - Dunn 2004, Chapter 3 – Structuring Policy Problems - Veselý 2008, Problem Tree: A Problem Structuring Heuristic
4.	27.9.	Data, information, and evidence in policy analysis; Data gathering methods and techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bardach 2000, Chapter 2 – Assemble Some Evidence - Bardach 2000, PART II – Gathering Data for Policy Research - (optional) Patton and Sawicky 1993, Chapter 3 – Crosscutting Methods
		<i>Home exercise 1: Available evidence for the policy project</i>
5.	4.10.	Identification of key stakeholders, political feasibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varvasovszky and Brugha 2000 – A Stakeholder Analysis - Howlett and Ramesh 2003, Chapter 3 – Policy Actors and Institutions (in <i>Studying Public Policy</i>, pp. 52-86) - May 1986 – Politics and Policy Analysis
		<i>In-class exercise: Key stakeholders</i>
		<i>Project presentation: Policy problem definition and available evidence</i>
6.	11.10.	Identification and construction of alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bardach 2000, Chapter 3 – Construct the Alternatives - Bardach 2000, Appendix A – Things Government Do - Patton and Sawicki 1993, Chapter 6 – Identifying Alternatives - Howlett and Ramesh 2003, Chapter 4 – Policy Instruments (in <i>Studying Public Policy</i>, pp. 87-117)
		<i>In-class exercise: Policy alternatives</i>
7.	18.10.	Goals and criteria formulation (AV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bardach 2000, Chapter 4 – Select the Criteria - Patton and Sawicki 1993, Chapter 5 – Establishing Evaluation Criteria
-	25.10.	Mid-term Break
8.	1.11.	Presentation of interim projects; Revision and discussion <p><i>Home exercise 2: A short (constructive) critique of a colleague's report</i></p>
9.	8.11.	Forecasting expected outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bardach 2000, Chapter 5 – Project the Outcomes - Dunn 2004, Chapter 4 – Forecasting Expected Policy Outcomes <p><i>Presentation: A short (constructive) critique of a colleague's report</i></p>
10.	15.11.	Policy choice and recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bardach 2000, Chapter 6 – Confront the Trade-offs

#	Date	Topic / Assignment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bardach 2000, Chapter 7 – Decide! - Dunn 2004, Chapter 5 – Recommending Preferred Policies <p><i>Project presentation: Progress report (5 minutes)</i> <i>Home exercise 2: Bad policy paper</i></p>
		<p>Policy arguments and communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bardach 2000, Chapter 8 – Tell Your Story - Dunn 2004, Chapter 8 – Developing Policy Arguments - Dunn 2004, Chapter 9 – Communicating Policy Analysis
11.	22.11.	<p>Implementation - getting things done (AV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matland 1995 – Synthesizing the Implementation Literature: The Ambiguity-Conflict Model of Policy Implementation - Birkland 2001 –Policy Implementation and Policy Failure (in M. E. Sharpe, An Introduction to the Policy Process : Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making, pp. 177-187)
12.	29.11.	<p>Outcomes monitoring and impact evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dunn 2004, Chapter 6 – Monitoring Observed Policy Outcomes
13.	6.12.	<p>Presentation of final projects; Concluding discussion</p>