

PLSC 216

Public Policy Analysis

Albion College - Fall 2019

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m. (Rob 406)

Dr. Dawid Tatarczyk (517-629-0664), dtatarczyk@albion.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:20-1:20 or by appointment, Robinson Rm. 303

Course catalog description

Public policy analysis will focus on how government decides to address social problems and the stages of the policy-making process involved. Special attention will be paid to the methods of program evaluation. Substantive policy areas are discussed, with an emphasis on social welfare, health, education, urban, and environmental protection policies

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to understand and follow the College's guidelines regarding academic integrity: "As an academic community, Albion College is firmly committed to honor and integrity in the pursuit of knowledge. Therefore, as a member of this academic community, each student acknowledges responsibility for this or her actions and commits to the highest standards of integrity. In doing so, each student makes a covenant with the college not to engage in any form of academic dishonesty, fraud, cheating or theft" (Albion Catalog). Suspected violations will be reported to the student and the college officials immediately. Confirmed instances of academic dishonesty may result in failure of the course and other consequences as outlined by the College. If you are unsure about whether your actions may fall under these guidelines, please do not hesitate to speak with me about your concerns.

Course requirements

Your grade will be determined by:

- Midterm exam (35%),
- Final exam (35%),
- Participation (30%) will consist of the following components:
 - Attendance (10%) – being in class is crucial for your learning and obviously if you are not in class you can't participate. Since we are meeting twice a week, I am allowing you to miss two substantive classes (or one week of new material) without a penalty. Missing review sessions will not count against you, although these are very important for your mid-term and final exam preparations. Therefore, if you miss more than two classes your attendance grade will not be higher than 3.7. If you miss more than four classes, 3.3 is the highest grade you will be able to earn; and so on.
 - Remarks in class (10%) – these amounts to offering critical comments or questions and sharing your point of view with other students.
 - Completion of in-class activities (10%) – throughout the semester, I will ask you to complete a variety of exercise including but not limited to group work activities, individual activates, short papers (1 page) etc.

Grading Scale and Formulas

This hypothetical example demonstrates how your final grade will be calculated:

1. Let's say your three scores were:
 - a. Mid-term = 3.40 (worth 35%)
 - b. Final = 3.60 (worth 35%)
 - c. Participation = 3.00 (worth 30%)Your overall numeric grade would be 3.35.
2. Your numeric grade is then applied to Albion's scale:

Albion's Scale	Score Needed
4.0	3.8 and above
3.7	3.79-3.50
3.3	3.49-3.15
3.0	3.14-2.85
2.7	2.84-2.50
2.3	2.49-2.15
2.0	2.14-1.85
1.7	1.84-1.50
1.3	1.49-1.15
1.0	1.14-0.85
0.0	0.84 and below

3. Therefore, 3.35 would translate to 3.3 on your official transcript.

Textbook

Mintrom, Michael. *Public Policy: Inversing For A Better World*. (Oxford UP, 2019)

* Additional readings will be distributed via email

Other notes

- Be sure to regularly check your albion.edu email for course announcements.
- Please refrain from using technology – cellphones, laptops – during the class period.
- Audio recordings are not allowed.
- If the vocabulary of politics is unfamiliar to you, it may be a good idea for you to read political coverage in a major daily newspaper (New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal), other online news source (CNN, FOX, Daily Beast, or Bloomberg) or watch the NewsHour on PBS.
- Please bring your textbooks to class
- You are responsible for contacting appropriate offices if you need special accommodations for exams. I need to be informed about such events at least two weeks in advance.
- Be respectful of others

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

27 August. Introduction

Tuesday. Introduction

Thursday. No Class – Dr. Tatarczyk at a conference

Week 2

3 September. The purpose and nature of public policy

Read Mintrom Chapter 1

Tuesday.

Thursday.

Week 3

10 September. The policy-making process

Read Mintrom, Chapter 2

Tuesday. Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict*, Ch. 1, (Cambridge UP, 1992).

Thursday.

Week 4

17 September. Public policies as investments

Read Mintrom, Chapter 3

Tuesday. Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Ch. 1 & 2, (Uni. of Chicago Press, 1982).

Thursday.

Week 5

24 September. Public infrastructure

Read Mintrom, Chapter 4

Tuesday. Steven Cheung, Roofs or stars: the stated intents and actual effects of a rents ordinance

Thursday.

Week 6

1 October. Defense and homeland security

Read Mintrom, Chapter 5

Tuesday. In class movie

Thursday. Chalmers Johnson, excerpts from *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*.

Week 7

8 October.

Tuesday. Mid-term review

Thursday. Mid-term exam

Week 8

15 October. Public schooling
Read Mintrom, Chapter 6
Tuesday. No Class – Fall Break
Thursday.

Week 9

22 October. Health care
Read Mintrom, Chapter 7
Tuesday.
Thursday.

Week 10

29 October. Poverty alleviation
Read Mintrom, Chapter 8
Tuesday. In class movie
Thursday.

Week 11

5 November. Criminal justice
Read Mintrom, Chapter 9
Tuesday.
Thursday.

Week 12

12 November. Science funding
Read Mintrom, Chapter 10
Tuesday.
Thursday.

Week 13

19 November. Environmental protection
Read Mintrom, Chapter 11
Tuesday.
Thursday.

Week 14

26 November. Policy legacies
Read Mintrom, Chapter 12
Tuesday.
Thursday. No Class – Thanksgiving Break

Week 15

3 December

Tuesday. Final exam review

Tuesday. Final exam review cont.

Final Exam

Thursday, 12 December from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

***I reserve the right to amend this syllabus**
