

Syllabus Public Policy Analysis Spring 2025

1. General information about the course

Course title: Public Policy Analysis

Course code: UME2209

ECTS (number of credits): 5

Year and Semester: Semester 2, 1st Year

2. General information about the instructor

Instructor's name: Bianca Radu

Contact information: bianca.radu@fspac.ro

Office hours: We can schedule a meeting by appointment.

3. Course description

a. Course description:

The analytical framework used in this course is inter- and multi-disciplinary. The course builds such an understanding of the complexity of policy problems in which the different branches of economics and social sciences have equal roles. This is a course about preparing, designing and selecting public policy (public strategies, programs and projects). It is mainly on analytical approaches and methods that are intended to guide policy design and structure policy choice: argumentation analysis, to understand, evaluate and construct policy arguments, including considerations about the values and other assumptions that are used.

The course looks at approaches and techniques as they are used and misused in a political society with plenty of examples about how they function in practice. This will demonstrate the fundamental limits upon, as well as specific roles for, prescriptive policy analysis. Policy making is a social (multi-actor) process involving a battle of ideas and struggles over resources, with both competitive and collaborative interactions between various groups who have diverse beliefs, interests and information. Throughout the course parallel to learning about the rationalistic policy analysis a more political perspective is used to reveal those hidden assumptions operating in practice that enable politicians to gain support for their cause.

b. General objective of the discipline - The objective of this course is to assist students to learn about, discuss and come to understand the crucial components of public policy analysis and providing advice to communities.

c. Specific objectives:

- To study fundamental concepts and frameworks of public policy analysis;
- To study analysis techniques for advising a decision maker to adopt the best course of action
- To apply the analytical tools learned in the course to analyze real public policies or decision situations in an international context;
- To conduct an evaluation of a public policy, identify problems and advice decision-makers on how to address the problems; and
- To develop skills for conducting a public policy analysis and to work in team.

4. Required bibliography

1. Anderson, J., *Public Policymaking*, 7th edition, Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2011.
2. Boardman, A.E., Greenberg, D.H., Vining, A.D. and Weimer, D.L., *Cost-benefit Analysis*, Boston: Prentice Hall, 2011.

3. Clemons, R.S. and McBeth, M.K., *Public Policy Praxis. A Case Approach for Understanding Policy and Analysis*, New York: Routledge, 2020.
4. Dunn, W.N., *Public Policy Analysis. An Introduction*, 4th edition, Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2008.
5. Howlett, M., *Designing Public Policies. Principles and Instruments*, London: Routledge, 2011.
6. Knoepfel, P., Larrue, C., Varone, F. and Hill, M., *Public Policy Analysis*, Bristol: The Policy Press, 2007.
7. McConnell, A., *Understanding Policy Success. Rethinking Public Policy*, New York: Palgrave Mcmillan, 2010.
8. OECD, 'Building an Institutional Framework for Regulatory Impact Analysis', 2008.
9. Shapiro, S., *Analysis and Public Policy. Successes, Failures and Directions for Reform*, Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2016
10. Stone, D., *Policy Paradox. The Art of Political Decision Making*, revised edition, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002.
11. Weimer, D.L. and Vining, A.R., *Policy Analysis*, 6th edition, New York: Routledge, 2017.

5. Topics and course schedule

Week	Topic/ Required and optional bibliography
Week 1	Introduction to the course Structure of the course, class requirements and evaluation of students' activity, required readings
Week 2	The Study of the Public Policy and the Stages of the Public Policy Process (The readings are mandatory for students who do not have an introductory course in Public Policy. The students should acquire a clear understanding of what public policies are, and of the stages of the public policy process.) Knoepfel, P., Larrue, C., Varone, F. and Hill, M., <i>Public Policy Analysis</i> , chapter 2, pp. 21-38 Howlett, M., <i>Designing Public Policies. Principles and Instruments</i> , chapter 2, pp. 15-28
Week 3	Defining policy analysis, Forms of policy analysis, Potential uses of policy analysis Dunn, W.N., <i>Public Policy Analysis. An Introduction</i> , 4 th edition, Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2008, pp. 1-15.
Week 4	Defining Public Policy Problems Stone, D., <i>Policy Paradox</i> , chapter 7, pp. 163-187 Case study: Clemons, R.S. and McBeth, M.K., <i>Public Policy Praxis. A Case Approach for Understanding Policy and Analysis</i> , Case study: The "Gig Economy" Case. Uber and Lyft from Boise to Burlington, pp. 39-47.
Week 5	Identifying the Causes of Public Policy Problems Stone, D., <i>Policy Paradox</i> , chapter 8, pp. 188-209 Optional bibliography: Patton, C., Sawicki, D. and Clark, J., <i>Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning</i> , chapter 4, pp. 140-168.
Week 6	Policy Actors and Their Interests. Stakeholder Analysis

	Stone, D., <i>Policy Paradox</i> , chapter 9, pp. 210-231 Clemons, R.S. and McBeth, M.K., <i>Public Policy Praxis. A Case Approach for Understanding Policy and Analysis</i> , chp. 1, pp. 1-38
Week 7	Equity When Deciding of Policy Alternatives Stone, D., <i>Policy Paradox</i> , chapter 2, pp. 35-60
Week 8	Identifying Policy Alternatives and Testing the Feasibility of Different Implementation Tools Howlett, M., <i>Designing Public Policies. Principles and Instruments</i> , London: Routledge, 2011. Weimer, D.L. and Vining, A.R., <i>Policy Analysis</i> , chp. 10, pp. 205-258
Week 9	Decision Making Process. Theories That Explain How Decisions are Made Anderson, J., <i>Public Policymaking. An Introduction</i> , chapter 4, pp. 125-164.
Week 10	Behavioral policy analysis. Libertarian paternalism Thaler, R.H. and Sunstein, <i>Nudge. Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness</i> , Yale University Press, 2008. Shapiro, S., <i>Analysis and Public Policy. Successes, Failures and Directions for Reform</i> , Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2016, chp. 6, pp. 105-119.
Week 11	Regulatory Impact Analysis OECD, 'Building an Institutional Framework for Regulatory Impact Analysis', 2008.
Week 12	Cost-Benefit Analysis Boardman, A.E., Greenberg, D.H., Vining, A.D. and Weimer, D.L., <i>Cost-benefit Analysis</i> , Boston: Prentice Hall, 2011.
Week 13	Evaluating Policy Success. Communicating the results of a public policy analysis McConnell, A., <i>Understanding Policy Success. Rethinking Public Policy</i> , chapter 2, pp. 29-54. Optional bibliography: McConnell, A., <i>Understanding Policy Success. Rethinking Public Policy</i> , chapter 4, pp. 81-101. Patton, C., Sawicki, D. and Clark, J., <i>Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning</i> , chapter 9, pp. 341-366.
Week 14	Presentations of students' final papers

6. Evaluation:

Final grade is composed of:

- **10% Active participation to class discussions** – Students are expected to read the readings before attending a course and actively participate in class discussions and the discussions of the case studies that students will be provided throughout the semester. In addition, students are expected to contribute to discussions on forums which will be created on Moodle. In each forum, students will be provided with a case study and will be required to answer a question.
- **10% Brief analysis of a Regulatory Impact Analysis** – students are required to identify a list of indicators to measure the impact (costs and benefits) of a new regulatory proposal on both the private companies/citizens and public institutions.
- **30% Individual paper** - Students will analyze the implementation of a government program to identify the problems that arose during the implementation and formulate some recommendations to improve the program
- **50% - written exam** (open questions from the theoretical concepts discussed throughout the semester)

7. Academic integrity

All assignments must be completed on your own. Any words, ideas, or data that you borrow from other people and include in your work must be properly documented using an acceptable scholarly citation format. Failure to acknowledge your sources or the contribution of others is plagiarism and will be punished appropriately. Points will be subtracted from the final grade if students submit paper late (half of the grade).

8. Optional bibliography:

1. Birkland, T., *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 2nd edition, New York: M.E. Sharp, 2005.
2. Ewen, M., *Public Policy. The Competitive Framework*, Victoria, Australia: Oxford University Press, 2006.
3. Kingdon, J., *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, 2nd edition, New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1995.
4. Skinner, D., *Introduction to Decision Analysis. A Practitioner's Guide to Improving Decision Quality*, 3rd edition, Sugar Land, TX: Probabilistic Publishing, 2009.