

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT PEMBROKE
Department of Political Science and Public Administration

PSPA 2190
Section: 001
Public Policy and Analysis

Fall 2008
3 Hours Credit
T R 11:00 – 12:15
Business Administration Room 218
William Albrecht, Ph.D.
Professor of Political Science & Public Administration

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The instructor pledges to teach this course under the university guidelines for the academic honor code. UNCP has a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. Students pledge to knowingly neither give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming a personal commitment to honor and integrity. You are instructed to read UNCP's Honor Code as found in the 2008-2009 Student Catalog. Included in that publication are rules and regulations governing student rights and responsibilities, the university judicial system, disciplinary sanctions, penalties, violations, and type of offenses.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the student to public policy analysis utilizing a political economy approach. Political economy is a branch of the social sciences that studies the interrelationships between political and economic institutions and processes. Throughout the semester students will examine a) the ways in which various forms of government affect the allocation of scarce resources in society through their laws and policies, and b) the ways in which the nature of the economic system and the behavior of people acting on their economic interests affects the form of government and the kinds of policies that get made (Johnson, 2000).

Students are expected to be active participants in class and should be prepared to discuss current public policy topics. Therefore, members ought to review websites, newspapers, magazines, and journals that will facilitate this process.

Objectives

1. To communicate the central insight of the political economy approach to policy analysis.
2. To illustrate the tensions between individual preferences and collective outcomes.
3. To describe the range of institutions that can be utilized in formulating public policy choices.
4. To utilize the political economy approach in analyzing the American political system.
5. To encourage critical thinking about implications on an individual and societal level.
6. To develop effective analytical, written, and oral communications skills.

Textbooks (Required)

Bickers, K.N. and William, J.T. 2001. Public Policy Analysis: A Political Economy Approach.

Sowell, T. 2008. Economic Facts and Fallacies.

In addition students will need to have access to a calculator, computer, and the internet.

TEACHING METHODS

Teaching methods will involve class lectures, pedagogical videos, discussions, and collaborations on oral and written work. On some occasions small groups will be formed in order to allow course participants to gain experience with “collective work.”

EVALUATION METHODS*

Final grades will be based on three exam scores, two quiz scores, a group project, and class participation.

Evaluation Method		Proportion of Final Grade
Examinations	Exam 1	15%
	Exam 2	20%
	Exam 3	25%
Quizzes	Two Out of Three Quizzes (Lowest Score Dropped)	10%
Group Project	Written Assignment	10%
	Presentation	05%
Class Participation	Including Inside/Outside Assignments	15%

* NOTE: No late work will be accepted under any conditions. This includes exams and quizzes. However, if either of the first two exams is missed the following exam score will be counted as 80% in replacing a missing score. No student may miss more than one exam. No replacement grade will be given for the final exam. You are responsible for any and all announcements made in class.

Grading Scale

94 -100= A

90 - 93 = A-

87 - 89 = B+

84 - 86 = B

80 - 83 = B-

77 - 79 = C+

74 - 76 = C

70 - 73 = C-

60 - 69 = D

< 60 = F

Examinations*

There will be three examinations in this course. The first exam will be approximately 1.25 hours in length of time and will most likely consist of multiple choice questions (50%) and short answer questions (50%). The second exam will also be approximately 1.25 hours in length of time and will most likely consist of multiple choice questions (50%) and short answer questions (50%). The final exam will be comprehensive, two hours in length of time, and will most likely consist of multiple choice and fill in the blank questions (50%) as well as written responses (50%) in the format of an essay or policy memo.

Quizzes

There will be three quizzes in this course. Each quiz will be UNANNOUNCED and may be given in a variety of formats including multiple choice questions, fill in the blank questions, short answers, or essay style responses. The lowest quiz score for each student will be dropped when determining final grades.

Group Assignment

Students will be assigned to small groups. All groups will develop a word processed 3-5 page paper on an assigned reading by Gary S. Becker using Thomas Patterson's format for Analytical Thinking as a guide. Beginning with the fourth week of the semester an assigned group will give a 10-15 minute PowerPoint presentation of their paper. Approximately 5 minutes will be allowed for comments and discussion. Groups must submit a hard copy of their paper one class period in advance to the instructor. Further instructions will be given in class.

Class Participation

The teaching methods for this course will emphasize "active learning" and include group discussions and assignments which may or may not be completed during class time. Consequently, attendance is mandatory and absences, for whatever reason, are likely to lower the final grade for an individual participant.

As an incentive fifteen-percent of a student's grade will be awarded in terms of class participation. The evaluation of this criterion will be a subjective assessment by the instructor and be based upon attendance, overall involvement, and the successful completion of assigned activities.

* The instructor reserves the right to alter the format of any examination. Exact examination formats will be announced in class prior to administration dates.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Dr. William Albrecht
Business Administration Building
Room 244

Office Hours

Tuesday 9:15 - 10:30
Thursday 9:15 - 10:30

And by Appointment

Contact Information

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ADA Academic Access Statement

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak directly to Disability Support Services and the instructor, as early in the semester (preferably within the first week) as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Please contact Disability Support Services, DF Lowry Building, Room 107, or call 910-521-6695 for an appointment.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course schedule lists required readings and “lecture and discussion topics” for each week. This schedule also includes **tentative examination dates**. The instructor reserves the right to alter the course schedule if necessary.

Week	Dates	*Readings, Lectures & Class Discussions, & Exam Dates
1	Aug 21 Aug 21	“Course Introduction” Sowell: Chapter 1
2	Aug 26 Aug 28	“Defining Public Policy: Relevant Concepts” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 1
3	Sep 02 Sep 04	“Defining Policy Analysis: Relevant Concepts” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 11; Sowell Chapter 2
4	Sep 09 Sep 11	“Analyzing Proposed Policies: Cost Benefit Analysis” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 2
5	Sep 16 Sep 18	“Democratic Governance & Public Policy” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 3; Sowell: Chapter 3
6	Sep 23 Sep 25	“Forms of Democracy & Implications for Public Policy” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 4; Examination 1: Sep 25
7	Sep 30 Oct 02	“The Problem of Collective Action” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 5; Sowell: Chapter 4
8	Oct 07 Oct 07	“Government & Collective Action Problems” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 6
9	Oct 14 Oct 16	“The Market As a Collective Action Mechanism” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 7; Sowell: Chapter 5
10	Oct 21 Oct 23	“Limitations of the Market” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 8
11	Oct 28 Oct 30	“Policy Analysis in The American Context” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 9; Sowell: Chapter 6; Examination 2: Oct 30
12	Nov 04 Nov 06	“Politics & Policy Choice” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 10
13	Nov 11 Nov 13	“The Bureaucracy” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 12
14	Nov 18 Nov 20	“Evaluating Existing Public Policies” Bickers & Williams: Chapter 13
15	Dec 02 Dec 04	“Reform of Public Policy & Course Conclusion” Sowell: Chapter 8
16	Dec 11 Dec 11	Final Examination 10:45 – 1:15

*In general, student readings are assigned one week ahead of lecture topics. Additional readings will be distributed or announced as assignments throughout the semester.

GROUP PROJECT AND PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

The table below lists the readings and the anticipated presentation dates. *All* class participants are expected to have read each essay even if they are not presenting.

Group	Date	Project Readings*
1	Sep 11	“Prosperity Will Rise Out of the Ashes”
2	Sep 11	“The Best Reason to Get People off the Dole”
3	Sep 18	“The Economic Approach to Fighting Crime
4	Sep 30	“Stiffer Jail Terms Will Make Gunmen More Gun-Shy”
5	Oct 07	“A Higher Cost of Giving is No Cause for Low Spirits”
6	Oct 16	“Revamp Welfare to Put Children First”
7	Oct 23	“Democracy is the Soil Where Capitalism Flourishes Best”
8	Nov 06	“More People are Saying Yes to Legalizing Drugs”
9	Nov 11	“Your Tax Dollars Are at Work on The Wrong Job”
10	Nov 20	“Change at the WhiteHouse Plus CA Change”
11	Dec 02	“To Root Out Corruption Root Out Big Government”
12	Dec 02	“Tax Free Bonds for Tuition, A Step in The Wrong Direction”

*All project readings are posted on Blackboard.