
PUAD 5320 PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS

FALL 2022

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CLASS DAYS & TIMES: Online
CLASS LOCATION: Online
CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS: Canvas
OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Public Policy Analysis*! Public policy affects most aspects of our lives including, but not limited to, public health, education, economy, living environment, quality of life, and safety and security. Addressing and understanding public policy have become increasingly important considering rampant misinformation and mistrust of evidence. This course is designed to give master's students in public affairs a background in understanding critical issues and techniques used in public policy analysis. This course provides students with core skills and knowledge necessary to understand the causes and consequences of public policies. Students will conduct a systematic analysis of public policy issues by identifying a range of policy alternatives to address the policy issues and comparing the alternatives with respect to various public values including efficiency, feasibility, and social equity and justice. Students will learn using analytical tools, rationales, and knowledge to make sense of policy interventions and will practice effective delivery and communication of evidence, data, and policy recommendations at various levels of government.

This course is also designed to prepare students for their current and future careers in public service. By the end of the semester, students will be able to develop their ideas about questions such as (a) What are the proper roles of the government in society? What are the theoretical justifications for public intervention? (b) What are the political dynamics in defining policy problems and choosing policy alternatives? (c) What are the analytic tools that can be used? (d) How can we evaluate policy outcomes? (e) How do you make convincing arguments for communicating your analysis? (f) What are the limitations of policy analysis?

II. UNIVERSITY COURSE CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

This course provides opportunities for students to use skills developed in Research and Analytic Methods (including developing research/evaluation questions, designing surveys and interview guides, and analyzing data) to inform decisions and/or develop recommendations in multiple policy, management, and program evaluation scenarios.

III. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify and analyze policy issues and problems
- Model and evaluate policy alternatives and tools
- Identify real-world examples of market and government failures

- ❑ Recognize difficulties in analyzing policy alternatives and negotiating interest-based resolutions with stakeholders
- ❑ Understand and explain rationales for public policy and government intervention, and apply the rationales to analyze real-world problems
- ❑ Conduct professional policy analyses on social, political, and economic implications of public policy
- ❑ Conduct basic cost-benefit analyses of policies and programs
- ❑ Understand and summarize findings from empirical studies examining the impact of public policies
- ❑ Prepare well-organized and understandable policy documents and give clear briefings of the documents
- ❑ Communicate policy analysis with the public based on ethical reasoning and democratic participation

IV. THE NETWORK OF SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC POLICY, AFFAIRS, AND ADMINISTRATION (NASPAA) COMPETENCIES

MPA Target Competency	Relevant Course Activities
The student understands and is able to apply techniques for generating and selecting among policy alternatives	Analyzing policy alternatives for the policy memo; problem sets
The student is able to use data and apply ethical lenses, different perspectives, and assumptions to generate decisions among alternatives	Framing policy problems as market and government failures; problem sets; preparing and presenting the policy infographic and memo
The student understands the value of and can effectively foster and incorporate citizen participation	Discussing the role of citizens as policy analysts; presenting the infographic and policy analysis results
The student is able to set goals and use data, performance indicators, economic concepts and continuous improvement approaches to manage and lead in service of the mission	Analyzing market and government failures; problem sets; conducting cost-benefit analyses

V. RECOMMENDED COURSE PREREQUISITES

You are highly recommended to take PUAD 5003 Research and Analytic Methods or equivalent and PUAD 5004 Economics and Public Finance before you take this course. Some of the key knowledge and skills that students should have prior to this course include:

- High school linear algebra & 6th grade geometry
- Understanding of different types of market failures (e.g., public goods, externalities)
- Basic understanding of the languages used to describe structured data (e.g., unit of analysis, observations, variables)
- Being able to conduct basic statistical tests, including t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), chi-square test, and linear regression

VI. TEXTBOOKS AND COURSE MATERIALS

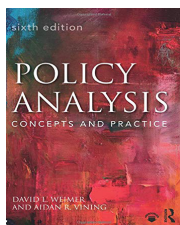
Online Resources

We will extensively use web resources including:

- Washington state institute for public policy: www.wsipp.wa.gov
- Vera Institute of Justice: www.vera.org
- Pew Research Center: www.pewresearch.org
- The Brookings Institution: www.brookings.edu

- Hoover Institution: www.hoover.org
- Urban Institute: www.urban.org

REQUIRED TEXT



Title: Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice (6th Edition)
Author: David L. Weimer & Aidan R. Vining
Publisher: Routledge
Publication year: 2017 (Earlier editions and e-books are also fine.)
ISBN-13: 978-1138216518
Available at: [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com) and other vendors

OPTIONAL TEXT (NO NEED TO PURCHASE)

- Meltzer, Rachel, and Alex Schwartz. [Policy Analysis as Problem Solving: A Flexible and Evidence-based Framework](#). Routledge, 2018.
- Bardach, Eugene, and Eric M. Patashnik. [A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving](#). CQ press, 2019 (6th eds.).
- Wildavsky, Aaron B. [Speaking Truth to Power: Art and Craft of Policy Analysis](#). Routledge, 1987 (2nd eds.).
- Lindblom, Charles Edward and Woodhouse, Edward J. [The Policy-Making Process](#). Prentice-Hall, 1993 (3rd eds.).
- Boardman, Anthony E., David H. Greenberg, Aidan R. Vining, and David L. Weimer. [Cost-benefit analysis: concepts and practice](#). Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Stone, Deborah. [Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making](#). New York: ww Norton, 2012 (3rd eds.).

SOFTWARE AND TOOLS

You will need Microsoft Excel or similar to complete some assignments in this course.

EVALUATION

I. ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments must be single-spaced with one-inch margins. Be sure to include your name and page numbers in headers or footers. Assignment due dates will be available on Canvas. Assignment submissions should be made via Canvas, not emails.

Component	Weight	Module
(a) Problem Sets	55%	
1. Pre-Requisite Test	5%	MODULE 1
2. Market Competition	5%	MODULE 2
3. Market Failures & Distributional Equity	15%	MODULE 3
4. Government Failures & Policies	15%	MODULE 5
5. Cost-Benefit Analysis	15%	MODULE 7
(b) Final Project – Policy Analysis	35%	
Part 1. Proposal	0%	MODULE 4
Part 2. Framing a Policy Problem	5%	MODULE 6
Part 3. Policy Memo	15%	MODULE 8
Part 4. Infographic & Presentation	15%	MODULE 8

(c) Discussions	10%	
1. Rational vs. Polis Models	5%	MODULE 1
2. The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis	5%	MODULE 6
(d) Optional	+3%	
Policy Case Study	3%	MODULE 6

(a) Problem Sets

Students will be asked to apply the concepts from the textbook and lectures to analyze examples. A few rules:

- Students are encouraged to work together to understand course materials and assignment questions. However, students must write their own solutions themselves in their own words.
- You must show *how* you got the answer. Clearly but briefly show how you derived the answer.
- Answers should be well-organized, understandable, and legible. Make sure your answers are presented in the order of the questions and include question numbers.
- Although I will accept handwritten answers, typed mathematical expressions and computer-generated graphs are preferred. If you have to scan your handwritten answers, please make sure your answers are easy to read.
- One PDF submission per assignment. Do not submit multiple documents for one assignment.

(b) Final Project – Policy Analysis

Students are highly encouraged to work as a group of 2 or 3 to complete the following four parts of the Final Project – Policy Analysis.

- **Part 1. Proposal (0%):** The purpose of this assignment is to help students define and articulate a policy problem to focus on. Briefly discuss your policy issue and provide a brief sketch of the context. (2 paragraphs)
- **Part 2. Framing A Policy Problem (5%):** Frame a policy problem as a market or government failure and build a rationale for government action. (up to 1,000 words)
- **Part 3. Policy memo (15%):** You will prepare a policy memo which includes i) the definition, description, and background of of the policy problem, ii) framing of the policy problem, iii) at least three policy alternatives, iv) and recommendations and implications. (up to 4,000 words plus references and appendices)
- **Part 4. Infographic & Presentation (15%):** You will create a one-page infographic, or a visual representation of information, concepts, data, or knowledge, from your policy memo. The infographic should **not** be a summary of the full policy memo. Instead, you should focus on presenting the most useful information for the public or the target groups of your policy memo. You can use online free tools (e.g., Piktochart, Canva) or any other software (e.g., Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Power BI, and Adobe Illustrator). You will share your infographic with your classmates on the discussion board and explain the infographics verbally (3-4 minutes).

II. BASIS FOR FINAL GRADE

A (95-100), A- (90-94.9), B+ (85-89.9), B (80-84.9), B- (80-82), C+ (75-79.9), C (70-74.9), C- (70-72), D+ (68-69), D (63-67), D- (60-62), F (0-59).

III. GRADE DISSEMINATION

Graded tests and assignments in this course will be returned via the Canvas course shell. You can access your scores at any time within the Canvas gradebook.

COURSE SCHEDULE & CONTENT

NOTE: W&V = Weimer & Vining (2017); † = Readings and/or additional materials are available on Canvas 📺 = Video; ⓘ = Important – Read or watch it carefully; 📖 = Optional reading. Skim; 📚 = Applied studies for the class discussions. Focus on understanding the analysis sections (i.e., data, methods, results) of the papers.

Week	Module
01 (08/22)	MODULE 1. INTRODUCTION TO POLICY ANALYSIS
02 (08/29)	
03 (09/05)	
04 (09/12)	MODULE 2. IDEALIZED COMPETITIVE MODEL & MARKET FAILURES
05 (09/19)	
06 (09/26)	MODULE 3. OTHER LIMITATIONS OF MARKETS & DISTRIBUTIONAL GOALS
07 (10/03)	
08 (10/10)	MODULE 4. GOVERNMENT FAILURES
09 (10/17)	
10 (10/24)	MODULE 5. GOVERNMENT POLICIES
11 (10/31)	
12 (11/07)	MODULE 6. DOING POLICY ANALYSIS
13 (11/14)	
14 (11/28)	MODULE 7. COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS
15 (12/05)	
16 (12/12)	MODULE 8. FINAL PAPER & PRESENTATION

MODULE 1. INTRODUCTION TO POLICY ANALYSIS

- **READINGS**

- W&V. Ch 1. Preview
- W&V. Ch 16. Case Study: The Canadian Pacific Salmon Fishery
- W&V. Ch 2. What Is Policy Analysis?
- “What is policy analysis?” by David L. Weimer (2014) 📺 ⓘ
- Wildavsky. (1987). Ch 5. Between Planning and Politics: Intellect vs. Interaction as Analysis
- Lindblom. (1993). Ch 1. The Challenges Facing Policy Making & Ch 2. The Limits of Analysis 📖
- Stone. (2012). Introduction & Ch 11. Decisions

- **ASSIGNMENTS**

- Discussion 1. Rational vs. Polis Models
- **Problem Set 1.** Prerequisite Test: This test is designed to evaluate if their students have the basic knowledge and skills to be successful in completing this course.

MODULE 2. IDEALIZED COMPETITIVE MODEL & MARKET FAILURES

- **READINGS**

- W&V. Ch 4. Efficiency and the Idealized Competitive Model
- W&V. Ch 5. Rationales for Public Policy: Market Failures

- **ASSIGNMENTS**

- **Problem Set 2.** Market Competition

MODULE 3. OTHER LIMITATIONS OF MARKETS & DISTRIBUTIONAL GOALS

- **READINGS**
 - W&V. Ch 6. Rationales for Public Policy: Other Limitations of the Competitive Framework
 - W&V. Ch 7. Rationales for Public Policy: Distributional and Other Goals
- **ASSIGNMENTS**
 - [Problem Set 3](#). Market Failures & Distributional Equity

MODULE 4. GOVERNMENT FAILURES

- **READINGS**
 - W&V. Ch 8. Limits to Public Intervention: Government Failures
 - W&V. Ch 9. Policy Problems as Market and Government Failure: The Madison Taxicab Policy Analysis Example
 - The Economist. (2014). [What's Gone Wrong With Democracy](#).
- **ASSIGNMENTS**
 - [Final Project – Policy Analysis](#) Part 1. Proposal

MODULE 5. SOLUTION ANALYSIS: GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- **READINGS**
 - W&V. Ch 10. Correcting Market and Government Failures: Generic Policies
- **ASSIGNMENTS**
 - [Problem Set 4](#). Government Failures & Policies

MODULE 6. DOING POLICY ANALYSIS

- **READINGS**
 - W&V. Ch 14. Gathering Information for Policy Analysis
 - W&V. Ch 15. Landing on Your Feet: Organizing Your Policy Analysis
 - W&V. Ch 3. Toward Professional Ethics
 - Bardach & Patashnik (2019). Part 1 The Eightfold Path
 - Wildavsky. (1987). Introduction: Analysis as Art & Ch 3. Policy As Its Own Cause
- **ASSIGNMENTS**
 - [Final Project – Policy Analysis](#) Part 2. Framing a Policy Problem
 - Discussion 2. The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis

MODULE 7. COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

- **READINGS**
 - W&V. Ch 17. Cost-Benefit Analysis: Assessing Efficiency
 - Boardman, Greenberg, Vining & Weimer. (2017). Ch 1. Introduction to Cost Benefit Analysis & Ch 2. Conceptual Foundations of Cost Benefit Analysis[†]
 - Washington State Institute for Public Policy. (2019). [Benefit-Cost Technical Documentation](#).
 - Hansen, L., Lacy, V., Glick, D. (2013). [A Review of Solar PV Benefit & Cost Studies](#). Rocky Mountain Institute. [link](#)
 - Duwe, G. (2018). [Can circles of support and accountability \(CoSA\) significantly reduce sexual recidivism? Results from a randomized controlled trial in Minnesota](#). *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 14(4), 463-484. [link](#)
- **ASSIGNMENTS**
 - [Problem Set 5](#). Cost Benefit Analysis

MODULE 8. FINAL PAPER & PRESENTATION

- **READINGS**
 - W&V. Ch 19. Doing Well and Doing Good
- **ASSIGNMENTS**
 - [Final Project – Policy Analysis](#) Part 3. Policy Memo
 - [Final Project – Policy Analysis](#) Part 4. Infographic & Presentation

COURSE POLICY & PROCEDURE

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. I will do my best to present materials and activities that are respectful of all groups and individuals with various gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, religion, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. Your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course are encouraged and appreciated.

CLASS POLICY

- **Attendance and Absences Policy:** We follow UC Denver [Student Attendance and Absences Policy](#) (Policy Number: 7030).
- **Emails:** I do my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours on weekdays. I do not check emails regularly on weekends.
- **Announcements:** It is a student's responsibility to check Canvas announcements regularly. Make sure to receive notifications when announcements are posted on Canvas.
- **Group Work Policy:** Group work is encouraged for the group assignments. Students are encouraged to work together to understand course material, including homework materials. However, students must complete individual assignments themselves.
- **Grades of "Incomplete":** The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course; students have up to one year to complete course requirements. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished within the time allowed or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

RESOURCES

- **University Academic Calendar:** Check out [UC Denver Academic Calendar](#)
- **Writing Center:** The [CU Denver Writing Center](#) can assist you free of charge in developing and honing your writing skills. I used a similar service when I was in college. It helped me tremendously.
- **Auraria Library:** I strongly encourage you to acquaint yourself with the [Auraria Library](#) and all that it has to offer. It is an indispensable resource for gaining access to academic journal articles, research databases, books, news articles, citation management software, etc. To use these resources, you must have a student ID number.
- **The Student and Community Counseling Center** (located in Tivoli 454): For students feeling overwhelmed or experiencing life stressors that interfere with academic or personal success, the Student and Community Counseling Center is located in Tivoli 454 and provides cost-free and confidential mental health services to help students manage personal challenges that impact emotional or academic well-being. You can learn more about the center at www.ucdenver.edu/life or by calling 303-556-4372.

- **Emergency Support:** The Loving Lynx Committee is a resource available for CU Denver students dealing with unanticipated events related (but not limited) to: accidents, medical or dental emergencies, natural disasters, and/or a need for temporary housing. If you are unsure if your situation constitutes as an unanticipated event, we encourage you to contact the Dean of Student's Office to discuss your situation. The CU Denver Food Pantry provides access to non-perishable food and personal care items for CU Denver students in need; all CU Denver students are welcome (must have current student ID). The CU Denver Food Pantry is located on the 3rd floor of the Lola & Rob Salazar Student Wellness Center.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACCESS

- **Disability Access:** The University of Colorado Denver is committed to providing reasonable accommodation and access to programs and services to persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who want academic accommodations must register with Disability Resources and Services (DRS) in Academic Building 1, #2116, Phone: 303- 315-3510 , Fax: 303-315-3515. I will be happy to provide approved accommodations, once you provide me with a copy of DRS's letter. Note: DRS requires students to provide current and adequate documentation of their disabilities. Once a student has registered with DRS, DRS will review the documentation and assess the student's request for academic accommodations in light of the documentation. DRS will then provide the student with a letter indicating which academic accommodations have been approved.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

- **Student Code of Conduct:** Students are expected to know, understand, and comply with the ethical standards of the university, including rules against plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and falsification, multiple submissions, misuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. For suggestions on ways to avoid academic dishonesty, please see the [Academic Honesty Handbook](#).
- **Plagiarism** is the use of another person's ideas or words without acknowledgement. The incorporation of another person's work into yours requires appropriate identification and acknowledgement. Examples of plagiarism when the source is not noted include: word- for-word copying of another person's ideas or words; the "mosaic" (interspersing your own words here and there while, in essence, copying another's work); the paraphrase (the rewriting of another's work, while still using their basic ideas or theories); fabrication (inventing or counterfeiting sources); submission of another's work as your own; and neglecting quotation marks when including direct quotes, even on material that is otherwise acknowledge. **CU Denver has a license agreement with Turnitin.com, a service that helps detect plagiarism by comparing student papers with Turnitin's database and Internet sources.** Students who take this course agree that all required papers may be submitted to Turnitin. While students retain copyright of their original course work, papers submitted to Turnitin become part of the Turnitin's reference database for the purposes of detecting plagiarism.
- **Cheating** involves the possession, communication, or use of information, materials, notes, study aids, or other devices and rubrics not specifically authorized by the course instructor in any academic exercise, or unauthorized communication with any other person during an academic exercise. Examples of cheating include: copying from another's work or receiving unauthorized assistance from another; using a calculator, computer, or the internet when its use has been precluded; collaborating with another or others without the consent of the instructor; submitting another's work as one's own.
- **Fabrication** involves inventing or counterfeiting information—creating results not properly obtained through study or laboratory experiment. Falsification involves deliberate alteration or changing of results to suit one's needs in an experiment or academic exercise.
- **Multiple submissions** involve submitting academic work in a current course when academic credit for

the work was previously earned in another course, when such submission is made without the current course instructor's authorization.

- **Misuse of academic materials** includes theft/destruction of library or reference materials or computer programs; theft/destruction of another student's notes or materials; unauthorized possession of another student's notes or materials; theft/destruction of examinations, papers, or assignments; unauthorized assistance in locating/using sources of information when forbidden or not authorized by the instructor; unauthorized possession, disposition, or use of examinations or answer keys; unauthorized alteration, forgery, fabrication, or falsification of academic records; unauthorized sale or purchase of examinations, papers, or assignments.

NONDISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The University of Colorado Denver is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment. University policy and Title IX prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, pregnancy, creed, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, gender identity, gender expression, political philosophy or political affiliation in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. University policy prohibits sexual misconduct, including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or related retaliation. If you have experienced some sort of sexual misconduct or discrimination please visit the Office of Equity/Title IX web site to understand the resources available to you or contact [the Office of Equity/Title IX Coordinator](#) (1-844-288-4853).