

Introduction to Policy Analysis
Political Science 160AA/USP 101
Spring 2012
Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 am to 10:50 am PCYNH 109

Instructor: Nicole Bonoff
Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30 am to 12:30 pm SSB 345
Email: nbonoff@ucsd.edu

Course Description:

This course gives students an understanding of how one might choose between public policies. The first part of this course will focus on understanding the market values that underlie public policy and how to evaluate different policy options quantitatively and qualitatively. We will also address the political constraints that form the decision environment of policy analysts. Lastly, we will focus on a few real-world case studies to see the tools we have discussed implemented by analysts. Though PS 30 or another math class is not required, a familiarity with regression analysis and economics will be helpful.

Course Objective:

For you to learn the basic tools of policy analysis such as cost-benefit analysis, discounting, and programmatic evaluation. These are valuable and tangible skills that you will be able to confidently put on your resume. While we will touch upon the social choice theory that informs public choice, that will not be the focus of this class. Please consider PS 163 for a social choice theory class. You will also produce a final paper that can serve as a strong writing sample for future job applications.

Class Assignments/Grades:

There will be 4 graded pieces of work in addition to class participation.

- 1) Two exams Tuesday 04/24/2012 and Tuesday 05/15/2012, each worth 20% of grade. The exams will focus on the topics and skills we have learned up to that point.
- 2) Short response paper (2-3 pages) due Thursday 06/07/2012 at the latest, 20% of grade. After the second exam, we will discuss a series of Harvard Kennedy School of Government Case Studies in class. These will cover different policy areas. You are responsible for writing a single 2-3 page critical response paper on the case study of your choice. The paper is due in **HARD PAPER COPY** in lecture **BEFORE** the beginning of the class date for which that case study was assigned. Late papers will not be accepted, as there are multiple opportunities to complete this assignment. There is no option to re-do this assignment if you are displeased with your grade or are looking for extra credit. More information about this assignment will be distributed before the second exam.
- 3) Policy research paper (11-12 pages) due Tuesday 06/12/2012, 40% of grade. Instead of a final exam, you submit a 10-11 page policy research paper. More information about the paper will be distributed shortly before the first exam so you can start thinking about the assignment early in the term. The goal of this assignment is to use as many of the tools and skills we learned in the class to rigorously analyzing a policy debate. Drop-off your final paper in **HARD PAPER COPY** by 11 am at the Social Science Building. The grades of later papers will be reduced.

Re-grade policy:

Appeals about grades must be typed, double-spaced, and no more than 1 page. It must be submitted to your TA within two weeks of the assignment being returned in class along with the graded assignment. The assignment will then be fully re-graded by both the TA and myself, who will jointly determine a final grade. This grade may be lower than your original grade.

Course Policies

- 1) Academic Integrity. Students in this course are expected to comply with UCSD's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship. In particular, plagiarism is considered a dishonest practice and a serious academic offense. Hence, there will be a zero tolerance policy with respect to these practices: any student violating the obligation of academic integrity during the term will automatically fail the class. If you are confused about what constitutes plagiarism, please contact me or the TA to clarify about the situation BEFORE you turn in an assignment. Copies of the current version of the UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, also commonly referred to as the Academic Dishonesty Policy, may be found on the Academic Senate webpage: <http://www-senate.ucsd.edu/AcademicIntegrity/AcademicIntegrity.htm>
- 2) Disabilities. If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both me and the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify the OSD, call (858) 534-4382 to schedule an appointment.

Course Materials:

The main textbook for this class is Micheal Munger's *Analyzing Policy*. Note, this is a different book than the similarly-named by Kenneth Shepsle and Mark Bonchek. Please make sure you have the correct book. After we complete the textbook, the reading load will be reduced to allow you to complete your two writing assignments. These shorter reading assignments will primarily come from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government Case Studies. These assignments will be available online for you to view. Readings are required, and expected to be read before class.

Schedule

- 1) April 3 Introduction: What is policy? Who makes policy?
Munger Ch. 1-2
- 2) April 5 The Market
Munger Ch. 3
- 3) April 10 Market Failure
Munger Ch. 4
- 4) April 12 Market Failure cont; Expert Analysis
Munger Ch. 4-5
- 5) April 17 Social Choice Theory

- Munger Ch. 6
- 6) April 19 Social Choice Theory cont.; The Politics
Munger Ch. 6; Krehbiel Ch. 2
 - 7) April 24 Exam #1
 - 8) April 26 Welfare Economics Paradigm
Munger Ch. 7
 - 9) May 1 Choices in Regulation
Munger Ch. 8
 - 10) May 3 Discounting
Munger Ch. 9-10
 - 11) May 8 Cost-Benefit Analysis; Non-market Evaluation
Munger Ch. 11
 - 12) May 10 Programmatic Evaluation
Trochim and Donnelly Ch. 9-10; Munger Ch. 12
 - 13) May 15 Exam #2
 - 14) May 17 Social Security and Welfare Policy
“Social Security and the Fertility Rate” – KSGCS
“California Welfare Reform” – KSGCS
 - 15) May 22 Healthcare Policy – Guest Speaker Merlin Brittenham
“The Battle Over the Clinton Health Care Proposal” – KSGCS
 - 16) May 24 Education Policy
“The Cleveland School Voucher Program,” both Parts A and B – KSGCS
 - 17) May 28 Environmental Policy
“Saving The Tuolumne,” both Parts A and B – KSGCS
“The California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32)” – KSGCS
 - 18) May 31 Urban Development and Housing Policy
“Plans versus Politics - New Orleans after Katrina,” both Parts A and B - KSGCS
 - 19) June 4 Trade Policy
“Food Fight - The US, Europe, and Trade in Hormone-Treated Beef” – KSGCS
“Two Cheers for Sweatshops” – New York Times **(DO NOT USE FOR RESPONSE PAPER)**

20) June 7 Foreign Aid and Development Policy
“Evaluating Reconstruction Assistance in Postwar Uganda - The World Bank and
Institutional Capacity Building” - KSCGS

Final Paper Due Tuesday 06/12/2012 by 11 am in Social Science Building