

PADM 701: PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS

Old Dominion University

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

Exploration of key theories and approaches to public policy. This course covers all phases of the policy process, from formulation to evaluation, with particular focus upon the substance, political dynamics, and evolution of public policy. 3.000 Credit hours 3.000 Lecture hours

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to introduce you to key features of the public policy process. The course will cover all phases of the policy process, from policy formulation to policy evaluation. The course is structured to provide you with the tools necessary to understand and function effectively in positions in which public policy issues are addressed, and to analyze policy problems and solutions. The focus will also be on the politics of public policy making. As political scientist Harold Lasswell noted, politics is the process by which a society decides “who gets what, where, when, and how” and nowhere is politics more prominently at play than in public policy. Understanding the politics of policy making is much different from doing policy analysis, which often derives its principles from economics. While we will apply some policy analysis, the emphasis will be on analyzing policy through writing. Therefore, writing (and speaking) will be an important element of this course.

We will also focus on your role as a participant in the policy process, and you will learn tools that will make you a more effective participant in the public policy process. You will learn how to explain policy problems, evaluate alternative policy solutions, and make sound arguments that advocate for particular policy options. You will do all of this through writing as the communication medium. An important purpose of this course is to prepare you (as public service professional and active citizens) to “do” public policy by writing and speaking effectively in the policy process.

We will focus on policymaking in the context of American political institutions, but many of the ideas and topics we discuss will apply to other modern democratic systems. While the course will not focus on a specific area of public policy, we will use two substantive policy topics to illustrate and apply broader points about the policy process.

Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes for this course include being able to:

- Identify and explain the dominant theories of how public policy is made in the United States.
- Understand the social, political, economic, and technical environments in which public policy is made.
- Describe and analyze the policy process (from problem definition, agenda setting, policy formulation, policy implementation, and policy evaluation)
- Explain aspects of the policy process in concise, non-technical language.
- Present evidence, data, and logic through oral communication and selected policy communication tools.
- Appreciate the complexity of operating in a multi-sectoral environment.

TEXT AND READINGS

There are two required books for this course. Both books are available at the ODU bookstore.

- A. Birkland, T.A. 2011. *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making*. M.E. Sharpe. ISBN: 978-0-7656-2532-8

B. Smith, C. F. 2015. *Writing Public Policy: A Practical Guide to Communicating in the Policy Making Process*. 4th edition. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199388578

Other readings will be made available on BlackBoard.

COURSE GRADING

Grading for this course will be based on seven components:

Policy problem definition	15%
Opinion brief/Briefing memo	15%
Position paper	15%
Presentation of position paper	15%
In-class participation	15%
On-line participation	25%

<u>Points</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
93-100	A	80-82	B-
90-92	A-	77-79	C+
87-89	B+	70-76	C
83-86	B	< 70	F

Note: A grade of "I" indicates assigned work yet to be completed in a given course or absence from the final examination. It is assigned only upon instructor approval of a student request. The "I" grade can be given only in exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control, such as illness. In these cases, the student is responsible for notifying the faculty member. The "I" grade becomes an "F" if not removed by the last day of classes of the following term (excluding the exam period) according to the following schedule: "I" grades from the fall semester become "F", if not removed by the last day of classes of the spring semester; "I" grades from the spring and summer sessions become "F" if not removed by the last day of classes of the fall semester. An "I" grade may not be changed to a "W" under any circumstances.

Important: All written assignments must be submitted via BlackBoard (under 'Assignments') in Word format (no PDF documents will be accepted). All assignments MUST be submitted by 11pm on the designated due dates. **Late assignments will not be accepted.**

Key Due Dates

- BB Module: Policy Communication I
- Policy Problem Definition
- BB Module: Policy Communication II
- BB Module: Policy Communication III
- Opinion Brief
- BB Module: The Public in Public Policy
- BB Module: Education Policy
- BB Module: Economic and Budgetary Policy
- BB Module: Environmental and Energy Policy
- BB Module: Foreign Policy and Homeland Security
- BB Module: Health Care Policy
- BB Module: Welfare and Social Security Policy
- Presentation of Position Paper
- Position Paper

Writing and Policy Portfolio

This course is focused on providing experience in thinking about policy problems and their solutions. Over the course of the semester you will be creating a policy portfolio that you will add to as you complete the

course material and assignments. By the end of this semester you will have compiled a complete policy portfolio. This portfolio will allow you to demonstrate your readiness to do professional work in the public sector.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

The following standards are intended to define acceptable classroom behavior that preserves academic integrity and ensures that students have optimum environmental conditions for effective learning.

1. Students must turn off cell phones during class or have them set to vibrate mode.
2. Classes are expected to begin on time, and students will respect the time boundaries established by the professor. If classroom doors are locked, students may not knock or seek entrance in other ways.
3. Students should notify instructors in advance when a class will be missed. In the event of an emergency that causes a class to be missed, instructors must be notified as soon as possible.
4. Students must not engage in extraneous conversations during classes. Such acts are considered to be violations of the Code of Student Conduct.
5. Students will activate their ODU email accounts and check them before each class. If the student chooses to have his/her messages forwarded to another account, it is the student's responsibility to take the necessary steps to have them forwarded.
6. Offensive language, gestures and the like are disrespectful and disruptive to the teaching-learning process.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Violations of the academic honesty code will be dealt with in the strictest terms. Students are advised to become familiar with the university's academic honesty code, as well as the Statement on Plagiarism for the Strome College of Business. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that both the *letter* and *intent* of this code are met in all circumstances. Ignorance of this code, or of proper rules of citation, provides no defense. My policy concerning enforcement of this code is inflexible; no exceptions will be made.

HONOR PLEDGE

"I pledge to support the honor system of Old Dominion University. I will refrain from any form of academic dishonesty or deception, such as cheating or plagiarism. I am aware that as a member of the academic community, it is my responsibility to turn in all suspected violators of the honor system. I will report to Honor Council hearings if summoned." By attending Old Dominion University you have accepted the responsibility to abide by this code. This is an institutional policy approved by the Board of Visitors.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Old Dominion University is committed to achieving equal educational opportunity and full participation for persons with disabilities. It is the university's policy that no qualified person be excluded from participation in any university program or activity, be denied the benefits of any university program or activity, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination with regard to any university program or activity. This policy derives from the university's commitment to non-discrimination for all persons in employment, access to facilities, student programs, activities and services. For additional information visit the Office of Educational Accessibility.

UNIVERSITY E-MAIL POLICY

The Old Dominion University e-mail system is the official electronic mail system for distributing course-related Communications, policies, Announcements and other information. In addition, the University e-mail user ID and password are necessary for authentication and access to numerous electronic resources (online courses, faculty Web pages, etc.) For more information about the policy, please see the Electronic

Messaging Policy for Official University Community Policy 3506. For more information about student email, please visit <http://occs.odu.edu/accounts/studemail/>

WITHDRAWAL

A syllabus constitutes an agreement between the student and the course instructor about course requirements. Participation in this course indicates your acceptance of its teaching focus, requirements, and policies. Please review the syllabus and the course requirements as soon as possible. If you believe that the nature of this course does not meet your interests, needs or expectations, if you are not prepared for the amount of work involved - or if you anticipate that the class meetings, assignment deadlines or abiding by the course policies will constitute an unacceptable hardship for you - you should drop the class by the drop/add deadline, which is located in the ODU Schedule of Classes. For more information, please visit the Office of the University Registrar.

COURSE DISCLAIMER

Every attempt is made to provide a syllabus that is complete and that provides an accurate overview of the course. However, circumstances and events may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. This may depend, in part, on the progress, needs, and experiences of the students.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Class Participation

15% of your course grade will be based on in-class participation. There are two important elements to participation: quality and quantity of participation. While a little quality can go a long way, quantity cannot be a substitute for quality.

For each class session, you are expected to read all assigned readings. You will not be able to effectively participate if you do not read the material. Because the class is discussion-oriented, this lack of preparation will significantly affect your class participation and your contribution to the peer-learning environment.

At the beginning of every class session, we will review the reading material by discussing:

Were there any points, findings, or statements in the reading that...

- Surprised you?
- Made you pause or rethink what you thought you knew?
- Provided more concrete evidence of what you already believed?
- Provided an idea to be implemented in your organization?
- Led to an A-ha! Moment?

Please be prepared to discuss these items, as you may be called on to share your thoughts with colleagues in the class.

We will often discuss our personal opinions and experiences as they relate to the issues we are addressing in class. To ensure that class and on-line discussions are civil and reflect a spirit of open-minded inquiry and respect for the opinions of others, we will agree to the following:

- We will not interrupt one another
- We will address our responses to the content of the comments, not to the person
- We will try to use “I statements,” stating what we feel and think rather than anticipating what others may think
- We will ALL be responsible for seeing that everyone has an opportunity to speak
- We will ALL participate and contribute to each other’s learning, recognizing that learning is an interpersonal process, both a gift and an ethical responsibility to our colleagues
- We will respect confidentiality

- We won't belittle or demean individuals or groups
- We will give people the benefit of the doubt. Life is hard enough for all of us. We will do our best to be wise, caring and decent.

Note that failure to comply may result in points taken off your participation grade.

Policy Portfolio

The three writing assignments comprise a semester-long policy analysis in which you will identify, analyze and suggest solutions for a policy problem related to sea level rise and flooding.

Broad, general comments about your policy writing:

- a. Use proper grammar, punctuation and mechanics.
- b. Be clear, concise prose style. Wordy, needlessly long-winded text just take up space and waste your and your readers' time.
- c. Have excellent documentation of claims from sound and credible sources.

A few comments about information sources:

- a. You should rely primarily on sound and credible sources, which include:
 - Academic journals
 - Technical reports
 - Reports from government agencies
 - Analytical articles in popular journals written by experts in the field
- b. Other, not so sound sources should be used sparingly. These include:
 - Newspaper articles in any paper, including the New York Times and Washington Post. Most of the time, these sources will just steer you to original reports and analyses that you should find and assess on your own (remember, your professionalism is at stake here. You may sparingly cite newspapers to discuss the politics of an issue—to raise ideas, for example—but you cannot use journalism as a replacement for hard evidence.
 - Popular magazines and TV news programs, etc.
 - Wikipedia or any encyclopedia. Use Wikipedia to help you understand a concept—some of the articles are quite good. But this isn't evidence. Any paper that cites Wikipedia will be returned ungraded on the first instance. On the second presentation of any paper with a Wikipedia reference, the assignment will earn zero credit. Often, Wikipedia refers readers to source information, and if that information is good, you can use it.
 - Blogs or other material by non-experts. Anyone can start a blog and publish nonsense. On the other hand, some experts do create blogs, and their work can be useful. The quality of a blog is related to the quality of the blogger and any sponsoring organization, so proceed with caution.

Important: All written assignments must be submitted via BlackBoard (under 'Assignments') in Word format (no PDF documents will be accepted). All assignments MUST be submitted by 11pm on the day they are due.

Assignment: Policy Problem Definition

The policy making process starts with defining the problem. A policy problem definition has three main components: description of influential conditions and interests, discussion of governmental action or inaction, and persuasive argument. For this assignment you will need to identify (task #1 in Smith's chapter 'Definition: Frame the Problem'), specify and research (task #2 in Smith's chapter), and discuss (in memo format, task #4 in Smith's chapter) one problem that must be addressed as part of dealing with sea level rise and flooding.

Assume you are a policy analyst for the City of Norfolk, Virginia. You have been asked by the City Manager to write a memo defining and describing the policy problem you have identified. This memo is intended for the City Manager and other members of her administration, but may also be provided to members of the City Council. Your memo should be between 3-5 pages (900 – 1,200 words).

In your memo, you must summarize the important background information necessary to understand the policy problem you have identified. Your memo must answer the question: what is the key issue that needs to be addressed? You should provide appropriate history, theories, statistics, and political context that will allow your audience to assess the nature, distribution, and severity of the problem. You must also identify the key stakeholders and analyze their roles in the multi-sectoral environment surrounding this issue. In describing the problem, you must explain why it is important and relevant.

Your problem definition must answer the following questions:

- What are the problematic conditions? What problems do they cause?
- What factors in the multi-sectoral environment are related to this problem?
- What are the issues for policy? What is your concern? What is your intended reader's concern?
- Who else is concerned (on all sides)?
- What are the key disagreements and agreements among those concerned?

Assignment: Opinion Brief

An opinion brief provides targeted information in a concise manner, intended for an audience of decision makers who have too much to do in too little time. It offers only essential information targeted to the specific reader's needs regarding a specific policy issue. This assignment is designed to provide you with experience in distilling information, relating details accurately within a specific context, and selecting details according to relevance, in addition to efficiently stating your informed opinion while being aware of and responsive to other opinions.

For this assignment, you must select one major stakeholder for the problem you identified in your Problem Definition written assignment. Assume you are in a leadership position for this stakeholder group or for an advocacy organization representing the stakeholders' interests. Given your leadership position, you have been asked to provide an opinion brief to the (state or local) government's Policy Director. This opinion brief is intended to provide the Policy Director with information regarding your stakeholder group's concerns, your informed opinion regarding the severity of the problem, and the extent to which a policy solution must be considered.

To complete this assignment, you should consider Tasks 1 and 2 outlined in Smith's chapter on 'Briefing, Opinion, Resolution: Inform Policy Makers.' The informational content of your briefing memo should be designed and organized for quick comprehension and easy referral. You should follow a standard memo format (To, From, Date, Subject) and follow the structure suggested by Smith, including (1) using a

document header for targeted identification; (2) having an opening summary for overview; (3) chunking information with subheadings for directing attention; (4) using shorter sentences with one main idea per sentence for emphasis; and (5) relying on only necessary words. The opinion brief should be a maximum of 700 words.

Your opinion brief must address the following questions:

- What are your stakeholders groups' specific concerns regarding the policy problem?
- How severe does your group perceive the problem to be? Why?
- To what extent does your group believe a policy solution must be considered? Why?

Assignment: Policy Position Paper

The goal of a position paper (sometimes called discussion paper or "white" paper) is to present an in-depth compelling opinion on a policy issue or policy solution. For this assignment, the position paper will take the form of a recommendation for action to address the problem you identified in the Problem Definition written assignment. Policy leadership requires the ability to make a convincing case, and this assignment provides the opportunity to learn how to do so.

Assume you are a policy analyst for the state or local government. You have identified, described, and studied the problem, and you are now ready to recommend a solution for addressing the problem. Your task is to write a position paper that presents a convincing argument for this recommendation. You should assume a broad audience of elected officials, concerned citizens, and other relevant stakeholders. Therefore, you need to provide some information about the topic you address so those not directly involved will understand the logic of your argument.

Your goal is to convince, rather than to inform. You can, and should, address the impact of the issue or problem. But, while this is relevant, you must emphasize why the recommended action is necessary or justified. Your proposed solution for the public problem must acknowledge resource and other limitations.

Your position paper should be between 1,500 and 2,000 words.

You must also provide a 8-10 minute presentation with the goal of presenting a compelling case for action. The time limit will be strictly enforced. You may use PowerPoint slides. The presentation is scheduled for

In constructing the logic of your policy position, you should consider the following outline (as presented in Task #1 of Smith's chapter 'Position Paper: Know the Arguments'):

Problem - State the problem clearly and concisely

Issue - Delineate the issue at stake as a result of the problem

Question(s) - Pose a question about the issue that has at least two answers, and is therefore arguable

Claim - State your assertion or answer to the question.

Support for your claim

▪ **Justification**

- **Reasons** - What is the 'because,' or the relevance of the assertion?
- **Assumptions** - What is the 'why', or the values, beliefs, principles that motivate the assertion?
What is the authority represented in the assertion?

▪ **Elaboration**

- **Grounds** - What supporting evidence can you offer for the reasons and for the assumptions?
- **Limits** - What constraints would you place on your claim?

▪ **Anticipated reactions - What are the potential responses from diverse other positions?**

- What are cooperative, or supporting assertions?
- What are competitive, or opposing assertions?
- Can you identify altogether different assumptions?
- What challenges might be made to your reasons or to grounds?

ON-LINE PARTICIPATION

There are 10 BlackBoard modules. In addition, there may be periodic on-line activities throughout the semester. On-line participation includes participation in BlackBoard Discussion Forums and blogs. All BlackBoard activities for each module will be due by 11pm on the Sunday following the class date. For example, blogs and discussions for the BlackBoard module on, will be due by 11pm on.

On-line participation will be graded according to the following:

15 Discussion Forums (15 @ 10 points each)**	150
4 Blogs (4 @ 25 points each)	<u>100</u>
Total on-line points	250

**Note: There are more than 15 Discussion Forums. The 15 highest scores will be counted.

Blog

For blog activities, you are required to post a blog entry that addresses the prompt. Your entry must be less than 300 words. You must also comment on at least one entry posted by a colleague.

BlackBoard Discussion Forums

For these Discussion Forums you are required to answer the Discussion Question for each forum. Note that you must also comment on at least one colleague's response in the Discussion Forum.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Note: this schedule is tentative and might change during the semester according to how the course evolves. The content is subject to change as well, depending on students' interests and progress. Readings other than from the required text, and assignments and other course documents are posted on BlackBoard. Changes to readings, due dates, class cancellation, etc. will be announced on BlackBoard. **Please check BlackBoard regularly.**

BLACKBOARD MODULES

: Policy Communication I

Task Checklist

1. Read the Key Questions
2. Complete assigned readings
3. Analyze the Budgeting case study and post response as blog entry
4. Answer questions regarding newspaper article and post response as blog entry
5. Begin working on problem definition assignment

Key Questions

1. What is the role of communication in the public policy process?

2. How does communication function in the policy process?
3. What types of communication are used by actors in the policy process?
4. How do we communicate effectively within the culture of public policy making?
5. How do we apply communication and rhetoric principles to the definition of policy problems and the analysis of policy solutions?
6. How do we define a policy problem?

Assigned Readings

1. Smith Chapter 1
2. Smith Chapter 2
3. Smith Chapter 3

BLOG: Communication in the Policy Process

Read the Budgeting case (Case 2) in Smith's Chapter on 'Public Policy Making' (Chapter 1).

- Identify two actors (1 from inside government and 1 from outside government) that are involved in this policy process. Think beyond the obvious!
- For each actor, identify one type of policy communication (oral or written) available to or used by the actor. Describe the purpose of and audience for this communication.
- How does this communication help the actors become more effective in the policy making process?

Summarize your analysis of this case in a blog entry of less than 300 words. Remember: You must also read and comment on at least one other colleague's blog entry.

DF: Problem Definition

Read the two articles "Military tries to exempt acres from environmental laws" and "Sides armed with science, studies in conflict over health risks."

- Identify the different elements of the policy process as discussed in the articles. Who are the actors? How does each player define the problem? How do the varied problem definitions conflict or agree?
- From among the actors you identified in the previous question, select the one that interests you most. What kind of information does this actor generate? What kind of information does this actor require to make decisions in the policy process? What communication genres would the actor use? How does the actor's role determine his/her communication options?

Summarize your response to these questions in the Discussion Forum. Remember: You must also read and comment on at least one other colleague's post.

Thinking About the Problem Definition Assignment

Read 'A General Method of Communicating in a Public Process' and 'Two Checklists' in Smith's Chapter 2. Follow steps 1 through 3 as you work through the Policy Problem Definition assignment.

: Policy Communication II

Task Checklist

1. Read the Key Questions
2. Complete assigned readings
3. Examine the role of witness testimony and post response as blog entry (Part 1)
4. Discuss how witness testimony facilitates interaction between experts/witnesses and policy makers, and post response to Discussion Forum (Part 2)

Key Questions

1. What is the role or function of government hearings in the policy process?
2. What unique communication features do witness testimony offer?

Assigned Readings

1. Smith Chapter 9

BLOG: The Role of Witness Testimony

Watch at least 2 hours (more is better) of 'live' committee hearings on C-SPAN (may be a hearing, or several different hearings, but at least 1 continuous hour of statements and questions/answers in a hearing). What was the purpose of the hearing(s)? Who was speaking at the hearing(s), and in what capacity? What policy information did they offer? How relevant was this information, given the purpose of the hearing? Post your answers and discussion as a blog entry of less than 300 words. Remember: You must also read and comment on at least one other colleague's blog entry.

DF: Witness Testimony and Policy Interactions with Policy Experts

Smith writes "In the overall significance of government hearings for democracy, witness testimony is most important. For witnesses, it is an opportunity to bring concerns to the table, to talk directly with policy makers, to make personal or professional knowledge useful for solving problems. For policy makers, hearings offer a rare opportunity to talk directly with knowledgeable witnesses and to question them" (p. 165). How does the government hearing(s) you watched on C-SPAN illustrate these interactions between witnesses and policy makers? Answer this question in the BlackBoard Discussion Forum. Remember: You must also respond to at least one other colleague's post.

: Policy Communication III

Task Checklist

1. Read the Key Questions
2. Complete assigned readings
3. Develop suggestions for how non-governmental organizations can request action or propose policy. Post your suggestions to the Discussion Forum.
4. Discussion the role of the briefing memo as a policy communication tool and post to the Discussion Forum.
5. Examine the role of policy communication as social interaction and post response to the 'Seven Letters Case' as blog entry
6. Begin working on opinion brief assignment

Key Questions

1. Who provides information to policymakers?
2. How do we provide policy decision makers with information in a short, quickly comprehended summary format?
3. How does policy communication function as social interaction?
4. What are the steps for developing and communicating policy arguments?
5. What makes policy argument persuasive?
6. How can non-governmental actors request government action or propose public policy?

Assigned Readings

1. Smith Chapter 4
2. Smith Chapter 6
3. Smith Chapter 7
4. Smith Chapter 8

DF: Non-governmental actors

For the policy problem you defined in the previous problem statement assignment, identify one non-governmental organization that would be interested in the problem and that may request policy action or propose policy solutions. How would you suggest they move forward with requesting action or proposing policy? Post your suggestions to the Discussion Forum. Remember: You must also read and comment on at least one other colleague's post.

DF: Briefing Memo vs. Other Communications

Select one form of policy communication from the lists on pages 22 and 24 of Smith's book. Discuss how this communication format is similar to and different from the briefing memo. Your comparison should include the actors using the communication formats, the purpose of these communications, the target audience, and other criteria. Post to the Discussion Forum. Remember: You must also read and comment on at least one other colleague's post.

Blog: Policy Communication as Social Interaction

Smith writes that "Communication is more than an information exchange; it is also a social interaction" (p. 134). How does this dual role complicate written communication in the policy process? Read the attached 'Seven Letters Case' and select one memo from the series of communications included in this case. Use this memo to explain and illustrate your answer to the above question. Post your response as a blog entry of less than 300 words. Remember: You must also read and comment on at least one other colleague's blog entry.

Thinking About the Opinion Brief/Briefing Memo

Read Smith's discussion of 'How to Inform Policy Makers in a Briefing Memo, Opinion Statement, or Resolution' in Chapter 8. Work through tasks 1 and 2 as you prepare for the Opinion Brief assignment.

: The Public in Public Policy

Task Checklist

1. Read the Key Questions
2. Complete assigned readings
3. Discuss why and how public participation is important for policy making (in Discussion Forum)
4. Analyze the Milk Labeling case and post analysis as blog entry
5. Discuss how the public participation landscape can be improved. Post to the Discussion Forum
6. Explain the different policy communication tools available to the public for providing input (in Discussion Forum)

Key Questions

1. Why is public participation important for the policy process?
2. What roles do citizens have in the policy process?
3. What is the role or function of public comment in the policy process?
4. How can policy makers incorporate the public into the policy process?

5. What are advantages of public participation?
6. What are disadvantages of public participation?
7. How can the public provide input on proposed regulation, rule making, and/or adjudication procedures?

Assigned Readings

1. Kathlene, L. & J. Martin. 1991. Enhancing Citizen Participation: Panel Designs, Perspectives, and Policy Formation. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 10(1): 46-63.
2. Walters, L. C., J. Aydelotte & J. Miller. 2000. Putting more public in policy analysis. *Public Administration Review* 60(4): 349–359.
3. King, C. S., K. M. Feltey, B. & B. O. Susel. 1998. The Question of Participation: Toward Authentic Public participation in Public Administration. *Public Administration Review* 58(4):317-326.
4. Weeks, E. C. 2000. The practice of deliberative democracy: Results from four large-scale trials. *Public Administration Review* 60(4), 360–372.
5. O’Connell, L. & J. Yusuf. 2011. An Information Model to Present Proposals to Increase Taxes: Two Examples in the Context of American Values. *International Journal of Public Administration* 34(3): 180-189.
6. Smith Chapter 10

DF: Importance of Public Participation

Why and how is public participation important for policy making? Answer this question in the BlackBoard Discussion Forum. Remember: You must also respond to at least one other colleague’s post.

Blog: The Case of Milk Labeling

Read the case on Milk Labeling presented in Smith’s Chapter 1. Discuss how this case illustrates citizen participation in the policy process. Post your discussion as a blog entry of less than 300 words. Make sure to cite and incorporate the assigned readings into your discussion. Remember: You must also read and comment on at least one other colleague’s blog entry.

DF: Statistics on Public Participation

Birkland notes in Chapter 5 that “Historically, low levels of voting are also related to low levels of participation in other political activities. More Americans vote than write to elected officials, attend public meetings or hearings, circulate petitions, join groups and lobby officials, or even engage in peaceful protest activities. For example, a 2003 survey of college undergraduates conducted by the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University found that only 26 percent said they had attended a political rally or demonstration and only 32 percent said they had signed a petition or participated in a boycott. A 2006 report funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts found that 17 percent of young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five had participated in *none* of nineteen of possible political activities” (p. 132). What are the implications of the statistics provided by Birkland for policy making in the U.S.? How can this public participation landscape be altered? Specifically, what contributes to this low level of participation and how can it be addressed? Answer these questions in the BlackBoard Discussion Forum. Remember: You must also respond to at least one other colleague’s post.

DF: Policy Communication Tools for the Public

What policy communication tools are available to the public for providing input on proposed regulation, rule making, and/or adjudication procedures? How effective are these communication tools as mechanisms for public participation in the policy process? Answer these questions in the BlackBoard Discussion Forum. Remember: You must also respond to at least one other colleague’s post.

: Education Policy

Discussion Questions:

1. Should education policy remain primarily a state and local government concern, or should the federal government be involved? What are the arguments for the federal government to be more involved in education policy? What advantages do states have in maintaining their responsibility in this policy area?
2. Should government continue to support higher education and students who attend college? What factors should be considered when making such a policy decision? What are arguments for and against such government support?

: Economic and Budgetary Policy

Discussion Questions:

1. Economic policy depends heavily on projections of future developments, for example, of economic growth and tax revenues. What questions would you ask about any such forecast to determine its reliability? Can these forecasts be used for political purposes? How so?
2. What is the appropriate role for the federal government in helping to stimulate the economy? Are stimulus policies, such as the Recovery Act, the right way to proceed, or should we rely on tax cuts? What choice might you pursue, and why? The slow economy since 2008 has raised a number of questions regarding the role of the federal government and how best to address the situation. What are the relative merits of either cutting taxes or increasing government spending as a way to stimulate the economy?

: Environmental and Energy Policy

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of U.S. environmental policies? What policy elements do you think are the most in need of change? For example, should the nation rely more on the use of market incentives rather than regulation? More on information disclosure? Should more responsibility for environmental policy be devolved to the states?
2. Consider a specific environmental protection policy, such as the Clean Air Act or Clean Water Act. What kind of information would allow you to determine how successful the policy has been? What kind of information would you need to have to determine how effective the policy has been?

: Foreign Policy and Homeland Security

Discussion Questions:

1. Consider the USA PATRIOT Act, enacted just after the terrorist attacks of 2001 to give the government greater authority to investigate possible terrorist activity. How should government and its citizens resolve the conflict between providing sufficient security to the nation and protecting civil liberties? What information would you need in order to answer that question?
2. Review the data on foreign economic and military assistance provided in the chapter. Is the U.S. providing the right kind of foreign assistance to developing nations, and enough to address the problems they face? Should the U.S. do more? What do you think is the best way to determine the appropriate level of foreign aid?

: Health Care Policy

Discussion Questions:

1. Should employers continue to carry the burden of providing health care benefits to employees, or should the government institute a form of national health insurance instead? What difference might this make for the ability of U.S. companies, such as automobile manufacturers, to compete internationally when most other developed countries provide national health insurance?
2. What kinds of public policies might be designed to give individuals more incentives to remain healthy and reduce demand for costly health care services?

: Welfare and Social Security Policy

Discussion Questions:

1. What explains the demographic discrepancies in poverty rates across the nation, for example, among racial and ethnic groups? How else might the U.S. address issues of poverty other than through its means-tested programs?
2. In terms of welfare-type spending, is it better to provide specific programs such as food and housing, or direct cash payments to those in need? Why do you think so?