

POL 2318 H1S: Comparative Public Policy

Christian Breunig

Time: M 2-4pm Place: SS 2114

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Hours: M&T 4-5pm OBA

1 Statement of Purpose

This course provides an overview of current developments in comparative public policy and surveys a variety of theoretical literatures (including works on preference formation, interest articulation, and institutions) that seek to explain public policy in a comparative manner. The course explores substantive issues in public policy of industrialized democracies with material written mostly by political scientists, but also economists, sociologists, and psychologists. Issues of research design and the appropriateness of social inquiry figure prominently in the discussions. The course has two fundamental aims. The first is to assess our analytical tools and concepts for understanding how public policies are generated and changed. The second is to explore areas of comparative public policy that have seen interesting developments in the last twenty years.

The course is open to both MA and PhD students. For PhD students who are specializing in Public Policy as one of their fields, this course is the core course. A fuller bibliography of supplementary literature is provided in the Public Policy Core Course Reading List. The latter is available from the instructor and will be a primary source for PhD students who intend to write the Major Field Exam in Public Policy.

2 Requirements

Participation: (30 percent). Class sessions will be conducted in a highly participatory seminar format. In that spirit, you will make two brief *presentations* during the semester on that week's assigned readings. Presentations are *not* intended to provide a thorough overview of the readings. Instead, they should provide the necessary background for a question or point of discussion to be directed to your fellow seminar participants. Plan on taking 20 minutes to: (a) briefly overview the readings; (b) provide your own analysis of the literature; and (c) present some key questions for all of us to consider. Please be ready to be the main contributor to the discussion on the days you present – by default I will refer all class questions to you.

To encourage discussion all of you should *prepare three questions* a week to post in the Blackboard discussion forum by 8:00am the day of class. The questions can be theoretical or methodological in nature. Try to think across readings, regions, and weeks of the syllabus. Presenters are encouraged to use common questions when leading discussions. No late questions will be accepted. As the class will depend heavily on the quality of class participation, it is essential that members of the seminar attend all sessions, participate actively in class discussions, complete the required readings prior to class, and send in your questions in a timely manner. Participation grades will depend equally on participation, presentations, and weekly questions.

Papers: (50 percent total). There are two options for fulfilling the paper assignment. They are: *Two analytical essays* of 7 pages surveying the readings for the weeks you lead discussion. The surveys should not provide a summary of the week's reading; they should critically assess the major strengths and weaknesses of the selection of works, analyze the major theoretical debates, and tease out conflicts or inconsistencies in the conventional wisdom. Try to make a coherent argument about the body of literature. Papers should be emailed as a pdf file and are due at the beginning of the class on the days when you lead discussion. An *alternative* to the literature surveys is to write either a significant revision of an already existent and plausibly publishable paper or a proposal (approx. 12 pages) for a future paper or grant submission. This option needs to be done in consultation with me. Note that this is by far the more difficult option. Papers (in pdf format) are due the Friday of the last week of class. Late papers will be penalized five points per day. No work will be accepted after the Exam Period.

Final Exam: (20 percent). On the last day of class I will hand out three questions from which you will be required to choose one. You will have two hours to answer the question. This essay will force you to integrate insights drawn from the entire course.

3 Note on the Readings

Each week there are usually five required readings. In most cases, I have made the choice between readings on different theoretical aspects on each given topic. The readings are distributed electronically via Blackboard. I also ask you to rate each reading on Blackboard.

4 Class Schedule

09-Jan-2012: Introduction

- Collier, D. (1993). The comparative method. In Finifter, A., editor, *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II*, pages 105–119. American Political Science Association, Washington DC *)
- Hall, P. A. (2003). Aligning ontology and methodology in comparative research. In Mahoney, J. and Rueschemeyer, D., editors, *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, pages 373–404. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Pontusson, J. (1995). From comparative public policy to political economy: Putting political institutions in their place and taking interests seriously. *Comparative Political Studies*, 28(1):117–147
- Simeon, R. (1976). Studying public policy. *Canadian Journal of Political*, 9(4):548–580
- Stone, D. A. (1988). *Policy Paradox and Political Reason*. Longman, London, pages 13–26

*) Note that the debate advanced substantively, eg:

- Collier, D., Brady, H. E., and Seawright, J. (2010). Sources of leverage in causal inference: Toward an alternative view of methodology. In Collier, D. and Brady, H. E., editors, *Rethinking social inquiry: Diverse tools, shared standards*, pages 191–200. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham
- Brady, H. E., Collier, D., and Box-Steffensmeier, J. M. (2009). Overview of political methodology: Post-behavioral movements and trends. In Goodin, R. E., editor, *The Oxford handbook of political science*, pages 1005–1053. Oxford University Press, New York

16-Jan-2012: Micro-foundations

- Neblo, M. A., Esterling, K. M., Kennedy, R. P., Lazer, D. M., and Sokhey, A. E. (2010). Who wants to deliberate - and why? *American Political Science Review*, 104(3):566–583

- Shepsle, K. A. (2010). *Analyzing politics : rationality, behavior, and institutions*. W.W. Norton, New York, pages 15–31
- Simon, H. A. (1985). Human nature in politics: The dialogue of psychology with political science. *American Political Science Review*, 79(2):293–304
- Taber, C. (2003). Information processing and public opinion. In Sears, D. O., Huddy, L., and Jervis, R., editors, *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, pages 433–476. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Wilson, R. K. (2011). The contribution of behavioral economics to political science. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 14(1):201–223

23-Jan-2012: Interests

- Culpepper, P. D. (2011). *Quiet politics and business power : corporate control in Europe and Japan*. Cambridge University Press, New York, pages 1–81
- Hacker, J. S. and Pierson, P. (2010). Winner-Take-All politics: Public policy, political organization, and the precipitous rise of top incomes in the united states. *Politics & Society*, 38(2):152 –204
- Häusermann, S. (2010). Solidarity with whom? why organised labour is losing ground in continental pension politics. *European Journal of Political Research*, 49(2):223–256
- Mares, I. (2003). The sources of business interest in social insurance: Sectoral versus national differences. *World Politics*, 55(2):229–258
- Olson, M. (1965). *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, pages 1–65

30-Jan-2012: Representation

- Adams, J. and Ezrow, L. (2009). Who do european parties represent? how western european parties represent the policy preferences of opinion leaders. *Journal of Politics*, 71(1):206–223
- Kang, S. and Powell, G. B. (2010). Representation and policy responsiveness: The median voter, election rules, and redistributive welfare spending. *Journal of Politics*, 72(4):1014–1028
- Soroka, S. and Wlezien, C. (2010). *Degrees of democracy : politics, public opinion, and policy*. Cambridge University Press, New York, pages 1–62, 102–144
- Stimson, J. A., Mackuen, M. B., and Erikson, R. S. (1995). Dynamic representation. *American Political Science Review*, 89(3):543–565
- Strøm, K. (1990). A behavioral theory of competitive political parties. *American Journal of Political Science*, 34(2):565–598

6-Feb-2012: Institutions I

- Moe, T. M. (2005). Power and political institutions. *Perspectives on Politics*, 3(02):215–233
- Ostrom, E. (1999). Coping with the tragedies of the commons. *Annual Reviews in Political Science*, 2(1):493–535
- Schmidt, V. A. (2008). Discursive institutionalism: The explanatory power of ideas and discourse. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11:303–326
- Thelen, K. (1999). Historical institutionalism in comparative politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2:369–404
- Tsebelis, G. (1995). Decision making in political systems: Veto players in presidentialism, parliamentarism, multicameralism and multipartyism. *British Journal of Political Science*, 25(3):289–325

13-Feb-2012: Institutions II

- Gehlbach, S. and Malesky, E. J. (2010). The contribution of veto players to economic reform. *Journal of Politics*, 72(4):957–975
- Greif, A. and Laitin, D. D. (2004). A theory of endogenous institutional change. *American Political Science Review*, 98(4):633–652
- Levitsky, S. and Murillo, M. V. (2009). Variation in institutional strength. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12(1):115–133
- Page, S. E. (2006). Path dependence. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 1(1):87–115
- Pierson, P. (2000). Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics. *American Political Science Review*, 94(2):251–267

27-Feb-2012: Ideas

- Blyth, M. (2001). The Transformation of the Swedish Model: Economic Ideas, Distributional Conflict, and Institutional Change. *World Politics*, 54(1):1–26
- Campbell, J. L. (2002). Ideas, politics, and public policy. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28:21–38
- Hall, P. A. (1993). Policy paradigms, social learning, and the state: The case of economic policymaking in Britain. *Comparative Politics*, 25(3):275–296
- Lieberman, R. C. (2002). Ideas, institutions, and political order: Explaining political change. *American Political Science Review*, 96(4):697–712
- Mandelkern, R. and Shalev, M. (2010). Power and the ascendance of new economic policy ideas: Lessons from the 1980s crisis in Israel. *World Politics*, 62(3):459–495

6-Mar-2012: Policy Processes I

- Baumgartner, F. R. and Jones, B. D. (1993). *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. University of Chicago, Chicago, pages 3–55
- Jacobs, A. M. (2011). *Governing for the long term : democracy and the politics of investment*. Cambridge University Press, New York, pages 1–71, 241–268
- Jones, B. D. and Baumgartner, F. R. (2005). A model of choice for public policy. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15(3):325–351
- Kingdon, J. W. (1995). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. HarperCollins College Publishers, New York, 2nd edition, pages 165–208
- Sabatier, P. A. and Weible, C. M. (2007). The advocacy coalition framework: Innovations and clarifications. In Sabatier, P. A., editor, *Theories of the Policy Process*, pages 189–222. Westview Press, Boulder, 2nd edition

13-Mar-2012: Policy Processes II

- Callander, S. (2011). Searching for good policies. *American Political Science Review*, 105(4):643–662
- Hacker, J. S. (2004). Privatizing risk without privatizing the welfare state: The hidden politics of social policy retrenchment in the United States. *American Political Science Review*, 98(2):243–260
- Mettler, S. and Soss, J. (2004). The consequences of public policy for democratic citizenship: Bridging policy studies and mass politics. *Perspectives on Politics*, 2(1):55–73
- Patashnik, E. (2003). After the public interest prevails: The political sustainability of policy reform. *Governance*, 16(2):203–234
- Pierson, P. (1996). The new politics of the welfare state. *World Politics*, 48(2):143–179

20-Mar-2012: Diffusion

- Boushey, G. (2010). *Policy diffusion dynamics in America*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pages 1–55
- Dobbin, F., Simmons, B., and Garrett, G. (2007). The global diffusion of public policies: Social construction, coercion, competition, or learning? *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33(1):449–472
- Gilardi, F. (2010). Who learns from what in policy diffusion processes? *American Journal of Political Science*, 54(3):650–666
- Holzinger, K., Knill, C., and Sommerer, T. (2008). Environmental policy convergence: The impact of international harmonization, transnational communication, and regulatory competition. *International Organization*, 62(4):553–587
- Weyland, K. (2005). Theories of policy diffusion: Lessons from latin american pension reform. *World Politics*, 57(2):262–295

27-Mar-2012: Networks

- Dowding, K. (1995). Model or metaphor? a critical review of the policy network approach. *Political Studies*, 43(1):136–158
- Kenis, P. and Schneider, V. (1991). Policy networks and policy analysis: Scrutinizing a new analytical toolbox. In Marin, B. and Mayntz, R., editors, *Policy Networks: Empirical Evidence and Theoretical Considerations*, pages 25–56. Campus, Frankfurt
- Rhodes, R. A. W. (2008). Policy network analysis. In Goodin, R. E., Rein, M., and Moran, M., editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy*, pages 425–448. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Skogstad, G. (2008). Policy networks and policy communities: Conceptualizing state-societal relationships in the policy process. In White, L. A., Simeon, R., Vipond, R., and Wallner, J., editors, *The comparative turn in Canadian political science*, pages 205–220. UBC Press, Vancouver
- Ward, M. D., Stovel, K., and Sacks, A. (2011). Network analysis and political science. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 14:245–264

3-Apr-2012: Welfare State

- Busemeyer, M. R. (2009). From myth to reality: Globalisation and public spending in OECD countries revisited. *European Journal of Political Research*, 48(4):455–482
- Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Polity Press, Cambridge, pages 9–54
- Iversen, T. and Soskice, D. (2009). Distribution and redistribution: The shadow of the nineteenth century. *World Politics*, 61(3):438–486
- Korpi, W. (2006). Power resources and Employer-Centered approaches in explanations of welfare states and varieties of capitalism: Protagonists, consenters, and antagonists. *World Politics*, 58(2):167–206
- Walter, S. (2010). Globalization and the welfare state: Testing the microfoundations of the compensation hypothesis. *International Studies Quarterly*, 54(2):403–426