SYLLABUS

Professor: Alfred P. Montero
Office: Hasenstab 302
Phone: x4085 (Office); 507-301-8419 (cell)
Email: amontero@carleton.edu
Office Hours: 3 p.m.–4:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays; and by appt. on Zoom

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive overview of comparative and international public policy. It examines major theories and approaches to public policy design and implementation in several major areas: international political economy (including the study of international trade and monetary policy, financial regulation, technological change including artificial intelligence, and comparative welfare policy), global public health and comparative healthcare policy, housing, public safety and education, human rights, institutional development (including democratic governance, accountability systems, public safety, and judicial reform), and environmental public policy. This course serves as the gateway for the Public Policy Minor and it provides a good basis for more advanced work in comparative and international public policy at the graduate level.

What Is Expected of Students

Students will be expected to read, think, criticize, and form arguments. Outside of the classroom, this means that students must engage with the reading assignments and required audiovisual materials. Inside the classroom, the work in this class is highly interactive, involving much debate and discussion, sometimes in formal, timed settings, and sometimes in less formal formats. The best students will be critical but balanced in their assessments, and they will develop coherent arguments that they can defend in their writing and in their classroom discussions and debates. Although students’ own life experiences and opinions are welcome and valued in this class, more frequently students will be asked to defend or analyze perspectives quite different from their own. The effectiveness of their arguments will be judged as rigorously as if they were personally held. Any student who believes that they will have difficulty taking on a particular position or listening to a certain point of view, ought to communicate their concerns to the professor before class or during office hours.

Materials

This course uses a variety of written and audiovisual materials that will all be available on Moodle.

Grading

Assessment of students in this course will be based on their performance on two light research papers, a group data analysis project with an oral presentation component, and classroom participation. The grade breakdown is as follows:

First writing assignment (25%)
Second writing assignment (35%)
Group policy prescription assignment (25%, the sum of a group dynamics score (10%) and the oral presentation of findings (15%))
Class participation (15%)

The Writing Assignments

Paper assignments in this course are of varying lengths. Yet all must be typed, paginated, and double-spaced with Times New Roman or Garamond font type, 12cpi font size, and one-inch margins. Failure to follow these style requirements will result in points deductions.

The writing assignments must be turned in as PDF files on Dropbox by 5 p.m. Late work will receive no credit. Students anticipating missing the deadline must contact the professor no fewer than 48 hours before the deadline. Since the ability to edit texts and produce concise argument is a touchstone for assessing and developing critical skills, students will not be allowed to surpass the required number of pages. A handout for each of these assignments will specify the parameters of each of these papers well before the due date. Revisions to graded first drafts will be possible.

Paper #1 Hypothesis-testing Project

Students will develop or select a hypothesis discussed during the first sections of the course. Using a mix of quantitative and qualitative empirical evidence, they will compose a 6-7-page analytical paper testing the selected hypothesis. Completing this assignment will require a light amount of independent research.

Paper #2 Policy-Position Paper

Based on their study of policy areas during section 3 of the course, students research a problem area of their choosing and develop a policy prescription to address this problem. This paper will follow the conventions of policy-position papers that define the problem, discuss the failures of extant policy responses, and then develop a prescriptive approach that unpacks a specific policy. The final section of the paper anticipates some of the problems with the proposed policy and suggests possible remedies or forbearances. This paper will be 8-10 pages and will require a longer period of research than is the case for paper #1. The work in this paper must not be closely related to the focus of the first paper or the group data analysis project.

Group Data Analysis Project

Students will be assigned to groups during the first sections of the course. In these groups, they will be given a policy profile and a research mission that crosses several areas of public policy. In most cases, the focus of the mission will be cross-national in its comparative scope, but focused primarily on a contemporary policy issue. Each group will work with the professor to determine the focus of each mission and what the group will do. Then they will organize to gather both qualitative and quantitative data on the subject and organize a presentation that follows the policy-position approach modeled in Paper #2. Quantitative work can be done in Excel, but more advanced work will require the use of a statistical package such as Stata or R. A detailed handout will describe the format and other aspects of this project during the first weeks of the course.
The “group dynamics” score will be determined based on confidential peer evaluations, professor’s observations or preliminary work. Emphasis will be placed on the demonstration of consistent effort by all group members. The group dynamics score will be based on a mean group score adjusted for varying levels of individual effort. In most cases, collective responsibility tends to cause all individual scores to mirror the group score, which is the goal.

Class Participation

It is not possible to be a consistently quiet observer in this course. The classroom work in this course requires constant communication of students’ insights into the subjects and materials of the class. Participation is an integral part of the way in which students prepare for graded assignments and are evaluated. Student participation will be assessed in both formal, structured exercises and more informal and open-ended assignments in class. In most cases, the parameters of participation assignments will be explained in handouts and during prior classes.

Assessment of student participation provides some data to measure student learning. This course will use other tools, including occasional “diagnostics,” that will ask students to respond to a small number of questions on the readings and presentations. The professor will follow up with students whose scores suggest some challenges with the materials or the schedule.

Attendance is required under normal circumstances. If health and/or continued quarantine prevent in-person attendance, students so affected will be provided with a variety of alternative opportunities for participation and assessment. These may include asynchronous assignments and synchronous activities such as oral exams. This course will attempt to avoid simultaneous, hybrid formats in the classroom as these are disruptive and unsustainable.

Students who know that they will be absent due to a scheduling conflict involving athletic events, Model U.N., forensics, job interviews, or any other activity, must communicate their scheduling conflicts to the professor via email/text/WhatsApp as soon as possible.

Finally, there will be a number of enrichment opportunities linked to this course. Guest speakers who are providing on-campus talks, panel presentations, webinars, and the occasional “Public Policy Breakfast Chat” in the 2nd floor lounge of Hasenstab before class, will add to the experience of this course. These are optional experiences, but I recommend that students avail themselves of at least one of these during the term. Attendance for speakers and events posted in the syllabus is required.

The Grading Scale

I will be using the following grading scale in this course:
- 98-100 A+
- 94-97  A
- 91-93  A-
- 88-90  B+
- 83-87  B
- 79-82  B-
- 76-78  C+
- 72-75  C
- 68-71  C-
Academic Misconduct

Given the fact that academe relies upon the ethical conduct of scholars, students are held to the same standards in their own work. Any act of academic dishonesty or misconduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.

Special Needs

Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Office of Accessibility Services (OAR) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to arrange for reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, autism spectrum, chronic health, traumatic brain injury and concussions, sensory, or physical), please contact Sam Thayer, Director of OAR, to arrange a confidential evaluation. This course will implement only accommodations first approved by the OAR.

Global Trigger Warning

The substantive content of this course involves issues, subjects, and materials that some students will find disconcerting and, perhaps, triggering. Whenever possible, I will do my best to provide forewarning, but I also ask that students communicate directly with me about any issues or subjects that are particularly concerning to them. These communications will be protected with the utmost discretion.

NOTE: Readings must be completed for the dates assigned below.

SECTION ONE

THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT OF PUBLIC POLICY GOVERNANCE

Session 1: Anarchy, International Institutions, and Neoliberal Globalization

Anarchy and the Problem of Cooperation (Monday, September 11)


On Moodle: Recommended Video - “Cooperation Under Anarchy”
Embedded Liberalism and Neoliberalism (Wednesday, September 13)


Whither State Power in a Post-Neoliberal Age? (Friday, September 15)


On Moodle: Recommended Videos - “Money and Its Management” and “Exchange Rate Regimes”

Recommended: Adam Tooze, interviewed by Ezra Klein, “*How the Fed is Shaking the Entire System.*” Ezra Klein Show podcast (Oct. 7, 2022). Note: Pay close attention to the concept of “polycrisis.”

Session 2: Global Capitalism and Transnational Networks

Macroeconomic Policy-making (Monday, September 18)


Artificial Intelligence, Transnational Production and Labor (Wednesday, September 20)


Transnational and “Glocal” Movements and Networks (Friday, September 22)


**Human Rights, Basic Needs, and Human Security Regimes (Monday, September 25)**


**Debating Globalization and Agency – States, Movements, Local and Transnational Networks and Communities (Wednesday, September 27)**

Debate #1: Technological Change and Human Agency

**SECTION TWO**

**VARIETIES OF STATES AND CAPITALISMS**

**Session 3: Types of States and Varieties of Capitalism**

**Liberal and Social Democratic States/Orders (Friday, September 29)**


Gary Gerstle, interviewed on The Essential Podcast, “The Rise and Fall of the Neoliberal Order” (June 30, 2022).

**Developmentalist States and Hierarchical Capitalism (Monday, October 2)**


**Capitalist States and Democracy (Wednesday, October 4)**


**Humphrey School Event (Thursday, October 5)**

Learn about Masters programs in public policy at the Humphrey School. Hosted by Michael Massad’14, Director of Admissions, and visiting Humphrey faculty. 4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m. in Hasenstab 002 (food and refreshments will be served).

**Session 4: Social Welfare Regimes, Poverty and Inequality**

**Social Welfare Regimes (Friday, October 6)**


**Poverty and Inequality in Comparative Perspective (Monday, October 9)**


**SECTION THREE**

**POLICY AREAS**

**Session 5: Human Capital, Health, and Quality of Life Issues**

**Education Reforms: K-12 (Wednesday, October 11)**


**Issues in Higher Education: Financial Aid and Inequality (Friday, October 13)**


**MIDTERM BREAK (Monday, October 16)**

**Issues in Higher Education: Affirmative Action (Wednesday, October 18)**


Guest Speaker: Steven Poskanzer, Professor of Political Science and President Emeritus, Carleton

**Inequality and Labor Market Reform (Friday, October 20)**


National Health Care Systems & Health Equity (Monday, October 23)


Pandemic Policy (Wednesday, October 25)

Debate #2: Preparation for the Next Pandemic


Housing (Friday, October 27)


Cait Kelly. 2022. “Not Mobile” podcast on the case of Viking Terrace in Northfield, KYMN – The One 95.1 FM. Listen to the first episode, “Don’t Sign Anything” (November 1, 2022). Other episodes are recommended.

**Guest Speaker:** Mar Valdecantos, Director, Rice County Neighbors United.

**Session 6: Regulating Natural Resources and the Environment**

**Natural Resource Governance and Social Development (Monday, October 30)**


**Energy Policy and Renewables (Wednesday, November 1)**


**Transnational Environmental Networks (Friday, November 3)**

Debate #3


**Guest Speaker @ 4:30 p.m.:** Laura Gamboa (University of Utah), Gary Wynia Memorial Lecturer

**Session 7: Democratic Governance**

**Democratic “Backsliding” and Securing Political Freedoms (Monday, November 6)**


**The Rights of Minorities, Women, LGBTQ, and Indigenous Peoples (Wednesday, November 8)**


**Debating the Erosion of Democracy (Friday, November 10)**

Debate #4


**SECTION FOUR**

**STUDENT GROUP RESEARCH PROJECTS**

**Group Project Presentations (Monday, November 13 and Wednesday, November 15)**