THIRD DRAFT--- February 9, 2020

Meeting times and place:

Lectures 2:30-3:20 pm. M, W, 6203 SSSB
Discussion sections: Lec 301 (Discussion) Van Hise 159 Fridays 9:55-10:45am
Lec 302 (Discussion) Soc Sci 4308 Fridays 12:05-12:55pm

Canvas Course URL: https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/191411

Instructor: Timothy M. Smeeding
http://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/faculty-staff/faculty/timothy-smeeding
TA: Morgan Galecki

Preferred Contact information: smeeding@wisc.edu mgalecki@wisc.edu

Office Hours: Professor Smeeding Tuesday 2-3:30 pm, 3464 SSSB or TA Galecki by appointment

Course description:

The goal of this class is to offer a general primer on large-scale social, economic and other policies directed by federal and state governments, with specific examples in pressing policy areas. Students will gain a broad overall knowledge of how the majority of state and federal funding is both raised and spent, and the associated policy issues and outcomes. The class takes existing policies and the policy process as a given, explains a subset of policies in detail, and puts a focus on a set of specific contemporary public policy questions of concern to students, policymakers and society. A student of this class will gain a broad overall knowledge of how the majority of state and federal funding is spent and the policy outcomes associated with that spending, including its impacts on society. In particular this semester we will also focus on how “administrative burden” affects the delivery of policies and programs. Where appropriate, the class will include speakers from the policy world, or expert researchers on individual topics.

Course Learning Outcomes:

This class will accomplish the following learning goals:

1) Students will demonstrate understanding of how the US federal budget is spent and US domestic policies.
2) Students will gain knowledge and demonstrate application of methodological
tools utilized in the public policy arena (e.g., ‘policy memo’ writing).

3) Students will demonstrate understanding and application of knowledge regarding given policies, being able to apply basic policy concepts to practical cases drawn from the real-world.

4) Students will be able to engage in knowledgeable discussions about policy with researchers, policymakers and policy experts.

5) Students will be able to assess and interpret empirical analyses of policies, and understand the effect of policy changes.

6) Students will understand how policies are implemented and the way that implementation affects outcomes and effectiveness of policy.

7) Students will be able to persuasively advocate for a proposed policy change in an op-ed and in a testimony, as two examples of policy writing.

8) Students will have a chance to present policy options for addressing key public policy issue.

Course Prerequisite: none

Required text:


Paperback version is available on Amazon, and elsewhere - [please buy it ASAP](https://www.amazon.com/Administrative-Burden-Policymaking-Other-Means/dp/087154444X)

Required readings:

The readings for the class are up to date analyses of current policy issues. All required readings will be posted on the class Canvas page: [https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/191411](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/191411) (available second week of class). All assignments except for the in class exam will be administered via Canvas.

Grading structure:

Short memos (30%):

---Op-Ed Write an op-ed of 2 pages (750-800 words) supporting a particular solution to an assigned policy problem, due Tuesday February 25th by 4pm, in WORD on Canvas (15%)

---Testimony Complete a short (4-5 pages) congressional testimony arguing for or against a specific piece of legislation of your choice, due on or before Tuesday, April 21st by 4pm, in WORD on Canvas. (15%)

In both, you will consider the pros and cons of your approach. Both documents should directly engage with readings from the course as well as studies published in academic journals and policy reports produced by government agencies and reputable think tanks.
First exam (25%) Monday, March 9th: Students will complete a first written in-class exam, answering specific questions that demonstrate an ability to analyze specific policy problems within a limited time and word space.

Second exam (25%) Friday, May 1st: Students will complete a second written, in-class exam, answering specific questions that demonstrate an ability to analyze specific policy problems within a limited time and word space.

Attendance and Participation (10%): Students are encouraged to both come to class (attendance taken) and participate in it (see below).

Team Policy Presentations (10%) Student teams of three will present policy options for dealing with a given policy problem and discuss their pros and cons in discussion sections, March 27th-April 17th

Course Requirements:

Students will need to fulfill the following requirements:

1. *Complete all reading assignments.* Come to class with questions/comments to ask of the instructor and fellow students. Class sessions will briefly summarize the reading but will mainly provide the larger systemic context, integrate the materials and explore the implications of the readings.

2. *Participate in class discussion.* This means actively engaging in discussions of the reading and the cases. For all classes student participation will be a major component. To participate, you will need to be in class, so please let me know in advance if you cannot attend. In a few cases, I will assign a number of class discussion questions that we will engage in during class. When you read your readings, keep the questions in mind, and keep notes. Come to class prepared to discuss these questions. *Attendance lists will be distributed and signed for both lectures and discussion sections.*

3. *Complete grading requirements on time.*

Rules, Rights, & Responsibilities:

Academic Integrity

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison’s community of scholars in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For
more information, refer to studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

**McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement:** “The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.” [http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php](http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php)

Diversity & Inclusion

**Institutional statement on diversity:** “Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.” [https://diversity.wisc.edu/](https://diversity.wisc.edu/)

**Assigned Reading List**

**Below you will find the reading list finalized until the midterm on March 9th. All the readings and the PowerPoints from previous classes are kept up to date on Canvas so that one can read ahead and stay current as we move through the class. After March 9th you can expect some changes.**

1. **January 22nd Welcome and Introduction**


Herd and Moynihan, *Administrative Burden*. Introduction, pp 1-10

For those with no economics at all— one short article:


For all of you – an even shorter one and a retort against economists!


Discussion sections: Friday January 24th: hello and current policy issues

What others (PEW, Brookings) think are the top public policy issues of the day: skim and compare to summary of class preferences from PAF 200 Student Info & Interest Forms


2 January 27th, Values, Markets and Public Policy


3. January 29th Measuring Administrative Burden and Contentious issues:
   Political Rights (Voting) and Abortion/Birth Control

   Herd and Moynihan, *Administrative Burden*. Chapters 1-2-3


   Discussion sections: Friday January 31st: Values exercise & Admin. Burden

4. February 3rd and February 5th Where the Money Goes:
   Breaking Down the Federal and State/Local Budgets

Part 1:  4a. February 3rd Federal Government


   Policy Basics: Where do our Federal Tax Dollars go? Center on Budget and Policy
Bernstein, Jared. 2019. “A very good economic idea may be about to replace a very bad one”, Washington Post, January 10th; https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/01/10/very-good-economic-idea-may-be-about-replace-very-bad-one/?utm_term=.66ef0ff11f76


**Part 2: 4b. February 5th CBO plus State/ Local Budgeting**


**and**


**Discussion sections: Friday, February 7th:**

CFRB. 2020,. The Debt Fixer” - reduce the debt and balance the federal budget exercise at http://www.crfb.org/debtfixer/?group=lafollettepa20019

5. **February 10th: Demography and Public Policy**

*Guest lecturer, Marcy Carlson. Professor and Director CDE*

Furstenberg, Frank. 2014. “Fifty Years of Family Change: From Consensus to Complexity” ANNALS, Volume 654, July 2014, pp 12-30 (PDF)

Berger, Lawrence and Marcia Carlson. 2019.” Family Policy and Complex Contemporary Families: A Decade in Review and Implications for the Next Decade of Research and Policy Practice”, October 2019 (PDF)

Waldfogel , Jane. 2019. “Making it More Affordable to Raise a Family” , testimony before the Joint Economic Committee of the United States Congress, September 10, (PDF)

6. February 12th: The Minimum Wage and the “Living Wage”


Van Dam and Siegel. 2020, Minimum wage increases fueling faster wage growth for those at the bottom Wash PO, January 2nd at https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/01/02/minimum-wage-increases-fueling-faster-wage-growth-those-bottom/?arc404=true&wpsrc=pw_acq_010920

Discussion sections: Friday, February 14th discuss the week’s topics and visit from Olivia Ernst from the campus Writing Center talking about policy writing as it applies to this class and your testimony

7. February 17th Welcome to the LFS Undergraduate Certificate and the Internship Extravaganza

This class will include an explanation of the new LFS Undergraduate Certificate in Policy, a special panel of internship experts, LaFollette staff and others


8. February 19th and 26th: Reducing Poverty, Income Support and Encouraging Work

8a: February 19th: What is Poverty and Encouraging Work

West Wing. 2001. A New Formula for Poverty at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9EehZJw-zk and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8S4JJtV1zQ24th (short 5 minutes or so of video)


**Discussion sections: Friday, February 21st --tba--**

9. **February 24th:** Policy Reporting

**Guest speaker: Judy Davidoff, editor, Isthmus (and LFS graduate)**


More generally—read a bit about “Public Policy Reporting: The Role of the Press”


**Assignment due: Tuesday February 25th: Op Ed due 4pm**

Herd and Moynihan, Administrative Burden. Chapters 6 (SNAP) and 8 (EITC)


Discussion sections: Friday, February 28th: poverty discussion and sign up for presentations

10. March 2nd and March 4th Inequality and Mobility

10a. March 2nd Inequality


Reeves, Richard and Katherine Guyot. 2018. There are many definitions of “middle class”—here’s ours Brookings September 4, at https://www.brookings.edu/blog/upfront/2018/09/04/there-are-many-definitions-of-middle-class-heres-ours/

24th at https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/24/opinion/income-inequality-upper-middle-class.html (PDF)


OPTIONAL: Both below are interactive and you have to go to the NYT to fill in data if you want to do so!


10b. March 9th Mobility


Discussion sections: Friday, March 4th getting ready for the hour exam
ASSIGNMENT March 9th  In-class mid-term exam

**********expect some changes in the syllabus beyond here **********

11. March 11th  Social Security


Herd and Moynihan, Administrative Burden. Chapter 9, Social Security


Discussion sections: Friday, March 13th  The CBO social security balancing exercise


Spring Break: March 16th to March 20th

12. March 23rd, 25th and 30th : Health and Health Care Policy: Cost, Quality, Access and Value

12a. March 23rd  Introduction to Health, Health Care and Medicaid


Deaton, Angus. 2012. “Trying to be a good hip-op consumer” Letter from America, British Medical Journal (PDF)


12b. March 25th The US Health Care System and Health Care Reform,

Guest lecturer, Professor Yang Wang, LFS


Joanne Lynn, Aaron McKethan, and Ashish K. Jha, 2015 “ Value-Based Payments Require Valuing What Matters to Patients” JAMA October 13, Volume 314, Number 14, pp 1445-1446 ( PDF) also at https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2443231


Discussion sections: Friday, March 27th class discussion and presentations

12c. March 30th Administrative Burdens, Opioids and Final Policy Considerations

Herd and Moynihan. 2018. Administrative Burden, chapters 4, ACA; 5, Medicare; 6, Medicaid


13. April 1st Science and Privacy vs Security Policy
"Privacy Issues Related to Medical Records and Consumer Genetic Testing Companies"
Guest lecturer; Professor Lauren Schmitz, LFS


Discussion sections: Friday, April 3rd class discussion and presentations

12 April 6th: Criminal Justice Policy


Western, Bruce. 2015. Mass Incarceration, Visualized (short video) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u51_pzax4M0

15. April 8th and 13th, Climate, Environment and Energy Policy
15.a April 8th—the climate problem


Sanders, Nicholas. 2019. Clearing the Air on the Costs of Pollution, ECONOFACT, October 18th, at https://econofact.org/clearing-the-air-on-the-costs-of-pollution


**Discussion sections:** Friday, April 10th class discussion and presentations

15b. April 13th Climate and Energy Policy


16. April 15th and 20th Human Capital and Education Policy: ECE, K-12 and Higher Education

16.a. April 15th Overview, ECE and k-12


Discussion sections: Friday, April 17th class discussion and presentations

16b. April 20th Higher education, educational mobility and inequality


Carey, Kevin. 2019. In back rooms College, Inc., clamors for access to cash “, NY Times,

Assignment due: Tuesday, April 21st Testimony due 4pm

Topic 17. April 22nd Regulatory Policy: Gun Control


Discussion sections: Friday, April 24th preparation for second hour exam

18. April 27th and April 29th Immigration policy and wrap up

18.a April 27th: Immigration basics


18.b. April 29th Immigration policy, and Wrap up

Herd and Moynihan, Administrative Burden, Chapter 10, on evidence


ASSIGNMENT due, May 1: Second hour exam

END