Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: https://catalog.uvu.edu/

Semester: Spring
Course Prefix: POLS
Course Title: Introduction to Public Policy

Year: 2025
Course and Section #: 331- - X01
Credits: 3

Course Description

Provides an introduction to the process of public policy-making in the United States and to the substance of policy in areas like health policy, environmental policy, and education policy. Introduces students to the fundamental skills of policy analysis and to some of the difficult choices involved in identifying, addressing, and resolving public policy problems.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

☐ General Education Requirements
☐ Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
☒ Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
☒ Discipline Core Requirements in Program
☐ Elective Core Requirements in Program
☐ Open Elective
Other: *Click here to enter text.*

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Steven M. Sylvester

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the major theories of public policy.
2. Apply the major theories of public policy to policy problems affecting society.
3. Examine the moving parts of the policy process in the United States, including the primary actors and institutions involved in the policymaking process.
4. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of media depictions of policy issues in partisan or news media outlets.
5. Communicate ideas through writing and class discussion.
6. Develop subject matter writing skills through the writing of a policy brief.

Course Materials and Texts

Peters, B. Guy. 2022. American Public Policy: Promise and Performance, 11th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. **ISBN: 9781071809167**

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy
Participation: 5%
Chapter Quizzes: 15%
Discussion Board Questions: 20%
Response Papers: 15%
Policy Brief: 45%

Grading Scale: A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72;
D+ 67-69; D 63-66; D- 60-62; E 0-59

A - Work demonstrates consistently excellent academic performance; thorough comprehension; ability to correlate the material with other ideas, to communicate with course concepts and skills; reliability in attendance, and attention to assignments.

B - Work demonstrates superior academic performance overall; reliability in attendance and attention to assignments; may demonstrate excellence but with less consistency than an A student.

C - Work demonstrates satisfactory performance overall, as well as reliability in attendance and attention to assignments.

D - Work demonstrates minimal performance overall and limited knowledge of the subject area.

E - Work demonstrates unsatisfactory performance or unfulfilled requirements.

A note on rounding: Rounding for grades .5 to .99 is considered based on my perception of outstanding participation in the course, and requests for rounding or grade changes are not entertained.

A note on grades: Do your best, care primarily about learning the material, and don't stress over grades too much (to the best of your ability). I am happy to discuss your grade or standing in the class at any time, but I encourage you to initiate these conversations sooner rather than later, so our discussion can have the most impact.

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments
Peters, B. Guy. 2022. American Public Policy: Promise and Performance, 11th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. **ISBN: 9781071809167**

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

Module No.	Topic	Readings
Course Orientation	Course Introduction & Overview of Policy Brief	
1	What is Public Policy?	Guy – Chapter 1

2	The Structure of Policymaking in the American Government	Guy – Chapter 2
3	Explaining Policy Choices	Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: The Policy Cycle and its Stages Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: The Advocacy Coalition Framework Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: The Social Construction of Target Populations Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: Critical Policy Studies and the Narrative Policy Framework Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: Punctuated Equilibrium Theory
	Policy Issue: Housing	Watch: The Housing Affordability Crisis We Don't Want to Solve Watch: Why Rent is Rising in the U.S. Watch: How the Pandemic Drove Rents Higher and

		Made Housing Inequality Worse Listen: Three Reasons for the Housing Shortage Read: More Than a Home – Housing is a Human Right Read: America's Housing Crisis is a Choice Read: Housing Affordability – What are Best Practices and Why are they Important Read: The State of the Stat's Housing Market
4	Agenda Setting and Public Policy	Guy – Chapter 4
5	Legitimating Policy Choices	Guy – Chapter 5 Mayorkas Impeached: Is Congress on a Witch Hunt? 5 Ways to Judge Whether Oversight is Legitimate or Politicized
6	Organizations and Policy Implementation	Guy – Chapter 6
	Policy Issue: Organ Donation	Watch: Why More than 100,000 Americans Are

		Waiting for Organs
		Watch: Living Kidney Donors Should Receive Money for their Costs of Donating
		Watch: Inside the Farm Raising Gene-Edited Pigs for Human Kidney Transplants
		Read: U.S. States are Waging a Civil War over Donated Livers. Will a New Proposal Finally Resolve It?
		Read: This Gift Voucher Might Just Get you a Kidney
		Read: To Solve Organ Shortage, States Consider 'opt-out' Organ Donation Laws
7	Evaluations and Policy Change	Guy – Chapter 8
8	Public Policy and its Impact on Budgeting	Guy – Chapter 7
	Policy Issue: Higher Education	Watch: Frontline – College Inc.
		Watch: Frontline – A Subprime Education
		Listen: Tuition Impossible

		Listen: Disown Your Kid to Pay for College Read: The Long Road to the Student Debt Crisis Read: Price of College Increasing Almost 8 Times Faster Than Wages

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Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

AI programs are not a replacement for your human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. Writing, thinking, and researching are crafts you must develop over time to develop your voice. At the same time, you should learn how to use AI and in what instances AI can be helpful to you.

The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Bard, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas;
- Fine-tuning your research questions;
- Finding information on your topic;
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts and
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts/responses assigned to you or content that you put into a Teams/Canvas chat.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty.

Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work. Students who are seen using AI will receive a 0 for the assignment and could potentially be reported to student misconduct.

Using Remote Testing Software

☒ This course does not use remote testing software.

☐ This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities
Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at [accessibilityservices@uvu.edu](#) or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at [DHHservices@uvu.edu](#)

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity
At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: *Student Code of Conduct*](#).

Equity and Title IX
Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status,

pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation
UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.
To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a specially dedicated space for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.