MILANO THE NEW SCHOOL FOR MANAGEMENT AND URBAN POLICY

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Course Syllabus

Policy Analysis
Fall 2010
Tuesday and Thursday, 4:00 – 5:50 PM

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Course Description

Policy Analysis is the first course in a three-part sequence required for all students in the urban policy program. It prepares you for the Laboratory in Issue Analysis and the Advanced Seminar, in which students analyze policy and management issues and make recommendations for actual clients. This course is designed to help students develop and apply analytic skills necessary for informed decision-making.

Although policy analysis was originally associated with the public sector, it is now important to the nonprofit and corporate sectors as well. Based largely on case discussions, the class will explore the choices facing decision makers in the public and nonprofit sectors in the US and abroad with regard to a wide range of issues, including public health, environmental protection, criminal justice, and transportation. While the course will emphasize the development of analytic skills, it will also discuss alternative models of policy analysis and consider several critical perspectives. The course will culminate in a team project in which students work on a policy problem in preparation for Laboratory in Issue Analysis.

Case studies are used throughout the course to apply analytical techniques to a broad array of problems situated within different organizational settings. A case describes a real situation in which a public or private official or manager must make a specific decision. The cases summarize the various pressures and considerations that the official or manager must weigh in making the decision and the often incomplete or contradictory

information available at the time. Cases challenge you to put yourself in the decision-maker's place, to grapple with his or her dilemma, and formulate the best possible solution.

The course will be organized to familiarize students with the frameworks and tools of policy analysis, giving special attention to application. While students will develop rigorous analytic skills, they will also develop a sense of humility about the limits of their tools and the value of alternative models for decision-making. Further, students will learn how to communicate their findings and recommendations clearly, succinctly and persuasively in written and verbal form. Class attendance, thorough preparation, and active participation will be critical prerequisites for skill development and will figure centrally in the evaluation of student performance.

Course Requirements

In addition to class attendance and active participation students will be expected to present cases weekly, to prepare two pieces of policy analysis in the form of a policy memo to a decision-maker, and to work on an issue analysis as part of a team. The team's analysis will culminate in a policy memo and live briefing to a "client." Prior to the group issue analysis all students will complete a "presolve" – a single iteration of analysis in the absence of data collection. In addition there will be a written homework assignment for a cost benefit case that will require doing some quantitative analysis using a spreadsheet. Since policy analysts in organizational settings rarely work independently, but more often work as part of a team, the final analysis and briefing will be a team project. The grading on the project will be a team grade and effectiveness in group dynamics will be included in the grade.

Grading

Grading will reflect the standards generally expected of a graduate level course. Grades of A will be reserved for those students who perform exceptionally on all aspects of the course. Grade of B will reflect adequate graduate level work. Any grade below a B will be an indication that the student is performing at less than an adequate graduate level.

The final grade for the course will be calculated on the following basis:

Class Participation and Preparation (including all homework)	25%
Two Policy Analysis Memoranda (20% each)	40%
Individual Presolve Exercise	10%
Final Team Presolve, Policy Analysis Memorandum, and Client Briefing	25%

Since our goal is to provide an opportunity for students to master the tools of policy analysis, you will have an opportunity to resubmit the first Policy Analysis Memo if you receive a grade of B or lower.

Any student who receives a grade on the first assignment of B or below must resubmit it after receiving comments and suggestions.

The course is designed to prepare you to be a professional. Therefore, all assignments must reflect professional standards of analysis, presentation, writing and timeliness. As in professional life, accurate spelling and grammar, and clear and concise writing are critical. To further simulate the professional world, assignments will not be accepted after they are due, except for students who receive my prior approval. (After all, what good is a policy memo a week after the budget is submitted or the votes have been cast?) An incomplete for the course will be granted only in highly unusual situations and only with a prior written request from you and approval by me.

Computer Proficiency

This course assumes that you can use a PC or Mac and understand how to do basic word processing, use a spreadsheet program, and search and retrieve information from electronic databases. All of your assignments must be word processed and all quantitative analysis must be done with a spreadsheet. If you have little or no prior computer experience, you should enroll in a workshop arranged by Milano's Office of Student Services or through the University's Office of Academic Technology. Students will be provided with additional in-class support and workshops on using spreadsheets (Excel) for financial analysis and cost/benefit analysis and additional sessions on the use of PowerPoint for presentations. The course also assumes that you understand how to do basic research using library and electronic resources. If you are unsure of your research skills, please solicit the help of the librarians in the library, or speak with me during office hours.

Note on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity
You are responsible for learning and understanding the rules on plagiarism and academic integrity. Breaking these rules is a serious offense with serious consequences. The rules are clearly spelled out in the University's policy.
http://www.newschool.edu/gf/students/academic-honesty.htm

Professionalism Policies
This is a professional school. As such, you are expected to conduct yourselves in a professional manner. Please respect the following policies:

- **Cell phones: You must turn off all cell phones and beepers before coming to class.** If you are experiencing an emergency, and need to be reachable, please let me know before class and set your phone to silent. A phone ringing in class ensures its owner is dismissed immediately.
- **Attendance and lateness:** Class will begin and end promptly. If you are going to miss a class, or are going to be late or need to leave early, please let me know ahead of time. Students who come in late and leave early disrupt the class and miss important information.
- **Email:** You should have received notification from the university with your New School email address. This will operate as your address for this course; no supplementary addresses will be possible.

Class Schedule

Classes will normally meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:50 PM. In the last few weeks of the semester, however, due to the need to provide additional teaching support for student briefings, and in order to schedule briefings for each student team, additional time may be scheduled. These times may be necessary to accommodate group work, meet with a lab assistant or supervising faculty member. Additional time will be scheduled for student teams to meet with their faculty supervisors outside of class.

Please note the following changes in the schedule:

- There are no classes on Thursday, September 9th and Thursday, November 25th (Thanksgiving).

Course Readings

The following books are required reading for the course and are available for purchase at Barnes and Noble (5th Avenue and 18th Street):

Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving.* Washington, DC: CQ Press; 2nd edition (November 15, 2004)

John S. Hammond, Ralph L. Keeney, and Howard Raiffa, *Smart Choices: A Practical Guide to Making Better Decisions*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999.

Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. Revised Edition. New York: WW Norton, 2002.

In addition to these books, the course will also require purchase of case studies and other materials published by the John F. Kennedy School of Government (KSG) at Harvard University. These materials can be purchased and downloaded on-line. Go to http://www.ksgcase.harvard.edu/ . The costs for most cases is $3.45 for academic use. (Be sure to click on "Academic" for the price category; otherwise the cost is $6.45 per case). Be sure to download the correct version of the assigned cases. It is easiest to access cases by using the site's "Quick Search" function.

Other readings must be downloaded from the course's website on Blackboard. Go to the "My New School" link on the New School web page to access Blackboard.

Other books of value for this course that students might like to own are:

Carl V. Patton and David S. Sawicki, *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning* (Second Edition) (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993).

David L. Weimer et al., *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practic*e (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1999)

Edith Stokey and Richard Zeckhauser, A *Primer for Policy Analysis* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1979)

Robert B. Reich (ed.), *The Power of Public Ideas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988)

Anthony Boardman, et. al., *Cost Benefit Analysis: Concepts and Practice* (Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1996).

Andrew Lang Golub, *Decision Analysis: An Integrated Approach* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1997).

Class Schedule and Readings

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO POLICY ANALYSIS AND COURSE OVERVIEW

Tues. August 31st: Course Design: Objectives, Structure, and Expectations
A. The Policy Analytic Framework and it Relationship to Problem Solving
B. Learning by the Case Method

Required Reading

Jose Gomez-Ibanez, "Learning by the Case Method" Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Case N15-86-1136.0 (Download from the KSG).

Thurs. Sept 2nd: Problem Identification
Case: "Air Pollution and Democracy: The Mexico City School Calendar Change Proposal," Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Case C16-92-1164.0 (Download from KSG)

Required Reading

Bardach, pp. 1-15 "Define the Problem" and "Assemble Some Evidence"
Hammond et al., Chptrs. 1 & 2 ("Making Smart Choices" and "Problems"), pp. 1-29

A General Schema for Issue Analysis (Schema) (Download from Blackboard)—pp. 1-9

WEEK 2: THE BASIC FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING

Tues. Sept 7th: Generating Alternatives

Case: "Ellen Schall and the Department of Juvenile Justice." (Download from Blackboard)

Required Reading

Bardach, pp. 15-25 "Construct the Alternatives" and pp. 123-131 "Appendix B: Things Governments Do."

Hammond et al., Chpt. 4 ("Alternatives"). pp. 47-64

Schema, pp. 10-12 ("Step 4")

Patton and Sawicki, *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning*, Chpt. 6: "Identifying Alternatives" pp. 227-255 (Download from Blackboard)

Sunstein, Cass R. and Richard H. Thaler. *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness*. New Haven: Yale University Press, "Introduction", pg. 1-14 (Download from Blackboard)

Thurs. Sept 9th: No Class (Rosh Hashanah)

WEEK 3: THE BASIC FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING (CONTINUED)

Tues. Sept 14th: Objectives and Criteria

Case: "The Challenge of Adapting to Climate Change: King County Brings Local Action to a Global Threat" Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Case 1906.0. (Download from KSG)

Required Reading

Hammond et al., Chpt. 3 ("Objectives"), pp. 31-45

Bardach, pp. 25-35 "Select the Criteria"

Patton, Carl & David Sawicki. Basic Methods of Policy Analysis & Planning. NJ: Prentice-Hall. 1986. Chapter 5, "Establishing Evaluative Criteria," pp.139-174. (Download from Blackboard)

Policy Analysis Memo #1 handed out (due Sept. 23rd in class)

Thurs. Sept 16th: Analysis and Recommendation

Case: "Swimming Pools," Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. (Download from Blackboard)

Required Reading
Hammond et al., Chptrs. 5 & 6 ("Consequences" and "Tradeoffs"), pp. 65-108

Bardach, pp. 35-59 "Project the Outcomes," "Confront the Tradeoffs," "Decide!" and "Tell Your Story."

Bardach, pp. 61-105 "Assembling Evidence" and "'Smart (Best) Practices' Research"

Schema, pp. 16-20 ("Step 6")

"Memo Writing" Electronic Hallway. (Download from Blackboard)

"Brief Guidelines for Writing Action Memos" Electronic Hallway . (Download from Blackboard.

"Writing Effective Memos" The Electronic Hallway, 2003. (Download from Blackboard)

"Writing Effective Memoranda: Planning, Drafting and Revising". The Electronic Hallway 2004. (Download from Blackboard)

Optional Reading

Patton and Sawicki, *Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning*, pp. 77-107 (Download from Blackboard).

WEEK 4: THE BASIC FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING (CONTINUED)

Tues. Sept 21st: Review of the Key Components of the Analytic Decision-Making Process

Case: "Seattle Commons," Electronic Hallway. (Download from Blackboard)

Required Reading

Bardach, pp. 133-140 "Appendix C: Semantic Tips"

Hammond et al., Chptrs. 10 & 11, pp. 189-234.

David Weimer and Aidan Vining, Policy Analysis, Concepts and Practice (3rd Edition. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: 1999)": Chpt. 10: "Landing On Your Feet: How to Confront Policy Problems." (Download from Blackboard).

Thurs. Sept 23rd: Case Discussion

Case: "Flu Vaccine Case Study" (Download from Blackboard)

******Policy Analysis Memo #1 Due******

WEEK 5: ALTERNATIVE MODELS FOR POLICY ANALYSIS

Tues. Sept 28th: Politics and Policy Analysis

Required Reading

Deborah A. Stone, Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making Chptrs. 2, and 3, 6, 7, 9, 10
Optional--Conclusion, and Policy Paradox in Action

Thurs. Sept 30th: Alternatives to the Rational Model

Required Reading

Charles E. Lindblom, "The Science of Muddling Through*," Public Administration Review*, Volume 19 (Spring 1959), pp. 79-88 (Download from Blackboard).

Hank C. Jenkins Smith, "Professional Roles for Policy Analysts: A Critical Assessment" Journal of Policy Analysis and Management 2,1 (1982): 88-97 (Download from Blackboard).

John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy* (HarperCollins, 1995), pp. 83-89 and 116-144 (Download from Blackboard)

Richard F. Elmore, "Backward Mapping: Implementation Research and Policy Decisions" Political Science Quarterly 94,4 1979-80): 601-616 (Download from Blackboard)

WEEK 6: ANALYTIC TECHNIQUES

Tues. Oct 5th: Spreadsheets and Financial Analysis

A. Time Value of Money
B. Introduction to Cost Effectiveness and Cost Benefit Analysis'

Required Reading

Regina Herzlinger and Denise Nitterhouse, Financial Accounting and Managerial Control for Nonprofit Organizations. Chpt. 14, "Techniques for Financial Decision-Making" pp. 491-512. Cincinnati: South Western Publishing Co. (Download from Blackboard).

Edith Stokey and Richard Zeckhauser, *A Primer for Policy Analysis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), Chpt. 9 ("Project Evaluation: Benefit Cost Analysis") pp. 134-158 and

Chpt. 10 ("The Valuation of Future Consequences: Discounting") pp. 159-176 (Download from Blackboard).

Thurs. Oct 7th: Review of Discounting and Time Value of Money

Case: Leicester Polytechnic Institute (included at end of Herzinger & Nittenhouse chapter—on Blackboard)

Spreadsheet assignment distributed (due Tues. Oct. 19th).

WEEK 7: ANALYTIC TECHNIQUES (CON.)

Tues. Oct 12th: Cost Benefit Analysis in Theory and Practice

A. Efficiency
B. The Social Welfare Function: Distributional Equity
C. The Challenge of Valuing all the Relevant Impacts

Required Readings

Anthony Boardman et. al, *Cost Benefit Analysis: Concepts and* Practice (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), Chptrs. 1, 2 (Download from Blackboard).

Robert Cullen, "The True Cost of Coal." *Atlantic Monthly* Dec. 1993: 38-52 (on Blackboard).

Optional Reading

Dennis Culhane et al. "Public Service Reductions Associated with Placement of Homeless Persons with Severe Mental Illness in Supportive Housing." Housing Policy Debate 13,1 (2002)107-165. Download from:
http://www.mi.vt.edu/data/files/hpd%2013%281%29/hpd%2013%281%29_culhane.pdf

Anthony Boardman et. al, *Cost Benefit Analysis: Concepts and* Practice (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), Chptrs. 6 and 17 (Download from Blackboard).

******Policy Analysis Memo #1 (second version) Due at start of class******

Policy Analysis Memo #2 (Cost-Benefit memo) distributed—Due Thursday, Oct 28th.

Thurs. Oct 14th: Computer Workshop on Excel and Cost Benefit Analysis

Location TBA

WEEK 8: ANALYTIC TECHNIQUES (CON.)

Tues. Oct 19th: Discounting and Public Policy

Case: "Leasing the Pennsylvania Turnpike" Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Case C14-07-1878.0 (Download from KSG)

******Spreadsheet assignment due******

Thurs. Oct 21st: Review of Cost Benefit Analysis

Case: "Crossrail (A): The Business Case" Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Case CR14-08-1898.1 (Download the case and the sequel from KSG)

WEEK 9: ANALYTIC TECHNIQUES (CONTINUED)

Tues. Oct 26th: Critical Perspectives on Cost-Benefit Analysis

Required Reading

Anthony Boardman et. al, *Cost Benefit Analysis: Concepts and* Practice (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), Chpt. 19, pp.507-522. (Download from Blackbaord)

William H. Trumbell, "Who has Standing in Cost-Benefit Analysis? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. Vol. 9, no., 3, Spring 1990, pp. 201-218 (Download from Blackboard)

Steven Kelman, Cost-Benefit Analysis, an Ethical Critique In John Martin Gilroy and Maurice Wade eds., *The Moral Dimension of Public Policy Choice* (Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 1992 (Download from Blackboard)

Thurs. Oct 28th: Case Discussion

Case: "Bridge Over the Tempisque River." Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Case C18-95-1292.0 (Download from KSG).

******Policy Analysis Memo #2 Due******

WEEK 10: INTRODUCTION TO ISSUE ANALYSIS

Tues. Nov 2nd:

A. Using the Schema
B. Teamwork and Project Management
C. Presolve and Research Design

Required Reading

The Schema (Download from Blackboard)

Lab Manual (Download from Blackboard)

Individual Pre-Solve Assignment Distributed (due Thurs. Nov 4th). TA grades/returns on Mon. Nov 8th.

Thurs. Nov. 4th: Teams Assigned and Issues Distributed

Case: New York City Taxi Cabs

Team Pre-Solve Assignment Distributed (due Tues. Nov 9th).

WEEK 11: GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING

Tues. Nov 9th: Group work with TA and Faculty Advisor

******Team Pre-Solve due to supervisor******

Thurs. Nov 11th: Group work with TA and Faculty Advisor

WEEK 12: GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING (CONTINUED)

Tues. Nov 16th: Group work with TA and Faculty Advisor

Thurs. Nov 18th: Model Briefing and Discussion of Policy Memo (Henry Cohen Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 72 Fifth Avenue, Time TBD)

Required Reading

Presentation Checklist" Electronic Hallway (Download from Blackboard)

WEEK 13: GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING (CONTINUED)

Tues. Nov 23rd: Workshop on PowerPoint Presentations (Time TBD)

Location TBA

Thurs. Nov 25th: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

WEEK 14: GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING (CONTINUED)

Tues. Nov 30th: Group work with TA and Faculty Advisor

Thurs. Dec 2nd: Group work with TA and Faculty Advisor

******Team Policy Analysis Memorandum Due Day Before Briefing******

WEEK 15: BRIEFINGS

Tues. Dec 7th: Briefings (Henry Cohen Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 72 Fifth Avenue)

Thurs. Dec 9th: Briefings (Henry Cohen Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 72 Fifth Avenue)

******Team Policy Analysis Memorandum Due Day Before Briefing******

WEEK 16: EDUCATING THE CLIENT—AND COURSE CONCLUSION

Tues. Dec 14th: NO CLASS

Thurs. Dec 16th: Course Reflections

Required Reading

Behn, Robert (1985). "Policy Analysts, Clients, and Social Scientists." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (Spring): 428-432. (Download from Blackboard)

Eugene Bardach, Educating the Client: An Introduction" "Professional Practice." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (Winter) (Download from Blackboard)

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SUMMARY OF DEADLINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- **Policy Analysis Memo #1 —** Distributed Sept 14th, Due Sept 23rd (Revisions due Oct 12th)
- **Spreadsheet Assignment—** Distributed Oct 7th, Due Oct 19th
- **Policy Analysis Memo #2 —** Distributed Oct 12th, Due Oct 28th
- **Individual Pre-Solve —** Distributed Nov 2nd, Due Nov 4th
- **Team Pre-Solve —** Distributed Nov 4th, Due Nov 9th
- **Team Policy Analysis Memo** — Due the day before the scheduled briefing (12/7 or 12/9)