

GVPT 419P

Seminar in Public Policy: Applied Policy Research

Fall, 2022

Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00-3:15
Edward St. John Learning and Teaching Center, 1309

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This course is the application and evaluation of public policy. We will explore the policy process, from the assessment of need, through implementation, to the evaluation of outcomes. At the end of the course, you will have a better idea of the challenges faced by both elected and unelected policymakers. We will pay particular attention to the needs assessment phase of the policy process, and students will engage in data analysis with the goal of locating where policy change is most needed and is most likely to be effective.

Classes will involve both discussions led by the instructor and discussions led by students. The subject of the discussions will be the readings for the week, media supplements, and relevant additional topics as they come up. Your active participation in this seminar is important both for both the quality of the discussions and for your grade in this class.

Grades

In this class you will be assessed based on the following:

1. Performance on three **quizzes** (20% each, for a total of 60%)
2. Performance on a **seminar discussion assignment** (10%)
3. Quality of **participation** in seminar discussions (10%)
4. Performance on a **final project** (20%)

Quizzes will be short-essay tests, requiring 2-3 paragraphs per answer. Questions will be drawn from readings and seminar discussions. Twice during the semester, each student will either lead

or be included on a team with other students to **lead part of the class discussion** based on the week's reading and/or the media supplements, and the instructor will assess the students' preparation, presentation, and the extent to which the students generate and sustain useful discussions. **Participation** in seminars will involve an evaluation of the frequency and quality of student participation in both in-class and online discussions related to final projects. **Final projects** will take the form of a Powerpoint (or similar) presentation on an instructor approved topic related to local government and politics.

Final grades will be assigned on the following scale:

A+	98-100%
A	92-97%
A-	90-91%
B+	88-89%
B	82-87%
B-	80-81%
C+	78-79%
C	72-77%
C-	70-71%
D+	68-69%
D	62-67%
D-	60-61%
F	59% or lower

Textbooks

There are three required textbooks in this course:

- Walker, Kyle. *Analyzing U.S. Census Data*. <https://walker-data.com/census-r/>. This is the open-source version of the CRC Press book Glaeser, Edward. *Triumph of the City*. Penguin Books.
- Karlan, Dean. 2011. *More than Good Intentions: Improving the Ways the World's Poor Borrow, Save, Farm, Learn, and Stay Healthy*. 2012. Plume Publishing.
- McAskill, William. 2016. *Doing Good Better*. Penguin Publishing.

Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Topic and Readings
Week 1	8/29-31	Introduction, Syllabus, Overview
Week 2	9/7	Education Policy, Media Assignments
Week 3	9/12-14	Transportation and Housing Policy, Media Assignments
Week 4	9/19-21	Welfare and Health Policy, Media Assignments
Week 5	9/26-28	Walker, Chapters 1-2, Quiz 1 (9/28)
Week 6	10/3-5	Environmental and Public Safety Policy, Media Assignments
Week 7	10/10-12	Walker, Chapters 3-4
Week 8	10/17-19	Karlan, Chapters 1-4
Week 9	10/24-26	Karlan, Chapters 5-8
Week 10	10/31-11/2	Karlan, Chapters 9-12
Week 11	11/7-9	McAskill, Chapters 1-6
Week 12	11/14-16	McAskill, Chapters 7-Conclusion, Quiz 2 (11/16)
Week 13	11/21	Project Workshop
Week 14	11/28-30	FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
Week 15	12/5-7	FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
Week 16	12/12	Review

Finals Week When Scheduled **FINAL QUIZ**

Make-up Assignments

Make-up Exams and Assignments will be given as a result of a documented, unexpected emergency or as the result of a university-authorized commitment.

Contacting the Instructor

Students with requests or questions about the class should feel free to contact the instructor. I am happy to discuss issues related to DSS accommodations, class content, or other issues related to the class.

Additional Course Information

The syllabus is tentative, and mid-semester changes to the class may be necessary. Changes are at the discretion of the instructor and will be announced in class. When a class has to be canceled or rescheduled the instructor will communicate that information via email. Students are required to ensure that their emails are registered with ELMS.

Additional information about course-related policies at the University of Maryland, including academic integrity, sexual misconduct, and discrimination, can be found on the Course Related Policies page, hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Studies:

<http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

Information on campus closings and other emergencies can be found on the University website:

<http://www.umd.edu/>

Information related to weather emergencies and campus can be found on the University website and by calling the weather emergency phone number: 301-405-7669.