THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Course Outline

Part I

Programme Title	:	Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Policy Science and Management
Programme QF Level	:	5
Course Title	:	Policy Processes and Institutions
Course Code	:	POS1006
Department	:	Asian and Policy Studies
Credit Points	:	3
Contact Hours	:	39
Pre-requisite(s)	:	Nil
Medium of Instruction	:	EMI
Course Level	:	1

Part II

The University's Graduate Attributes and seven Generic Intended Learning Outcomes (GILOs) represent the attributes of ideal EdUHK graduates and their expected qualities respectively. Learning outcomes work coherently at the University (GILOs), programme (Programme Intended Learning Outcomes) and course (Course Intended Learning Outcomes) levels to achieve the goal of nurturing students with important graduate attributes.

In gist, the Graduate Attributes for Undergraduate, Taught Postgraduate and Research Postgraduate students consist of the following three domains (i.e. in short "PEER & I"):
- **P**rofessional **E**xcellence;
- **E**thical **R**esponsibility; **&**
- **I**nnovation.

The descriptors under these three domains are different for the three groups of students in order to reflect the respective level of Graduate Attributes.

The seven GILOs are:
1. Problem Solving Skills
2. Critical Thinking Skills
3. Creative Thinking Skills
4a. Oral Communication Skills
4b. Written Communication Skills
5. Social Interaction Skills
6. Ethical Decision Making
7. Global Perspectives

1. Course Synopsis

A core objective of the course is to build students' capability to conceptualize policy problems, devise strategies for addressing them, and comprehend policy documents and the mechanisms by which policy solutions are approached and implemented and assessed.

The course introduces students to policy processes and the institutional contexts that undergird decision-making in the policy-making process. Specifically, the course will address the competing and multidimensional approaches to problem identification, problem framing, agenda-setting, policy formulation, public and stakeholder consultation, processes and systems of policy implementation, monitoring, feedback and programme/policy evaluation.

The course is designed to expose students to the policy cycle and how policy is evolved, adopted, implemented and monitored in governmental, non-governmental and other institutional contexts (civil society, think tanks and advocacy coalitions).

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

CILO$_1$ Understand key concepts and main theories in the study of public policy;

CILO$_2$ Apply the theoretical and analytical approaches to the issues under different institutional contexts;

CILO$_3$ Understand the key issues on policy formulation and policy implementation; and

CILO$_4$ Examine the role of the political institutions and actors involved in the public policy processes from a comparative perspective.

3. Content, CILOs and Teaching & Learning Activities

Course Content	CILOs	Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities
Theories of Public Policy and Policy Processes: To provide a general overview of the study of policy process and introduce major theoretical schools (e.g. Pluralism, Marxism, Globalism) and approaches (e.g. Rational choice theory, incremental approach, multiple streams model etc.) to public policy making	*CILO$_1$*	• Lectures and seminars compare and differentiate various theories of public policy and policy processes and the approaches to the analysis of public policy. • Student presentation and discussion on a pre-assigned case (e.g. *North Korea Nuclear Crisis*) to highlight the influence of institutions, organizations and actors in policy decisions.
The Role of Political Institutions: To differentiate between formal institutions (regime type, legislature, government, and the electoral system) and less formal organizations (political parties, and special interest groups), examine the extent to which they may constrain and shape the public policy process, and explore their changing roles under the context	*CILO$_{2,4}$*	• Lectures and seminars describe the characteristics of formal and less formal institutions and critically discuss how they are linked to different types of interests and the balance of power among different organizations, groups and/or actors. • Student presentation on the pre-assigned topic—education policy and the ensuing discussion on the

of globalization and the fast-developing information technologies.		role of various institutions and actors in shaping the policy process.
Policy Process—Policy Formulation: To review some conceptual foundations (e.g. market and government failure and distributive rationale of public policy), and identify the principal phases of policy process, major actors/stakeholders, and various types of interest (private, collective and national).	$CILO_{3,4}$	• Lectures and seminars introduce key concepts in understanding the process of policy making and identify the principal phases of the policy making process. • Student presentation and discussion on the pre-assigned topic—the process of China's fiscal reform in changing the central-local fiscal relationship.
Policy Process—Policy Implementation: To identify and examine the key issues on policy implementation, critically discuss some key factors, particularly institutional factors, in shaping policy implementation process, and explore possible solutions for making greater congruence between the policy intentions and the policy outcomes in reality.	$CILO_{3,4}$	• Lecturers and seminars identify and examine the key issues on policy implementation and explore possible solutions for improving the quality and efficiency of policy implementation. • Student presentation and discussion on the pre-assigned topic—the implementation of environmental protection policy in China to highlight the implementation challenges.

4. Assessment

Assessment Tasks	Weighting (%)	CILO
(a) **Class Discussion and Participation:** Students are expected to read relevant readings before s/he attends the tutorials and must participate actively in the discussion.	25%	$CILO_{1,2}$
(b) **Group Project:** Students are required to work in small groups to evaluate a real-world policy intervention by analyzing secondary data and submit a group report.	40%	$CILO_{1,4}$
(c) **Final Examination:** Consisting of a series of short-answer questions, the exam will be based exclusively on the required reading undertaken for the course.	35%	$CILO_{1-4}$

5. Required Text(s)

Howlett, Michael, M. Ramesh, and Anthony Perl. 2009. *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems*. 3 edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

6. Recommended Readings

Anderson, Charles W. 1979. "The Place of Principles in Policy Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 73(3): 711–23.

Bardach, Eugene. 2011. *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving 4E*. 4th edition. Los Angeles : Thousand Oaks: CQ Press College.

Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones. 1991. "Agenda Dynamics and Policy Subsystems." *The Journal of Politics* 53(4): 1044–74.

Becker, Gary S. 1976. *The Economic Approach to Human Behavior*. University of Chicago Press.

———. 1992. *The Economic Way of Looking at Life*. Nobel Prize Committee. https://ideas.repec.org/p/ris/nobelp/1992_001.html (October 22, 2017).

Birkland, Thomas A. 2010. *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making, 3rd*. 3rd edition. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Bonchek, Mark S., and Kenneth A. Shepsle. 1996. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior and Institutions*. 1st ed edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and Alastair Smith. 2011. *The Dictator's Handbook : Why Bad Behavior Is Almost Always Good Politics*. New York: PublicAffairs.

Cairney, Paul. 2011. *Understanding Public Policy: Theories and Issues*. 2011 edition. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave.

Clark, William Roberts, Matt Golder, and Sona N. Golder. 2012. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. Washington, D.C: CQ Press.

Dye, Thomas R. 2016. *Understanding Public Policy*. 15 edition. Boston: Pearson.

Godwin, Kenneth, Scott H. Ainsworth, and Erik Godwin. 2012. *Lobbying and Policymaking: The Public Pursuit of Private Interests*. SAGE.

Head, Brian W. 2010. "Reconsidering Evidence-Based Policy: Key Issues and Challenges." *Policy and Society* 29(2): 77–94.

Hill, Michael. 2012. *The Public Policy Process*. 6 edition. Harlow, England; New York: Routledge.

Hill, Michael, and Peter Hupe. 2008. *Implementing Public Policy: An Introduction to the Study of Operational Governance*. SAGE.

John, Peter. 2013. *Analyzing Public Policy*. Routledge.

Kerwin, Cornelius M. 1999. *Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policy*. CQ Press.

Kingdon, John W. 2010. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, Update Edition, with an Epilogue on Health Care*. 2 edition. Boston: Pearson.

———. 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Longman.

Lindblom, Charles E. 1959. "The Science of 'Muddling Through.'" *Public Administration Review* 19(2): 79–88.

Maynard-Moody, Steven, and Michael Musheno. 2000. "State Agent or Citizen Agent: Two Narratives of Discretion." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 10(2): 329–58.

Moran, Michael, Martin Rein, and Robert E. Goodin. 2008. *The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy*. OUP Oxford.

North, Douglass C. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. 59262nd edition. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ostrom, Elinor. 2015. *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Reissue edition. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Pierson, Paul. 1995. "Fragmented Welfare States: Federal Institutions and the Development of Social Policy." *Governance* 8(4): 449–78.

Powell, G. Bingham, Russell J. Dalton, and Kaare Strom. 2014. *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*. 11 edition. Boston: Pearson.

Sabatier, Paul A., and Christopher Weible. 2014. *Theories of the Policy Process*. Avalon Publishing.

Schneider, Anne, and Helen Ingram. 1990. "Behavioral Assumptions of Policy Tools." *The Journal of Politics* 52(2): 510–29.

———. 1993. "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy." *The American Political Science Review* 87(2): 334–47.

Shipan, Charles R., and Craig Volden. 2012. "Policy Diffusion: Seven Lessons for Scholars and Practitioners." *Public Administration Review* 72(6): 788–96.

Shirk, Susan L. 1993. *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Smith, Kevin B., and Christopher W. Larimer. 2013. *The Public Policy Theory Primer*. 2 edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Steinmo, Sven, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth, eds. 1992. *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge England ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Stone, Deborah. 2012. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Stone, Deborah A. 1989. "Causal Stories and the Formation of Policy Agendas." *Political Science Quarterly* 104(2): 281–300.

Thaler, Richard H., and Cass R. Sunstein. 2009. *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness*. Revised & Expanded edition. New York: Penguin Books.

Weible, Christopher M., and Paul Sabatier. 2017. *Theories of the Policy Process*. 4th ed. edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Weimer, David L., and Aidan R. Vining. 2010. *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*. 5 edition. Boston: Routledge.

Zucker, L G. 1987. "Institutional Theories of Organization." *Annual Review of Sociology* 13(1): 443–64.

7. Related Web Resources

Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Public Policy: http://www.eiu.com/publicpolicy

Rulers, Elections, and Irregular Governance (REIGN) Dataset: http://oefresearch.org/datasets/reign

OECD Data: https://data.oecd.org/

International Monetary Fund (IMF) Data: http://www.imf.org/en/Data

World Bank DataBank: http://databank.worldbank.org/data/databases.aspx

8. Related Journals

Governance: An International Journal of Policy Administration and Institution

Journal of European Public Policy

Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory

Journal of Policy Analysis and Management

Journal of Public Policy

Policy and Politics

Policy Studies Journal

Public Administration

Public Administration Review

Public Management Review

Journal of Asian Public Policy

Regulation & Governance

9. **Academic Honesty**

   The University adopts a zero tolerance policy to plagiarism.   For the University's policy on plagiarism, please refer to the *Policy on Academic Honesty, Responsibility and Integrity with Specific Reference to the Avoidance of Plagiarism by Students* (https://www.eduhk.hk/re/modules/downloads/visit.php?cid=9&lid=89).   Students should familiarize themselves with the Policy.

10. **Others**

    Newspaper articles, policy reports and video-clips on relevant issues.

Last updated on 17 May 2019