

The Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
Rutgers University

Introduction to Policy, Planning and Health
10:762:101 and 10:832:101

Fall 2008
TT 2:15-3:35 Cook-Douglass Modular Building 103

Professor Michael Greenberg- mrg@rci.rutgers.edu Room 536, EJB Building (next to State Theater, 33 Livingston Avenue)

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Office hours to be set after discussion with class

This course introduces students to common policy decision-making processes in the fields of planning, public policy, and public health. We provide insights and examples about the creation, execution, and evaluation of policy decisions in these complementary areas.

All readings, exams and other materials are available online on our:

<http://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal> (login using your Rutgers NetID and password: click on tab: "762:101:01 **Fa08**"). I have finished a new book specifically for this kind of course. Michael Greenberg (2008) *Environmental Policy Analysis and Practice*, Rutgers University Press. Unless otherwise indicated, all the readings are found in this book or on Sakai.

Course objectives

After completing this course, students will understand:

- (1) Six key factors that drive public policy formation: (a) science; (b) elected officials and their staff; (c) other stakeholders, such as business, media, not-for-profits, and the public; (d) costs and benefits; (e) ethics/morality; and (f) time/flexibility.
- (2) Applications of these factors to important planning and public health decisions.
- (3) Application of tools used to guide and communicate decisions.

Students will be introduced to:

- (1) Preparing talking points for lectures, newspaper interviews and testimony for hearings.
- (2) Working in small groups to produce policy positions.
- (3) Majors, internships, volunteer opportunities offered through the Bloustein School.
- (4) Hear policy analyses by faculty, staff, and guest speakers of the Bloustein School.

Grading and Academic Honesty Policies

Grading:

Policy question (10%): During the fourth week of class, you will submit a public policy issue in the form of a question. For example, should New Jersey government support the construction of a new nuclear power plant? Should people with family incomes in excess of \$200,000 obtain social security benefits? Should all school districts in Middlesex County, New Jersey, be consolidated into a single county-wide district?

Second, along with the policy question, you will submit an outline of up to one-half page outlining your strategy for investigating this policy question. This can be in the form of bullet points or short sentences.

Third, you will submit a list of 10 sources and 1-3 sentences about each source that explain what you have learned from this source. These may not be your final sources, but we must determine if you are on the right path. The entire report should not exceed two pages double-spaced.

Mid-tem (20%): During the eighth week of class, we will have our midterm exam. It will consist of a multiple part essay question. The first part will require you to explain the science, non-elected official stakeholder, elected official and staff criteria. The second will ask you to explain how these do or do not bear upon the issue that you are studying. The last part asks you to pick one of these and describe in detail how it influences the policy process. This will be an in-class exam (blue-book).

Final-exam (40%). The final exam is to be a culminating experience. There will be in-class and take-home parts. The in-class parts will ask you to explain all six criteria and how these bear upon your policy issue. The take-home part will ask you to assess the advantages and disadvantages of your policy from the perspective of the six criteria. You will do this using the 6 rows by 2 columns table presented in Greenberg 2008. You will describe the influence of one of the six in detail. The take-home part of the exam should be no longer than five double-spaced pages. You will have the entire last class set aside for the in-class parts of the exam.

Attendance and class participation (30%). Even though this is a large class, I am big believer in class participation. We will take attendance at every class. I may not remember each person's name, but I recall faces, and we have your photos. So we will know who participates and who does not. If you expect a high grade in this class, you must ask questions and actively participate in the Thursday sessions.

Final grade:

A is 93 or higher

B+ is 88-92

B is 83-87

C+ is 78-82

C is 73-77

D is 68-72

F is 67 or lower

Also, students who fail to correctly answer a question (Policy question and mid-term) will be required to redo their answer. Your grade will not automatically be increased. But the new grade will be noted.

Statement on academic honesty:

All members of our community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain advantage not given to all students is dishonest, whether or not the effort is successful. A violation of academic honesty is a breach of trust, and will result in penalties, including possible suspension or expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the course instructors.

Organization of the course and class schedule

The Tuesday of every week will introduce the policy criterion, and then the Thursday breakout sessions will discuss prominent examples, tools, and readings. The last few weeks will be devoted to outside speakers.

**Week 1: Classes start Tuesday, September 2, 2008
September 2 and September 4, 2008**

Introduction to the course objectives, expectations, grading and reading. Outline of how the course will be conducted. Overview of factors that drive policy formation: science; economics, including costs and benefits; elected officials and their bureaucracies; vested interests, including business, not-for profits, the public, and the media; ethics/morality; and time-flexibility. *Reading:* preface and introduction chapter to Greenberg book. Use GNEP as an example of a hot button policy issue for the USA. Thursday use example suggested by class.

Week 2: September 9 and 11, 2008

Overview of key urban planning changes during the last half century and near future. *Reading:* Fishman, R. (2000). The American metropolis at century's end: past and future influences. HPD, 11(1), 199-213. Tuesday MRG lecture. What has happened since article was written?

Week 3: September 16 and 18, 2008

Overview of key public health improvements during the last century. *Reading:* Coburn, J. (2004). Confronting the challenges in reconnecting urban planning and public health, AJPH, 94(4), 541-546. Professor Dona Schneider is guest speaker. Dona Schneider, undergraduate program director at the Bloustein School. See her "Then and Now" file in the readings. Thursday discussion of possible future changes.

Week 4: September 23 and 25, 2008

The scientist perspective on public policy. *Reading:* chapter 3 and risk analysis and environmental impact sections of chapter 7 in Greenberg. Tuesday: lecture by MRG using chemical weapons as the example. Thursday: example suggested by class and

breakup class into interest groups (e.g., HMOs, GMOs, needle exchange, global warming).

Policy Question report due on September 25, 2008.

Week 5: September 30 and October 2, 2008

The public perception of hazards and risk, and its influence on policy. *Reading:* See public perception part of chapter 3 and survey section of chapter 7. See also Greenberg, M. (2005). Environmental protection as a US national government priority: analysis of six annual public opinion surveys. *EP&M*. 48(5), 733-746. Tuesday clash of cultures-scientists vs. public; Thursday – class example of public perception vs. science

Week 6: October 7 and 9, 2008

The media's role, newsworthiness. *Reading:* chapter 2 of Greenberg. Also read, Begley, The truth about denial, *Newsweek*, August 13, 2007. Tuesday: lecture re newsworthiness; Thursday - class example of media coverage of an issue, class role plays different media forms based on story line presented by MRG and TA.

Week 7: October 14 and 16, 2008

Federal elected officials, their staff and bureaucracies. The tools of power. *Reading:* Greenberg laws, rules, regulations, executive decisions, leadership changes, and budget sections of chapter 8. Tuesday. USEPA example- controlling an annoyance. Thursday – the fate of public housing and HUD.

Week 8: October 21 and 23, 2008

Local elected officials, their staff and bureaucracies. Applying the tools of power. *Reading:* Greenberg chapter 1. Tuesday: Land use changes for the benefit of who? Land use control of cities and suburbs. Thursday – class suggests example for breakout.

Week 9: October 28 and October 30, 2008

Economic factors. *Reading:* Greenberg chapter 4 and cost-benefit part of chapter 8. Tuesday - measuring life cycle costs. Thursday - the costs of health care, or another issue of interest to class

Week 10: November 4 and 6, 2008

Ethics and morality factors. *Reading:* Greenberg chapter 5. Tuesday: Environmental justice history in the USA. Thursday- Is gentrification fair? Discussion led by TA.

Week 11: November 11 and 13, 2008

Time and flexibility. Reading is chapter 6. Tuesday- Caution vs. full steam ahead. Thursday–Examples suggested by class.

Week 12: November 18 and 20, 2008

Tools of the profession: EIA (190-192), content analysis (199-202), regional economic impact (215-218), communicating with journalist (246-249).

Week 13: November 25, 2008

Guest-TBD.

Week 14: December 2 and 4, 2008

Guest-TBD

Week 15: December 9, 2008

Take home questions handed in, in class part completed