Syllabus for Introduction to Public Policy

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Introduction to Public Policy
Richard Skinner

Requirements:

Students will be evaluated in the course based on: midterm examination (20%), final examination (30%), class participation (20%) and one group project (30%).

Group Project:

The class will be divided into groups of three to five students. Using the tools you have acquired in this class, you will analyze two or more proposals on a given policy issue, produce your recommendation on which one (if any) should be adopted, and evaluate the likelihood of it actually being enacted. The groups will be formed in Week 1 and you will pick your issues by Week 3. A draft of the project report will be due in Week 10 and the final version will be due in Week 13. I expect the report to be about 15 to 20 pages long.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. After three unexcused absences, any further unexcused absences will lower your grade by one-third of a letter. Please notify me in advance of any unavoidable absences.

Books:


Schedule of Topics and Readings:

**Week 1: Introduction**
- Kingdon, p. 1-21
- Pierson and Skocpol, chs. 1-3

**Week 2: What is Public Policy?**
- Weimer and Vining, chs. 1-3

**Week 3: The Structure of Policymaking: Official Actors**
- Pierson and Skocpol, chs. 5, 8-10
- Kingdon, p. 21-45

**Week 4: The Structure of Policymaking: Unofficial Actors**
- Kingdon, p. 45-71
- Pierson and Skocpol, chs. 4, 6-7

**Week 5: The Structure of Policymaking: The Policy Process**
- Kingdon, p. 90-231

**Week 6: Midterm**

**Week 7: Economic Perspectives I**
- Weimer and Vining, ch. 4-9

**Week 8: Economic Perspectives II**
- Weimer and Vining, ch. 10-13

**Week 9: Doing Policy Analysis**
- Weimer and Vining, chs. 14-16

**Week 10: Cost-Benefit Analysis**
- Weimer and Vining, chs. 17-18

**Week 11: Noneconomic Perspectives**
- Weimer and Vining, ch. 19


in the United States: Future Possibilities in Historical Perspective.

**Week 12: Education Policy – Historical Perspective**
McGuinn, ch. 1-3.

**Week 13: Education Policy – Forging a New Regime**
McGuinn, chs. 4-10.