

PLS 306--COMPARATIVE PUBLIC POLICY
Fall 2002
Dr. Gobeyn (Bradley Hall 434/677-2497)

This course provides an in depth introduction to the burgeoning political science sub-field of comparative public policy. During the course of the semester we will be examining in a comparative context the public policies and policymaking systems and strategies of the governments of Britain, France, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan, and the United States. While considerable time will be devoted to identifying and explaining policy differences in the areas of micro- and macro-economic management, we will also address, in as much detail as time allows, policies and policymaking practices in such sectors as education, social welfare, housing, health care, and the environment.

STRUCTURE AND EVALUATION

Though this course is largely lecture-oriented in format, it is hoped that substantial classroom discussion will be generated on a consistent basis. Hence, it is important that you read all of the assigned materials and come to class prepared to offer periodic "words of wisdom" to your fellow classmates and to your instructor.

While much of our time will be devoted to addressing directly the assigned readings, a considerable portion of the material to be presented in class is not covered in your textbooks. Thus, attendance at all class sessions is strongly encouraged.

There will be two in-class essay-based examinations during the semester, each is worth 30% of your final grade. An additional 30% of your grade will be determined by the score you receive on a 9-10 page evaluative essay, which will be based on the Wilson text (see below). The remaining 10% of your grade will be based on class attendance and participation.

BOOKS

The following required books are available at the Bradley Bookstore:

S. Theodoulou, Policy and Politics in Six Nations
W. Wilson, When Work Disappears

WEEK 1 (8/29)

-comparing public policies: an introduction

WEEK 2 (9/3-9/5)

-comparative public policy: theoretical approaches
-the state and the policy process: case studies

READINGS: Theodoulou, ch. 1; also read through the brief case studies in chs. 4-8

WEEKS 3, 4, 5, 6 (9/10-9/12) (9/17-9/19) (9/24-9/26) (10/1-10/3)

-the government and the economy
-microeconomic management: supply-side theory and industrial policy
-macroeconomic management: Keynesianism and monetarism

READINGS: Handout, Heidenheimer, Heclo, and Adams, "Economic Policy;" Also begin reading Wilson

WEEK 7 (10/8-10/10)

-government-business relations

MID-TERM EXAM (Thursday, Oct. 10)

WEEKS 8, 9 (10/17) (10/22-10/24))

-urban politics and policy: The U.S. case

READINGS: W. Wilson (entire book)

Evaluative Essay assigned 10/24

WEEK 10 (10/31)

-the welfare state in comparative perspective

-taxation and redistribution

READINGS: Theodoulou, ch. 9

WEEK 11 (11/5-11/7)

-housing policy

WEEK 12 (11/12-11/14)

-education policy

-health care policy

READINGS: Theodoulou, chs. 10-11

WEEK 13 (11/19-11/21)

-health care policy (cont.)

-environmental policy

READINGS: Theodoulou, chs. 10 and 12

WEEK 14 (11/26)

No class scheduled

WEEK 15 (12/3-12/5)

-public policy and the fiscal crisis of the state

-exam review

FINAL EXAM: Time and date TBA