

**University of Oregon**  
**School of Planning, Public Policy and Management (PPPM)**

**PPPM 415: Policy & Planning Analysis**  
**Winter 2023 (CRN 24277) Syllabus**  
**Tue. & Thur. 4 to 5:20 p.m. --- 245 Straub Hall**

**Instructor: Roland Ofori, PhD**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will introduce you to some of the major issues that policymakers and planners contend with and the economic tools and frameworks that researchers and policy analysts utilize to evaluate policy solutions to inform decision making. The primary focus of this class will be the analyses of U.S. public policies, including topics on housing, the environment, health, poverty, and wellbeing.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of this course, students are expected to:

1. Understand core concepts and frameworks in policy analysis.
2. Demonstrate competence in applying analytical tools to assess various public policies from the perspective of economic efficiency and distributional outcomes.
3. Discuss and engage others in a meaningful dialogue about policy solutions.

**CLASSROOM AND ACADEMIC POLICIES**

**Course Website**

The syllabus, reading materials, assignments and announcements will be posted on the University of Oregon's Canvas website (<https://canvas.uoregon.edu>). Please check the course website frequently as these materials may be updated in the future.

**Classroom Policies**

The following policies are designed to help ensure that all participants benefit fully from the class:

- **Work environment:** To help create a classroom in which students feel safe and comfortable enough to express their thoughts, please be open-minded and respectful of other peoples, ideas, opinions and worldviews.
- **Courtesy:** All participants in the class should treat each other with the professional courtesy and respect expected in a workplace. All forms of communications should reflect professional standards in tone, presentation, formatting, and spelling.
- **Electronic devices:** Please do not use laptops, mobile phones or unauthorized electronic devices in class unless you are using them for class-related activities (e.g. taking notes).

- **Email:** I will aim to respond to your emails within 48 hours during workdays. Please review Canvas and course syllabus prior to asking questions about the class.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is prohibited and includes, but is not limited to, **tampering with grades, resubmitting the same assignment/work for more than one class, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, giving or receiving unauthorized help, and furnishing false information.** Please review the Dean of Student's website for the complete definition of academic misconduct. You are responsible for ensuring that your actions do not constitute academic misconduct. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is your obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act.

### **Violations of Course Policies**

Students who fail to adhere to the guidelines described in this section may receive an F for the course and may be subject to additional penalties from the School or the University.

### **Writing Lab**

If you would like to improve your writing skills, please take advantage of the free services provided by the Writing Lab of the Tutoring and Academic Engagement Center.

### **Accessibility and Disability**

Students with documented accessibility/disability needs should see the course instructor as soon as possible. They should also request a verification letter from the Counselor for Students with Disabilities.

### **Workplace Harassment Prevention**

The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment and abuse, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. UO employees have a duty to report such actions or behaviors to their supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. The University Health Center and University Counseling and Testing Center can assist and work confidentially with students.

### **Inclusion Statement**

The College of Design is a community that values inclusion. We are committed to equal opportunities for all faculty, staff and students to develop individually, professionally, and academically regardless of ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic standing, cultural beliefs and traditions. We are dedicated to an environment that is inclusive and fosters awareness, understanding, and respect for diversity. If you feel excluded or threatened, please contact your instructor and/or department head. The university Bias Education and Response Team is another resource that can assist you.

### **GRADING POLICY**

You are expected to receive rigorous, challenging education at this university. Hence, please do all the readings, attend all classes, and turn in all assignments to receive a passing grade in this class. We will also strive to grade your work in a fair and rigorous manner. The grading scale is displayed below.

However, your grades may be adjusted upwards to ensure consistency with the distribution of grades in previous classes if necessary.

Ranges	Grades
94.0% or higher	A
90.0 to 93.99%	A-
87.0 to 89.99%	B+
83.0 to 86.99%	B
80.0 to 82.99%	B-
77.0 to 79.99%	C+
73.0 to 76.99%	C
70.0 to 72.99%	C-
66.0 to 69.99%	D+
63.0 to 66.99%	D
60.0 to 62.99%	D-
59.99% or lower	F

- (1) **Attendance** (10 percent of final grade): You are expected to attend all class meetings. To record attendance, you will be asked to use an iClicker in class (please follow the instructions on Canvas to register your iClicker). Your presence in class will help you better understand the reading materials and prepare you well for the exams. To make room for absence due to unavoidable circumstances, only the top 80% of your attendance scores will be counted towards your grades. In other words, you will be automatically excused if you miss up to 20% of class meetings. **NB: Submitting an iClicker response for another student is academic misconduct.**
  
- (2) **Reading Quizzes** (20 percent of final grade): Reading Quizzes are administered on Canvas and designed to help you engage with the course material prior to it being covered in class. A quiz will typically consist of about 10 multiple choice questions drawn from the assigned reading. Reading Quizzes are expected to be taken ‘open book’, you may consult the course readings as you take the quiz. However, you are expected to do your own work on quizzes; **working with other students in completing the quiz is considered academic misconduct.**
  
- (3) **Problem Set** (10 percent of final grade): The Problem Set at the beginning of the term will help you review the underlying economics used in this course. This is an open-book assignment, and you can discuss the material covered in class with other students. However, please do the work alone as **working with other students to complete the Problem Set is considered academic misconduct.** Additionally, completing this assignment alone will help both you and the instructor to gauge your understanding of the basic principles in economics upon which the entire course is based. This assignment is due in class on **Thursday, January 26 at 4 p.m.**
  
- (4) **Midterm Exam** (30 percent of final grade): This will be a **closed-book exam in class on Thursday, February 16, from 4 to 5:30 p.m.**
  
- (5) **Final Exam** (30 percent of final grade): This will be a **comprehensive, closed-book exam in class on Thursday, March 23, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.**

**NB: There are no extra credit assignments. Late submissions for the Readings Quizzes and Problem Set will attract a 25% deduction from your score each day unless you had an emergency. Early/late exams are only allowed under university-approved conditions (e.g. documented serious illness, family emergency or religious obligation).**

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Reading materials are available on the course Canvas website under Modules. To benefit fully from the lectures, please do all the readings before class.

### **Week #1**

#### **Jan. 10: Course Overview & Introduction to Policy Analysis**

- Kraft and Furlong, *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis and Alternatives*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (CQ Press, 2015), Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.
- Bardach, E., *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (CQ Press, 2004): ‘Appendix B – Things Government Do’.

#### **Jan. 12: Review – Supply, Demand, and Price Elasticities**

- Levy, J., *Essential Microeconomics for Public Policy Analysis* (Praeger Publishers, 1995), Chapter 2 ‘Definitions and Axioms’.

### **Week #2**

#### **Jan. 17 & 19: Review – Supply, Demand, and Price Elasticities (cont’d)**

- Levy, J., *Essential Microeconomics for Public Policy Analysis* (Praeger Publishers, 1995), Chapter 3 ‘Supply and Demand’.

### **Week #3**

❖ **Problem Set - due in class on Thursday.**

❖ **Reading Quiz – due on Tuesday before class.**

#### **Jan. 24: Price Ceilings and Floors**

- Krugman, P. and R. Wells, *Microeconomics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Worth Publishers, 2013), Chapter 5 ‘Price Controls and Quotas: Meddling with Markets’.

#### **Jan. 26: Drug and Housing Policies**

- Miron, J. and J. Zwiebel, ‘The Economic Case against Drug Prohibition’, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Fall 1995.
- Anderson, D.M. and D.I. Reese ‘The Legalization of Recreational Marijuana: How Likely Is the Worst Case Scenario’, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 2014, 33(1):221-32.
- Metcalf, G., ‘Sand Castles Before the Tide? Affordable Housing in Expensive Cities’, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 32, No. 1, Winter 2018.

## Week #4

❖ Reading Quiz – due on Tuesday before class.

### **Jan. 31 & Feb. 2: Externalities and the Environment**

- Stiglitz, J., *Economics of the Public Sector*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (W.W. Norton, 2000), Chapter 9 ‘Externalities and the Environment’.
- Cochran, C. and E. Malone, *Public Policy: Perspectives and Choices*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Lynne Rienner, 2014), Chapter 11 ‘The Environment: Issues on a Global Scale’.
- Tol, Richard S.J., “The Economic Impact of Climate Change”, *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*, 2018, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 4-25.
- Kraft. *Environmental Policy and Politics*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (2018) - selected pages on environmental and natural resources policies.

## Week #5

❖ Reading Quiz – due on Tuesday before class.

### **Feb. 7 & 9**

#### **Information Problems – Asymmetric Information**

- Weimer, D and A. Vining, *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Pearson, 2005), Chapter 5 ‘Rationales for Public Policy: Market Failures’ pp. 104 to 112.

#### **Information Problems – Risk and Uncertainty**

- Krugman, P. and R. Wells, *Microeconomics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Worth Publishers, 2013), Chapter 20 ‘Uncertainty, Risk and Private Information’.
- Camerer, C. and H. Kunreuther, ‘Decision Processes for Low Probability Events: Policy Implications’, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 1989.

#### **Information Problems – Applications to Insurance**

- Gruber, J., *Public Finance and Public Policy*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (2013), Chapter 12 ‘Social Insurance: The New Function of Government’

## Week #6

❖ Reading Quiz – due on Tuesday before class.

### **Feb. 14: U.S. Health Insurance and Reform**

- Rosen, H. and T. Gayer, *Public Finance*, 8th edition (McGraw to Hill, 2008), Chapter 9 ‘The Health Care Market’.
- Kraft and Furlong, *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis and Alternatives*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (CQ Press, 2015), Chapter 8 ‘Health Care Policy’.
- Simon, K., A. Soli and J. Cawley, “The Impact of Health Insurance on Preventive Care and Health Behaviors: Evidence from the First Two Years of the ACA Medicaid Expansions”, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 2017, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 390-417.
- Kaiser Family Foundation, *Focus on Health Reform: Summary of the Affordable Care Act*, (April 25, 2013, Publication #8061 to 02) (<http://kff.org/health-to-reform/fact-to-sheet/summary-to-of-to-the-to-affordable-to-care-to-act/>).

**Feb. 16: Midterm exam in class – 4 to 5:30 p.m.**

## Week #7

❖ Reading Quiz – due on Tuesday before class.

### **Feb. 21: Public Goods**

- Gruber, J., *Public Finance and Public Policy*, 4th edition (2013), Chapter 7 ‘Public Goods’.

### **Feb. 23: Taxation – Efficiency, Equity and Incidence**

- Cochran and Malone, *Public Policy: Perspectives and Choices*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Lynne Rienner, 2014), Chapter 5 ‘Funding Public Policy: From Theory to Practice’. **Read: ‘Case Study on Tax Expenditures’ (Box on pp. 118-119) and pp. 120-end.**
- Gruber, J., *Public Finance and Public Policy*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (2013), Chapter 19 ‘The Equity Implications of Taxation: Tax Incidence’, **pp. 557 to 571.**

## Week #8

❖ Reading Quiz – due on Tuesday before class.

### **Feb. 28 & Mar. 2: Inequality and Well-being**

- Schiller, B., *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition (Pearson, 2008), Chapter 2 ‘Inequality’.
- Peck, D. (2011). ‘Can the Middle Class be Saved?’, *The Atlantic*, 308(2), 60 to 78.
- Wilkinson and Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger* (Bloomsbury Press, 2011), Preface, Chapters 1 and 2.

## Week #9

❖ Reading Quiz – due on Tuesday before class.

### **Mar. 7 & 9: Poverty and Redistributive Policy**

- Schiller, B., *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination* (Pearson, 2008), Chapter 3 ‘Counting the Poor’.
- Schiller, B., *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination* (Pearson, 2008), Chapter 13 ‘Welfare Programs’.

## Week #10

❖ Reading Quiz – due on Tuesday before class.

### **Mar. 14 & 16: Cost Benefit Analysis and Applications**

- Rosen, H. and T. Gayer, *Public Finance*, 8th edition (McGraw to Hill, 2008), Chapter 8 ‘Cost to Benefit Analysis’, pp. 150-152 and pp. 156-end (**drop sections titled ‘Inflation’, ‘Private Sector Project Valuation’ and ‘Internal Rate of Return’**).
- Belfield, Clive R. et al. “The High/Scope Perry Preschool Program: Cost-Benefit Analysis Using Data from the Age-40 Follow Up”, *Journal of Human Resources*, Vol. 41, No. 1, Winter 2006.
- Varian, Hal, “Recalculating the Costs of Global Climate Change”, *The New York Times*, December 14, 2006.

## Finals Week

**Final exam in class - Thursday, March 23, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.**