



Faculté des sciences sociales | Faculty of Social Sciences
Graduate School of Public and International Affairs

Public Policies: Design and Instruments (January 20 version)

API6399-D00

Winter 2024

Course Information

Class Schedule:

In person, FSS room 6004
Tuesdays 17.30 to 20.30

Instructor Information:

Name: Luc Bernier

Email: luc.bernier@UOTTAWA.CA

Phone Number: 4431

Office Hours: by Zoom or Tuesdays afternoons

Before emailing a question, please *fully* read this syllabus and explore the associated resources. The answers to many questions can be found in this document and students may be referred to the syllabus if the answer is already available. Please allow at least two **(2) business days** for responses to inquiries before pursuing another route of communication.

Official Course Description

This course offers theoretical and practical perspectives on the design of public policies. It does so by the study of the implementation instruments used by governments and the processes in government which lead to tool selection and enactment. These instruments develop their own institutional life and stabilize relations among state actors and other stakeholders on policy issues. In a perspective of modern governance and bounded rationality, the range of instruments constitutes the toolbox from which governments expect to resolve policy problems. Practical lessons from senior fellows are expected to illustrate the theory discussed. Case studies are used with a view to understanding, analyzing and discussing key concepts and issues in public sector management, especially transformations and reforms

in the public sector. In other words, we look at how formulated policies (designed) are implemented (with which instruments).

Additional Course Description

The course focuses on the rationality of public policies and the instruments used to implement them. This approach could be very useful for students preparing MRPs by helping to articulate how policy objectives become reality and how complex issues can be managed. Hopefully, this course will help students to better understand the design of policy and eventually to be better policymakers and managers after completing their degree. (Insert text here)

Course Learning Outcomes

General Course Learning Outcomes

Policies could be understood by considering institutions and actors but we can also look at their design. In other words, we can look at how the choice of solutions is made. At the end of the semester, students should be able to discuss and practice instrument choice that comes with design too often in a not so visible as agenda setting. Instrument choice might be the most important aspect of policy making. Students might become better policy designers.

Specific Course Learning Outcomes

This course might accelerate greatly the preparation of the major research paper.

Teaching Methods

Teaching methods might be described as antiquated. There will be lectures, discussin about the readings, discussions of case studies, guest speakers toward the end of the semester.

There will beno recording of lectures or discussions during seminars.

<Describe your individual **teaching philosophy** and list the **teaching strategies and approaches** that will be used throughout this course to support students in achieving the **Course Learning Outcomes**.>

Course Calendar

Module 1 (January 9) : **General introduction:**

A presentation of the course and a general model of public policy. We establish the “contract” for the session.

Some topics are well known with an established consensus. Others are more the limit of what we know. What we say this semester might be eventually proven wrong or be forgotten.

Points for participation: shared responsibilities for the required readings and once in a while a quick question to answer.

Discussion about the content of the course, how we are going to work and when. A few words on public policy making and contextual elements on instruments such as federalism and waves

Who are you and what is the topic of your MRP?

Module 2. (January 16) **Policy implementation: what we know**

A while ago, you heard part of what we talk about today, it is the start for the discussion about design and instruments, cope with me. We revisit briefly policy analysis as a discipline and focus on implementation to introduce the topic of policy instruments. The lecture will be on Brightspace before class discussion.

Required readings:

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1981)

Howlett (2019)

Suggested readings:

Schattschneider (1960) The Semi-Sovereign People,

Trebilcock and Hartle (1982)

And others

No case study

Module 3 (January 23) **Policy capacity and capability: more hope than knowledge?**

Usually this module is further away during the semester. This time, I try to use it earlier to use the ideas more in depth for your term paper.

The topic this week is the question of capability. Are governments able to do what needed to be done? Do they have the resources? Some instruments such as nudging are very cheap, could be added in a mix but are they efficient?

Required readings:

Mayne et al 2019

Hanson and Sigman, 2021

Suggested reading :

Pritchett et al. (2012)

Andrews et al. (2016)

Andrews, Rhys, Beynon, Malcolm J. and Aoife M. McDermott (2016), Organizational Capability in the Public Sector; A Configurational Approach, *Journal of Public Administration, Research and Theory*, pp. 239-258.

Case: The Central Bank digital currency

A first case study: the question is always “what would you do?” Trust yourself

Module 4 (January 30) **Another building block: policy design (is it more than wishful thinking?)**

Policy studies can be divided roughly in two: Policy analysis explain after the fact why a policy is what it is. Prior to the implementation, policy designers attempt to craft policies that will serve the common interest. There are other authors on the topic, but one of the most important authors on both approaches is Michael Howlett. In a course on design, it is important to study his work. Professor Howlett is a prolific author. We try to summarise his work here.

Required reading (Howlett’s suggestions):

Howlett (2014) Design: what, who, how and why?

Whiteford, Peter. “Debt by Design: The Anatomy of a Social Policy Fiasco – Or Was It Something Worse?” *Australian Journal of Public Administration* 80, no. 2 (2021): 340–60.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12479>.

Koski, Chris, and Saba Siddiki. “Linking Policy Design, Change, and Outputs: Policy Responsiveness in American State Electricity Policy.” *Policy Studies Journal* n/a, no. n/a (2021).

<https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12442>.

Recommended reading:

Have you ever read Christian Bason?

Michael Howlett (2020) “Challenges in applying design thinking to public policy: dealing with the varieties of policy formulation and their vicissitudes”, *Policy and Politics*, vol. 48, 49-65.

No case study but the paper on design to discuss due by 10 PM the night before class

Module 5. (February 6) **Strategy and strategic planning**

With new public management discussed later came the idea of strategic management for the public sector. Strategy is used here as a way to design policies. It is an important movement or sub-discipline in management. And politicians decide policy!

Required readings:

Bryson et al, (2018)

Andrews et al, 2009

Case: The Impending Gray Storm

Module 6. (February 13) **Revisiting New Public Management and Governance**

If the private sector works better than the public sector, should governments import methods from the private sector? This is the essence of the new public management. Some argued that the efficiency gains of this approach are not very important, that the real issues are in governance. Both schools are presented with their focus on various instruments and how to look at corporate governance as well as political governance and the relation with stakeholders. What is important here is how the list of potential instruments to deliver policy has been expanded.

Required readings:

Dunleavy et al, (2006)

The debate between Borins and Savoie (1995)

Suggested readings:

The list of instruments in Osborne, and Gaebler (1992), *Reinventing Government*.

Case: Reinventing a ministry

Reading week , no class on February 20 and no required reading

Module 7. (February 27) **The French touch: the social life of the instruments**

Required readings:

Hood (2007) Obsolescence

Lascoumes and Le Galès (2007) or Desmond King (2007)

Some prefer the model, others the use of it, so Lascoumes and LeGalès or King.

Or Lascoumes and Simard if you prefer reading in French

Suggested readings:

Boussaguet et al. (2015), *Une "French touch" dans l'analyse des politiques publiques?* Paris: Presses de science politique.

Vickers, Geoffrey (1965), *The Art of Judgment*, New York: Basic Books

Lascoumes and Simard, 2011

Lascoumes on Foucault, 2004

Callon and Latour, any book

Case: Don't advocate on my loonie

Module 8. (March 5) **Do we know what we talk about: revisiting bounded rationality and public entrepreneurship**

Are policies designed or do they happen? Based on the work of Herbert Simon on bounded rationality and Schumpeter's ideas on entrepreneurship, we look at an alternative explanation.

Required readings:

Bernier et Hafsi (2007)
Jones (2002)

Suggested readings:

Bernier (2014)
Simon, Herbert A. (1997), *Administrative Behavior*, fourth edition, New York: Free Press.

Case: Memorandum to cabinet (may be the long version has to be scanned)

Module 9.(March 12): **Ask others to do it: public private partnerships, sub-contracting or regulate them**

Required readings:

Mendoza and Vernis (2006)
Warner and Aldag (2021)

Recommended reading:

Lieberheer et al. (2012)

Case: Housing

Module 10 (March 19): **Do it yourself : agencies, state-owned enterprises**

If something is very important, perhaps it should be done internally. And perhaps if it is a specialized task, it could be done by an agency or a state-owned enterprise`

Required readings:

Elston (2013)
Andrews et al (2020)
Voorn et al, (2018)

Suggested readings:

Bernier, Luc, Florio, Massimo and Philippe Bance (2020), *The Routledge Handbook of State-Owned Enterprises*, London: Routledge. 653 p.

Case: The Transmountain pipeline (being translated and improved)

Module 11 (March 26). **International policy and instruments**

An hour with senior fellows

The policy instruments approach is viewed as a domestic policy view of things. But, what are the instruments for international policy? Military solutions exist but there are various other ways. The senior fellows have suggestions for us.

Required readings:

An old friend, Cable (1994)
Cuervo-Cazurra and Li (2021)

Suggested readings:

Already on Brightspace and more to come

Case: The Yemen crisis

Module 12 (April 2). **Your term papers in five minutes**

This is a capstone seminar. Think that you are doing a job interview. One of the members of the committee asks you to present your MRP/term paper in 3-5 minutes. What would you tell them?

- The intellectual puzzle
- The key findings
- A conclusion in three: contribution to knowledge, contribution to practice, future research or follow ups.
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And your public admin model

Assessment Strategy

1. Active participation (10%)

Readings are supposed to be done every week and students capable of discussing them

2. What is policy design about (10%) (due January 29 and discussed January 30)

Two pages to explain what you understand policy design to be about

3. A public administration model (10%) (due March 28 but presented quickly April 2d)

What are the variables that are important to play with to improve the functioning of government organizations. When you do the readings or the case studies or from the lectures, what are the main element to put in the "your name" model. One slide will be required to present on a collective powerpoint.

4. Case studies (5 points per case for a total of 40%)

Eight cases to prepare, a page and one half every time

A case study is a story. The question varies a little every week but essentially, you are asked to make a decision as if you were the person in charge. What would you decide as the decision maker? You do the readings of the week to get you in the mood but the answer has to be written rapidly, remember the nine minutes of Mintzberg on decision making.

In two pages at the most, you summarize the issue in half a page and explain in the space left what is the solution you would choose. There is no wrong answer but the solution has to be well argued. Innovative solutions are welcomed. We use cases written in Canada for the CAPPa annual competition and from the IPAC selection. You are expected to do case studies over the semester.

5. Final paper (30%) (deadline April 22 at 23h32)

You have to consider the following elements that will become clearer as we discuss them over the semester.:

Intro: the intellectual puzzle: why is this interesting and important; (why should some one read 20 pages about it) 1-2 pages

Using Mazmanian and Sabatier framework, what are the 4 elements that have to be taken into account? (1 page)

How can you design (formulate) a policy to confront these difficulties (3 pages) ? or

Is there a policy already drafted? A strategic plan from the department or government? What can you say about them (2-3 pages)?

What would Howlett say of this policy design (1 page?)

What would you say of the rationality of the policy? Were there entrepreneurs behind it? (1-2 pages)

The stakeholders: if the sociological approach is right, there are various stakeholders to be taken into account on this policy: who and what are their resources in play. Name three to five and explain how to manage them? How did institutionalisation took place (2 pages)

Since 1980 or a more appropriate date, what are the main changes that have taken place in the management of this policy (2 pages)?

What are the instruments that can be used to do better and how (5 pages) ?

Conclusion: when we consider all these elements, the solution is...(2 pages) ...

Papers can be written in English or French. The discussion in class will be in English. Some additional readings might be in French. 7500-8000 words

Assessment Policies and Expectations

It was very popular to say that in public administration, theory is ahead of practice... (Daniels and Charih, 1997), James Ian Gow suggested afterwards that having a good theory makes it possible to avoid mistakes already made somewhere else in the past. It is not clear that we have that many great theoretical explanations (Bernier, 2016). So, case studies are often the basis of many of the scientific articles we read in the best academic journals and theories that need validation. How do we apply these ideas in practice?

Attendance

Participation every week is expected.

EIN (fail) Grading Policy

Course failure – EIN (Failure/incomplete): according to regulation [A-3.6](#), a student receives the equivalent to a failure mark whenever a student has failed to complete one or more evaluations identified as mandatory in the course syllabus approved by the academic unit. The term paper is necessary.

Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted by their due date and time. Cases studies cannot be presented after class discussion.

All late submissions will be immediately docked 5%, with an additional 5% for each subsequent day late to a maximum of 3 days, *including weekends*. **After 3 days all outstanding assignments will be given a zero (0%) grade.**

According to [academic regulation A-8.6](#), absence from any examination or test, or late submission of assignments on medical grounds or due to exceptional personal circumstances, must be reported by submitting the online [Declaration of Absence from an Evaluation form](#) **within five (5) working days of the examination date** or the assignment deadline, except if extenuating circumstances prevent the student from doing so; these circumstances must be documented.

Exams Integrity

- *Exams will be done on Brightspace and will use the following proctoring tools: Respondus Lockdown Browser and real-time proctoring with Zoom (Zoom Live Proctoring). These tools block access to applications and internet browsing during the exam. It is important to note that there is no recording of students during the exam (no use of Respondus Monitor). You must agree to the terms and conditions for installing the Lockdown Browser. Your camera must always be on during the exam.*

Assessment Details

<Detail individual **assessment instructions, expectations, and grading schemes** or rubrics>

Required Materials

All required material is provided on Brightspace

Bibliography

On Brightspace too

Indigenous Affirmation

ENGLISH

We pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this land. We acknowledge their longstanding relationship with this territory, which remains unceded. They have been invaded. Invaded people do not give territories, they are forced to.

Intellectual Property Rights of Course Content

If you would like clarification regarding the intellectual property right of course content, please visit the [Copyright Office webpage](#) or consult your professor.

Institutional Policies and Academic Regulations

It is very important to know the institutional policies and academic regulations associated with your academic success. This information is available on the Faculty of Social Sciences website, on the [Student Hub webpage](#) under the “Institutional policies and academic regulations” tab.

Academic Fraud Regulations

If you would like clarification regarding academic integrity and misconduct, please consult [Academic Regulation A-4](#) or consult your professor.

Regulations on bilingualism at the University of Ottawa

Per [Academic Regulation A-1](#) : « Except in programs and courses for which language is a requirement, all students have the right to produce their written work and to answer examination questions in the official language of their choice, regardless of the course’s language of instruction. »

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

<Indicate whether AI is strictly prohibited or whether and how students can use it in the course.>

Recent cases come from <https://cappa.ca/en/what-we-do/case-competition/>