

## **SEP/ POLSCI 701: Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis**

Term: Fall 2023  
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Seminar: TBD  
Classroom: TBD

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The processes associated with developing, implementing, influencing and assessing public policy can be extraordinarily complex. Public officials and the people who guide them confront difficult challenges. Often, they are forced to balance competing interests or conflicting agendas. Much of the time, the information they require to solve a problem is less than complete, or even if enough information is available, they might not have sufficient authority to make the changes they consider necessary. Further, sometimes, the things they want to do are simply not possible: the technology does not exist, the numbers do not add up, or there is a serious disconnect between the outcomes people say they want and the sacrifices they're prepared to make to get there.

In this course, an in-depth description of the public policy process will be provided. Students will develop an understanding of the process by reviewing and debating current public policy issues and emerging trends. They will apply a series of techniques and exercises to develop and refine their capacity to identify societal problems or opportunities, develop options, assess those options, and present them to decision makers.

The public policy process will be considered from various perspectives including, for example, politicians, officials or bureaucrats, national, provincial and local levels of government, political parties, interest groups and non-governmental organizations. Additionally, because government action or inaction can have an inescapable effect on the affairs of business, this course will also provide students with an opportunity to a) gain increased understanding of how various policies affect both the day-to-day and long term trajectories of business, and b) learn how they can join the discussion and influence the process. Ultimately, they will:

- Better understand the role that public policy plays in facilitating or hindering their work
- Realize the importance of their participation in the policy process
- Learn how to how to engage with government and other stakeholders, and
- Enhance their ability to play an effective role as professionals

## FORMAT

The course will adopt a mixture of learning strategies including lectures, discussions, debates, exercises, presentations and individual projects. Following a brief introduction to the designated topic, students will take the lead in discussing key issues. Students will have many opportunities to explain and defend their own work as well as gain and provide feedback. The instructor will help to inform and frame discussions to keep the class focused on important public policy concepts and approaches.

## CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to join each class. A richer understanding of the material is possible by doing so. Students are also expected to have completed the required readings and prepared to conduct meaningful discussions about them.

## AVENUE TO LEARN

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

## RULES & POLICIES

### COURSE OUTLINE – APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS

#### ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

McMaster University is concerned with ensuring an environment that is free of all discrimination. If there is a problem, individuals are reminded that they should contact the Associate Director, Graduate Studies, the Sexual Harassment Officer or the Human Rights Consultant, as soon as possible.

[http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Discrimination\\_Harassment\\_Sexual\\_Harassment-Prevention&Response.pdf](http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Discrimination_Harassment_Sexual_Harassment-Prevention&Response.pdf)

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION**

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### **COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT**

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **ONLINE PROCTORING**

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Maintain current contact information with the University, including address, phone numbers, and emergency contact information.
- Use the University provided e-mail address or maintain a valid forwarding e-mail address.
- Regularly check the official University communications channels. Official University communications are considered received if sent by postal mail, by fax, or by e-mail to the student's designated primary e-mail account via their @mcmaster.ca alias.
- Accept that forwarded e-mails may be lost and that e-mail is considered received if sent via the student's @mcmaster.ca alias.
- Check the McMaster/Avenue email and course websites on a regular basis during the term.

## CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests. <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/Studentcode.pdf>

## COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course.

Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

## EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

## COURSE CONTENT

### Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

### Evaluation

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>% Value</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
• Historical Review	20	Oct 16
• Presentation of Historical Review	5	Oct 16 or Oct 23
• Briefing Note	20	Nov 13
• Press Release	10	Nov 20
• Presentation <u>Documents</u> (Presentation Script + Q&A)	20	Nov 27
• <u>Performance</u> (of Presentation + Questions ... Technical & Attack)	10	Nov 27 or Dec 4
• Leadership & Reflection(s)	15	Every Week
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	100	

**Note:** There will be checkpoints prior to submission / presentation of most components described in 'Evaluation' above.

### Schedule

The intention is to follow the course schedule as described below. However, at certain points it may make good sense to make modifications. Students will be notified accordingly.

Session (Week of ...)	What
1 (Sept 11)	<b>Lecture:</b> Introduction; assignment explanations (Review, Briefing Note, Press Release, Presentation, etc.)
2 (Sept 18)	<b>Lecture:</b> Automotive case study (example of Historical Review) <b>Student Explanation:</b> Students discuss individual areas of study <b>Assignment Explained:</b> “Getting Familiar with Your Topic”
3 (Sept 25)	<b>Student Presentations:</b> Students present refined individual area of study “Getting Familiar With Your Topic” (secondary resources)
4 (Oct 2)	No full Class ... Students book 1:1 with professor to discuss progress on Historical Review
(Week of Oct 9)	<b>No Class</b> (Reading Week)
5 (Oct 16)	<b>Assignment Due:</b> Students hand in Historical Review <b>Lecture:</b> Understanding the Policy Making Process (the actors, how a Bill becomes a Law etc.) <b>Student Presentations:</b> <b>Group A</b> Present Historical Review
6 (Week of Oct 23)	<b>Student Presentations:</b> <b>Group B</b> Present Historical Review <b>Lecture:</b> The purpose and style of a well-crafted Briefing Note
7 (Week of Oct 30)	No full Class ... Students book individual time with professor to discuss Briefing Note
8 (Week of Nov 6)	<b>Lecture:</b> The purpose and style of a well-crafted Press Release <b>Optional Support:</b> Students present draft of Briefing Note ... get feedback (adjust as necessary)
9 (Week of Nov 13)	<b>Assignment Due:</b> Students Hand in Briefing Note <b>Assignment Explained:</b> Final assignment (presentation to Committee) explained
10 (Week of Nov 20)	<b>Assignment Due:</b> Student hand in Press Release <b>Note:</b> Professor posts the press release in advance of the next week for students to read and consider in advance of final presentations and Q&A <b>Optional Support:</b> Students book time to discuss/review Final Assignment (Presentation + Q&A)
11 (Week of Nov 27)	<b>Assignment Due:</b> <u>All</u> Students hand in Presentation + Q&A <b>Student Presentations:</b> <b>Group B</b> members make Presentation, then responds to questions

