

Actor Interaction for Policy Change - Redux

POSC 315 - Introduction to Public Policy

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Fall 2024 | Week 5, Lecture 2

Slide 2: Lecture Overview

- **Topics:**

- Understanding Policy Actors
- Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF)
- Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) Framework
- Rational Choice Theory
- Lindblom's Incrementalism
- Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET)
- Kingdon's Three Streams and Policy Windows

Slide 3: Understanding Policy Actors

- **Who are Policy Actors?**
 - Individuals and groups involved in the policymaking process
- **Types of Actors:**
 - Government officials
 - Interest groups
 - Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
 - Citizens and stakeholders
- **Importance:**
 - Their interactions shape policy outcomes

Slide 4: Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF)

- **Key Concepts:**

- Focuses on the interaction of actors within policy subsystems
- Actors form coalitions based on shared beliefs and interests
- Coalitions compete to influence policy over time

- **Components:**

- **Deep Core Beliefs:** Fundamental worldviews
- **Policy Core Beliefs:** Domain-specific policy preferences
- **Secondary Aspects:** Specific policy positions and strategies

Slide 5: ACF Example - Climate Change Policy

Pro-mitigation Coalition

- Environmental NGOs
 - Climate scientists
 - Renewable energy companies
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Economic Prioritization Coalition

- Fossil fuel industry
 - Some labor unions
 - Certain policymakers
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Core Belief

- Urgent action needed to address climate change (Pro-mitigation)
 - Economic growth should not be sacrificed for climate action (Economic Prioritization)
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Outcome: Policies reflect the balance of power between coalitions (e.g., Paris Agreement implementation)

Slide 6: Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) Framework

- **Key Concepts:**

- Developed by Elinor Ostrom
- Focuses on how institutions shape actor behavior
- Institutions provide rules and norms influencing actions

- **Components:**

- **Action Arena:** Where actors interact
- **Rules-in-Use:** Formal and informal guidelines
- **Outcomes:** Results of interactions within the action arena

Slide 7: IAD Example

- **Community-Based Resource Management:**
 - **Situation:**
 - Local fishers managing a common fishing area
 - **Institutions:**
 - Agreed-upon rules for sustainable fishing practices
 - **Action Arena:**
 - Meetings to decide on quotas and enforcement
 - **Outcome:**
 - Sustainable use of the resource benefiting the community

Slide 8: IAD Example from My Research

- **Title:** “Does Collaboration Matter?”
- **Context:**
 - Examined watershed management collaborations
- **Findings:**
 - Collaborative institutions lead to better environmental outcomes
 - Stakeholder engagement enhances policy effectiveness

WatershedCollaborationModel.pdf

Slide 9: Rational Choice Theory

- **Key Concepts:**
 - Focuses on the behavior of individual actors
 - Assumes actors are rational and self-interested
 - Actors seek to maximize their utility (benefits)
- **Implications:**
 - Policies can be designed to align individual incentives with social goals

Slide 10: Rational Choice Example

- **Voting Behavior:**
 - **Assumption:**
 - Individuals will vote if the benefits outweigh the costs
 - **Factors:**
 - Perceived impact of their vote
 - Personal time and effort required
 - **Policy Application:**
 - Making voting easier increases turnout (e.g., mail-in ballots)

Slide 11: Lindblom's Incrementalism

- **Key Concepts:**

- Proposed by Charles Lindblom
- Policy changes occur gradually through small adjustments
- Decision-makers “muddle through” rather than make radical changes

- **Characteristics:**

- Limited analysis of alternatives
- Focus on practical solutions over ideal ones

Slide 12: Incrementalism Example - Minimum Wage Policy

Initial State:

- Federal minimum wage at \$7.25/hour

Incremental Changes:

1. **Year 1:** Increase to \$8.00/hour
2. **Year 3:** Increase to \$9.00/hour
3. **Year 5:** Increase to \$10.00/hour

Rationale:

- Allows businesses to adapt gradually
- Reduces political opposition
- Provides opportunities for assessment and adjustment

Slide 13: Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET)

- **Key Concepts:**
 - Policy change occurs in significant leaps after periods of stability
 - Long periods of incremental change are interrupted by sudden shifts
- **Mechanisms:**
 - **Policy Monopolies:** Established interests maintaining status quo
 - **Triggering Events:** Crises or shifts in public opinion disrupting equilibrium

Slide 14: PET Example

- **Financial Regulation:**
 - **Stability Period:**
 - Minimal regulatory changes before 2008
 - **Triggering Event:**
 - Global financial crisis of 2008
 - **Policy Shift:**
 - Rapid enactment of new regulations like the Dodd-Frank Act

Slide 15: Kingdon's Three Streams and Policy Windows

- **Key Concepts:**
 - Policy change occurs when three streams converge:
 - **Problem Stream:** Recognition of issues needing attention
 - **Policy Stream:** Potential solutions available
 - **Politics Stream:** Political climate and public mood
 - **Policy Window:**
 - Opportunity for change when streams align
- **Role of Policy Entrepreneurs:**
 - Individuals who promote policy changes by coupling streams

Slide 16: Kingdon's Model Example - Telehealth Policy

- **Problem Stream:**
 - Rural healthcare access issues
 - Rising healthcare costs
- **Policy Stream:**
 - Advances in telemedicine technology
 - Proposals for insurance coverage of telehealth services
- **Politics Stream:**
 - COVID-19 pandemic highlighting healthcare access issues
 - Bipartisan support for telehealth expansion
- **Policy Window:**
 - Rapid adoption of telehealth policies during pandemic
 - Permanent expansion of Medicare telehealth coverage
- **Policy Entrepreneurs:** Advocates for telehealth expansion

Slide 17: Conclusion

- **Summary of Theories:**
 - **ACF:** Coalitions based on shared beliefs influence policy
 - **IAD:** Institutions shape interactions and outcomes
 - **Rational Choice:** Individuals act to maximize personal benefit
 - **Incrementalism:** Policy evolves through small, manageable steps
 - **PET:** Significant changes follow long periods of stability
 - **Kingdon's Model:** Policy change when problem, policy, and politics align
- **Importance:**
 - Understanding these theories aids in analyzing and influencing policy processes

Slide 18: Questions and Discussion

- **Open Discussion:**
 - How do these theories apply to current policy debates?
 - Can you identify examples from recent news?
- **Questions:**
 - What connections did you make between the theories?
 - Which theory do you find most applicable to real-world policy changes or changes in your term paper topic?