



# Policies and Policy Types

Week 6-2

POSC 315

# Policies

- Some types involve more interest groups and publics than other types
- Some engender more conflicts than others
- Some are more visible than others
- Some can transform *inattentive* publics into *attentive* publics

# Policy Typologies

- Help to categorize things
- Help to predict what sort of politics will accompany kinds of policies
- Categories aren't always perfect
- A policy can transform into different types over time
- A policy can fit into more than one category at the same time

# Classic Policy Typologies

# Distributive Policies

- **Takes a resource from a broad group of people and gives it to a smaller group of people**
  - Can result from *logrolling* or *pork barrel* politics
- Often results in **Interest Group Liberalism**
  - Government accommodates a wide range of narrow interests
  - Particular interests are served, but the public interest is not

# Distributive Policies

- Interest groups are often formed to protect and expand these policies
- These policies are often popular with the public, politicians, bureaucrats, the media, the courts, the President, and Congress
- These policies are often difficult to change or eliminate
- These policies are often difficult to reform

# Distributive Policies

- Examples
  - Farm subsidies
  - Social Security
  - Medicare
  - Medicaid
  - Student loans
  - Tax breaks for home ownership
  - Tax breaks for charitable giving



# Distributive Policies

## Equity

- But what about equality? What about fairness?
  - Equality denotes sameness or uniform distribution
- Equity denotes distributions regarded as fair, even though they may contain inequalities and equalities
  - In the U.S. context, we have equal opportunity, not equal outcomes



# Distributive Policies

## Three Dimensions of Equity

- The **Recipients** of the policy
  - Who gets the benefits?
- The **Item** of the policy
  - What is being distributed?
- The **Process** of the policy
  - How is the distribution made?

# Redistributive Policies

- **Policies that take (or seem to take) resources from one identifiable group and give them to another identifiable group**
- Manipulate the allocation of wealth, property, and personal or civil rights
- Works two ways:
  - from the most well-off to the least well-off
  - from the least well-off to the most well-off
- Not always about money

# Redistributive Policies

- Examples
  - Welfare
  - Food stamps
  - Unemployment insurance
  - Social Security
  - Medicare
  - Medicaid
  - Affirmative action
  - Civil rights

# Redistributive Policies

- These policies are often unpopular with the public, politicians, bureaucrats, the media, the courts, the President, and Congress
- These policies are often difficult to enact, change, or eliminate
- These policies are often difficult to reform
- These policies are often highly visible and very often controversial

# Regulatory Policies

- **Policies that restrict or constrain the behavior of certain groups or individuals**
- Often involves the use of government authority to control or change the behavior of individuals or groups
- Three types of regulatory policies
  - Competitive
  - Protective
  - Constituent

# Competitive Regulatory Policies

- **Policies that seek to promote competition among businesses**
- Limit the provision of goods and services to one or a few designated deliverers chosen from many competing potential deliverers.
- Allows the government to regulate the price, quality, and availability of goods and services
- Allows for governmental *and* professional control of the market

Public Utilities	Lawyers	Pharmacists	Accountants	Architects
Cable television	Doctors	Dentists	Engineers	Real estate agents
Radio and television	Plumbers	Hairdressers	Barbers	Stockbrokers
Airlines	Electricians	Teachers	Nurses	Securities dealers
Trucking	Psychologists	Social workers	Physical therapists	Investment advisors
Railroads	Family therapists	Audiologists	Occupational therapists	Funeral directors
Telecommunications	Acupuncturists	Athletic trainers	Midwives	Court reporters
Banking	Private investigators	Polygraph examiners	Security guards	Hearing aid dispensers
Insurance	Veterinarians	Optometrists	Opticians	Chiropractors
Respiratory	Speech-	Dietitians	Nutritionists	Massage



# Competitive Regulatory Policies

- Low visibility and low conflict
- Often supported by the public, politicians, bureaucrats, the media, the courts, the President, and Congress

# Protective Regulatory Policies

- **Policies designed to protect the public from (potentially) negative effects of private activity**
- Often translate into additional costs for businesses, which are passed on to consumers
- Often involves the use of government authority to control or change the behavior of individuals or groups
- Iron triangles and policy networks determine the form and the extent to which these policies are implemented

# Protective Regulatory Policies

- Examples
  - Environmental protection
  - Consumer protection
  - Occupational safety and health
  - Food and drug safety
  - Workplace safety
  - Workplace discrimination
  - Workplace harassment
  - Workplace privacy
  - Workplace security

# Protective Regulatory Policies

- High visibility and high conflict
- Often opposed by the public, politicians, bureaucrats, the media, the courts, the President, and Congress
- Often difficult to enact, change, or eliminate
- Often difficult to reform

# Constituent Regulatory Policies

- **Policies that seek to protect the rights of individuals**
- Intended to benefit the public generally or to serve the government
- Examples
  - Foreign and defense policy
  - Policies affecting the structure and function of government agencies and policies governing their operations.

# **Alternative Policy Typologies**

# Cost-Benefit Analysis

- **A method of policy analysis that involves comparing the costs of a policy with its benefits**
- Concentrated or Diffuse?
- Social construction of costs and benefits
  - If a group is convinced it will bear the costs, they are not likely to support the policy



# Substantive and Procedural Policies

- **Substantive policies** are what the government does
  - What is the government doing?
- **Procedural policies** are how the government does it
  - e.g., regulatory procedures for rulemaking, such as public hearings, public comment periods, etc.

# Material and Symbolic Policies

- **Material policies** are policies that provide tangible benefits.
  - Doing something
  - e.g., grant funding for communities to hire more police officers and social workers
- **Symbolic policies** are policies that provide intangible benefits
  - Appeal to values, beliefs, and emotions
  - e.g., "Just Say No" to drugs campaign

# Liberal and Conservative Policies

- Easiest to generalize
  - Liberals: government can solve problems and achieve goals
  - Conservatives: government is the problem, not the solution
- Least useful to analyze



