

PMAP 8531-2: Policy Analysis

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Office Hours: Wed: 12:00-3:00 / [by appointment](#)

Office: 55 Park Place NE, Suite 462

Responses within 24-48 hours

Class Time: Monday 7:15 - 9:45

Class Room: Aderhold Learning Center 30

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the technical skills necessary to conduct policy analysis. This course concentrates on policy development decision strategies, specifically cost-benefit analysis and impact analysis. Students will conduct problem-solving exercises using a number of decision methods appropriate to policy analysis and evaluation. Students will develop a greater understanding of causal analysis and how to incorporate causality into policy analysis. Students will also learn how to incorporate opportunity cost into impact analysis and the impact that the presentation of costs and benefits has on the policy-making process.

Required Materials

- Basic Methods of Policy Analysis and Planning. Patton, C., Sawicki, D., and Clark, J., Publisher: Routledge, Edition 3rd, Year Published: 2012. ISBN:0137495099. (\$51-\$140). *This book was available for free at lib.gsu.edu as a digital version as of Spring of 2023.*
- (Recommended) The Economic Analysis of Public Policy, Author: Bellinger, William K., Publisher: Routledge, Edition: 2nd, Year Published: 2015. ISBN: 9781138796348 (\$52-\$73)
- [Moblab Premier \(\\$25\)](#)
- A computer with internet access, data analysis software, and Microsoft Office or similar

Technology Requirements

Course content is accessible through iCollege. Students will need to be able to view videos, write and upload assignments, perform data analysis, and participate with online activities. Students should have access to high-speed internet and updated software. Mobile devices may be used to view course content, upload assignments, and take assessments as determined by the instructor.

Prerequisites

PMAP 8131 or Instructor Approval

Course Objectives

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the need for public policy arising from regulatory needs, public goods, externalities, and market failure.
2. Understand how data collection can be used to estimate counterfactuals and their role in policy analysis.
3. Understand opportunity cost and its role in policy analysis.
4. Conduct a policy analysis complete with cost-benefit analyses and impact analysis.
5. Present the results of their policy analysis in a complete and succinct manner.

Course Structure

Papers

Students will write four papers throughout the semester, each worth 100 points or 10% of their overall grade. These papers will build towards the final policy analysis that students will conduct at the end of the semester, allowing me the opportunity to provide feedback on the process throughout the semester. Each paper will have a rubric with specific instructions and clear grading criteria necessary to complete the assignment.

Policy Analysis

At the end of the semester, students will compile their papers previously written into a succinct policy analysis. Resources will be provided on iCollege on formatting, content, and presentation of the analysis. It will not be sufficient to simply copy and paste the four papers into a document and turn in the analysis. It is my expectation that you will incorporate the feedback provided on the previous four papers into your final analysis and that your analysis will continue to evolve throughout the semester as we learn new material. The policy analysis is due on the final day of class, Monday, December 11th, at 11:59 PM, and will be worth 300 points or 30% of the overall grade. Further instructions and grading criteria will be provided in the assignment rubric.

Presentation

The final three weeks of class will be spent presenting your policy analysis. Students will each give a 10-minute presentation with a two-minute time period for questions on their policy analysis. Further instructions and grading criteria will be provided in the assignment rubric, and further resources for putting together a policy analysis presentation will be posted to iCollege. Note for the final week of presentations: we will begin a little earlier at the university-sanctioned

final exam time: **Monday, December 11th from 7:00 PM - 9:30 PM.** Presentations will be worth 300 points, or 30% of the overall grade.

Grading Policy

The typical Georgia State University grading scale will be used. I reserve the right to curve the scale dependent on overall class scores at the end of the semester. Any curve will only ever make it easier to obtain a certain letter grade. The grade will count the assessments using the following proportions:

- 40% of your grade will be determined by four (4) papers worth 100 points (10%) each
- 30% of your grade will be determined by your Policy Analysis worth 300 points
- 30% of your grade will be determined by your Presentation worth 300 points

Grading Scale as follows:

- A: 93% and above
- A-: 92%-90%
- B+: 89%-87%
- B: 86%-83%
- B-: 82%-80%
- C+: 79%-77%
- C: 76%-73%
- C-: 72%-70%
- D+: 69%-67%
- D: 66%-63%
- D-: 62%-60%
- F: 59% and below

Note: Assignment percentages scale the points possible in the assignment. There are 1000 points possible in the course. For example, one paper is worth 100 points or 10.0% of your final grade. Additionally, I like rewarding participation and will give out extra credit points for particularly insightful comments in class. Further extra credit opportunities may arise throughout the semester and will be announced both in class and on iCollege. Please note: **I will not give points at the end of the semester to bump your final grade. You can easily earn extra credit throughout the course, so *you* have the power to marginally impact your grade.**

Course Policies

Late Work Policy

Assignment due dates are posted in the course schedule, as well as iCollege. All assignments are due at 11:59 PM on their due date may be emailed to me, handed in at the beginning of class, or uploaded on iCollege prior to the 11:59 PM deadline. You are always welcome to turn work in early; however, **I reserve the right to decline extensions requested after a deadline.** If you know you're going to be gone on the day an assignment is due, please either turn in your work early or let me know ahead of time so an arrangement can be made.

Late assignments will be accepted for no penalty if a valid excuse is communicated to the instructor before the deadline. Without communication after the deadline, assignments will be accepted for a 10% deduction in points per day until communication is established and a plan to turn in the assignment is put into place. After this any assignments handed in will be given 0. Please keep communication open with me. I want to extend grace as much as possible while maintaining consistent policies.

Make-Up Course Policy

Throughout the semester, it is entirely possible that a student or the instructor will have to miss class due to an illness or scheduling conflict. Depending upon classroom technology, I will try to record lecture for you if know ahead of time that you will be missing class. If this is not possible, my slides will be available on iCollege. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they receive lecture materials for missed classes. In the case that the instructor contracts an illness, I will send you all more detailed instructions on a case-by-case basis.

Part of my job as a university professor is representing Georgia State University at academic conferences and seminar presentations. I will be traveling on the following dates course date: **September 18th**. I will be canceling lecture on this date.

Electronic Recordings of Course Instruction

Please be aware that all classroom instruction, including student participation in classroom activities, is subject to recording and dissemination on the University's secure course management system (iCollege). The recordings will be made available only to students enrolled in the course to facilitate online learning and review. Students are expressly prohibited from capturing or copying classroom recordings by any means; violations will be subject to disciplinary action. Instructors who wish to use a recording outside of class must obtain the written consent of any students who are personally identifiable in the recording. I only plan on recording courses when a student cannot make it to class for health or university-sanctioned reason.

Attendance Policy

The University expects regular class attendance by all students. It will be much easier for me to get you lecture materials if you let me know ahead of time that you will be missing class. The class does not have attendance points, and materials can be turned in over the internet; however, the course will be significantly more difficult if you do not regularly attend class. As such, if you know that you are going to be missing class, **please let me know.**

Make-Up Exam Policy

As there are no exams in this course, I do not have a make-up exam policy. Your final exam will just be the finishing of presentations and turning in your policy analysis. Everything is due by **11:59 PM Monday, December 11th**.

Academic Honesty

Any instances of plagiarism will be handled via the [GSU policy](#). Your assignments for this class are entirely writing-based; therefore, any writing that did not originate from you or ideas that either did not originate from you without proper citation will be considered plagiarism. Lack of knowledge of the policy is not a sufficient excuse for violating the policy. Furthermore, the direct copying and pasting of AI-generated content as an assignment submission will be

considered to be plagiarism. You should not use these programs as a solo author for assignments anyway, as they tend to [generate false citations](#).

Disability Accommodation

Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Access and Accommodation Center. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Access and Accommodation Center of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which accommodations are sought. Please do so within the first two weeks of class so that we can get a plan into place for the duration of the semester.

Student Basic Needs

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide resources that I may possess. The Embark program at GSU provides resources for students facing homelessness.

Additional Information on the Embark Program – Panther’s Pantry: Panther’s Pantry aims to alleviate the stress associated with short-term food insecurity by providing food and basic necessities to the Georgia State Community. Currently enrolled students can visit Panther’s Pantry once per week to receive 1 food bag + 1 hygiene bag per visit. We have Panther’s Pantries at Atlanta, Decatur, Dunwoody, and Clarkston campuses. Students can access any of the locations for their weekly visit. You’ll only need your PantherID card and to complete a short form upon arrival. Panther’s Pantry also offers additional support to students in need of assistance with academics, housing, employment, mental health, and more. For additional information, visit their website <https://pantry.gsu.edu>.

Student Evaluation of Instruction

Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take the time to fill out the online course evaluation. I read course evaluations every semester and try my best to integrate the feedback into my lectures going forward. I do find these incredibly valuable, so please take the student evaluations seriously.

Syllabus Change Policy

“Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. If any of the dates of major papers or examinations are to be changed, advance notice of a week (or more) will be given.”

Weekly Schedule

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. As such, the schedule is tentative and subject to change. Some chapters may not be covered due to time constraints, and students will not be responsible for knowing the content from those chapters. Assignment due dates are not flexible, and all assignments are due at 11:59 PM on the due date.

Week 1, 08/21 - 08/25:

- Course Introduction and the Policy Analysis Process
- Patton et. al. Chapters 1-2

Week 2, 08/28 - 09/01:

- Problem Definition and Background Research
- Patton et. al. Chapters 3-4

Week 3, 09/04 - 09/08:

- Labor Day, No Class

Week 4, 09/11 - 09/15:

- Microeconomics and Policy Review
- Patton et. al. Chapter 5
- Bellinger Chapter 2

Week 5, 09/18 - 09/22:

- Science of Philanthropy Initiative Conference, No Class
- **Paper 1, Media Polarization and Coverage of Policy Proposals Due 9/18 at 11:59 PM**

Week 6, 09/25 - 09/29:

- Causal Analysis and Data
- Patton et. al. Chapter 3 Data Section
- Mostly Harmless Econometrics Chapter 2 (will be posted to iCollege)

Week 7, 10/02 - 10/06:

- Cost-Benefit Analysis I – Cost-Benefit Analysis Overview
- Bellinger Chapter 6
- *Check iCollege for additional readings and resources*
- Paper 2, Idea Formation, Literature Review, and Data Collection Due 10/2 at 11:59 PM

Week 8, 10/09 - 10/13:

- Cost-Benefit Analysis II – Monetization and Opportunity Cost
- *Check iCollege for readings and resources*

Week 9, 10/16 - 10/20:

- Cost-Benefit Analysis III – Discounting
- Bellinger Chapters 7-9
- *Check iCollege for additional readings and resources*

Week 10, 10/23 - 10/27:

- Identifying Policy Alternatives
- Patton et. al. Chapter 6
- Paper 3, Baseline Cost-Benefit Analysis Due 10/23 at 11:59 PM

Week 11, 10/30 - 11/03:

- Program Evaluation
- *Check iCollege for additional readings and resources*
- Patton et. al. Chapter 7

Week 12, 11/06 - 11/10:

- Displaying Alternatives
- Patton et. al. Chapter 8

Week 13, 11/13 - 11/17:

- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Patton et. al. Chapter 9.
- Paper 4, Baseline Impact and Alternatives Analysis Due **11/17** at 11:59 PM (sometime before you leave for Thanksgiving Break)

Week 14, 11/20 - 11/24:

- Thanksgiving – No Class 11/20

Week 15, 11/27 - 12/01:

- Final Presentations

Week 16, 12/04 - 12/08:

- Final Presentations

Week 17, 12/11 - 12/15:

- Final Presentations During Final Exam Time, Monday, 12/11, **7:00-9:30 PM**
- Final Paper Due 12/11 at 11:59 PM