

Advocacy Coalition Framework

EVSS/PUBA 602 Public Policy

Fall 2015

Unofficial Actors

- What the difference between official and unofficial actors?
- Who are some the important unofficial actors?

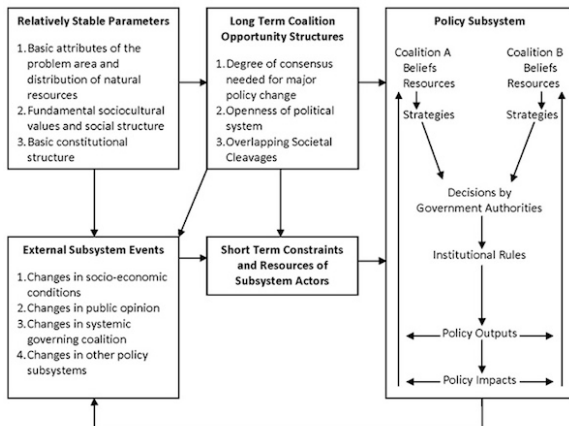
Defining Subsystems

- What is a policy subsystem?
- Compare:
 - Iron triangles / policy monopolies / dominant coalition
 - Issue networks (Heclo)

Levels of Analysis

- *Macro*: Policymaking occurs within policy subsystems that are affected by factors in the broader political and socioeconomic system
- *Meso*: The multiplicity of actors can be aggregated into advocacy coalitions
- *Micro*: Model of the individual drawn from social psychology; bounded rationality

The ACF Diagram



The ACF Components

- What is the primary unit of analysis?
- Describe the model of the individual
- Define advocacy coalitions
- How does policy change occur?

Policy Subsystems

- Primary unit of analysis
- Relevant actors include any regularly attempting to exercise influence
 - Top-down *and* bottom-up
- Subsystem actors are aggregated into one or more coalitions
- Determining scope of subsystem
 - Overlapping and nested subsystems

Model of the Individual

- Importance of *normative* beliefs
- Bounded rationality; bias in information processing
 - “devil shift”
- Hierarchical structure of belief systems

Deep core beliefs → Policy core beliefs → Secondary beliefs

Advocacy Coalitions

- Advocacy coalitions are made up of policy participants that share policy core beliefs and engage in a “nontrivial” degree of coordination
- Seek to achieve policy goals
- Members can include legislators, agency officials, interest groups, judges, researchers, journalists, and others

Advocacy Coalitions

- Coalition opportunity structures
 - Degree of consensus needed for policy change
 - Openness of political system
 - Number of decision-making venues
 - Accessibility of venues

Advocacy Coalitions

- Coalition resources
 - Legal authority
 - Public opinion
 - Information
 - Mobilizable troops
 - Financial resources
 - Skillful leadership / policy entrepreneur

Policy Change

- Policy-oriented learning
 - Enlightenment function (Weiss 1977)
 - Facilitated by: (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1993)
 - Moderate level of conflict
 - Analytically tractable
 - Professionalized forum
 - Subsystem type (Weible 2008)
 - Unitary
 - Collaborative
 - Adversarial Subsystems

Policy Change

- External shocks
 - Changes in socioeconomic conditions
 - Regime change
 - Other subsystems
 - Disaster/focusing event
- Internal shocks
 - Internal/external shocks redistribute resources
 - Confirm beliefs of minority coalition
- Negotiated agreements