Introduction to Public Policy

Political Science 2070-1
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Tues, Thurs 10:40-12:00
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. Office Hrs: by appointment or
Monday 9:30-11:30
Wednesday 2:00-3:00

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to public policy by examining 1) what is public policy 2) how markets and government policy interact and 3) how we determine if we need a particular policy and if a policy solution works.

Course Requirements

You are expected to come to class prepared to participate in the discussion of the day's reading assignment. The textbook for the course is *Introduction to Public Policy* by Charles Wheelan. All students must abide by the Student Academic Honor Code. Cheating will not be tolerated. All electronic devices (cell phones, ipads, laptops, etc) must be placed inside a zipped backpack during exams. Failure to place electronic devices inside a zipped backpack will be considered cheating.

Exams

There are three exams in the course. Each exam is worth 120 points and will consist of 40 multiple choice questions (2 points each) and four short answer questions (10 points each). Exams are not cumulative. If you miss an exam, you may take the makeup exam the day of the final exam (immediately following the final exam). Makeup exams consist of two essay questions worth 60 pts each. You will need a scantron for each exam.

Quizzes

There will be 10 pop quizzes or assignments scattered throughout the course. Each quiz or assignment is worth 15 points. Only 8 quizzes/assignments will count towards your grade so if you take all 10, I will count the best 8 of the 10 grades. Quizzes may consist of information from the previous class lecture or the assigned reading. THERE ARE NO MAKEUPS ON QUIZZES/ASSIGNMENTS. There are no exceptions to this rule. Quizzes must be turned in the day the quiz is given. Assignments must be turned in during class on the day they are due.

Presidential Candidates' Policy Stances

A 2 page single spaced paper (using Times New Roman 12 point font with one inch margins) will be due on October 27th. You may choose any Republican presidential candidate and any of

their policy stances on the following topics: job creation, health care, tax policy, fiscal responsibility, and foreign affairs. You must contrast their stance with that of President Obama in terms of 1) why government should or should not be involved in this policy arena and 2) whether or not Obama's policies have been a success or failure in this particular policy area. This paper is worth 20 pts.

Grading Scale

Total Assignments			Exam	
450-500	A		108-120	A
400-449	B		96-120	B
350-399	C		84-120	C
300-349	D		72-120	D
0-299	F		0-71	F

Bonus Points

Each of you starts the semester with 5 bonus points that are yours to lose. You lose them by emailing me and asking me a question the answer to which can readily be found on this syllabus or on LSU's website.

Reading Schedule

August 23rd	Introduction to Class
August 25th	Chapter 1: Public Decision Making
August 30th	Chapter 2: What Is It So Hard to Make the World A Better Place?
September 1st	Chapter 3: Understanding Rational Man and Woman
September 6th	Chapter 4: Understanding Group Behavior: Collective Action
September 8th	Chapter 5: Evaluating Social Welfare
September 13th	Chapter 5: Evaluating Social Welfare and Social Security (moodle reading)
September 15th	Catch Up and Review
September 20th	Exam One
September 22nd	Chapter 6: The Political Process
September 27th	Chapter 7: The Market System
September 29th	Chapter 8: The Role of Government

October 4th	Chapter 8: The Role of Government
October 6th	Chapter 9: Gathering and Measuring Information
October 11th	Chapter 9: Gathering and Measuring Information
October 18th	Chapter 10: Basic Data Analysis
October 20th	Chapter 10: Basic Data Analysis
October 25th	Exam Two
October 27th	Chapter 11: Introduction to Regression Analysis/Paper Due
November 1st	Chapter 11: Introduction to Regression Analysis
November 3rd	Chapter 12: Cost-Benefit Analysis
November 8th	Chapter 12: Cost-Benefit Analysis
November 10th	Chapter 13: Program Evaluation
November 15th	Chapter 13: Program Evaluation
November 17th	Chapter 14: The Role of Institutions
November 22nd	Chapter 14: The Role of Institutions
November 29th	Chapter 15: Policy Design
December 1st	Review and Catch Up
December 7th	Exam Three (10-12) and Makeup Exams