



PUB AFRS 2110
Introduction to Public Affairs
3 Credit Hours
Spring 2016

Online Carmen Course

Instructor	Professor Stéphane Lavertu, PhD (lavertu.1@osu.edu)
Office	250C Page Hall
Office hrs	Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 11:00am-12:00pm, or by appointment (Online access: carmenconnect.osu.edu/lavertu)
TA	David Cappella (Office 240A, Page Hall; Wednesdays, 1-3pm; cappella.4@osu.edu)
GE credit	Fulfills GE requirement in Social Science: Human, Natural, and Economic Resources

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is an introduction to the range of topics that constitute “public affairs.” The first four weeks of class provide an introduction to the policymaking process—emphasizing theoretical frameworks that help students understand how actors and institutions (both in and out of government) interact to produce public policies. The remainder of the course introduces students to the core crafts on which schools of public affairs focus: policy analysis & evaluation and public administration & management. The former entails the generation of rational advice relevant to public decisions and the systematic evaluation of the impact of public policies and programs. The latter focuses on the management of public agencies and non-profit organizations and the implementation of public policy.

Course learning goals and objectives are pursued via lectures, written assignments, and communication via email and Carmen discussion boards that are organized into weekly modules. You will be expected to access the course and participate multiple times during the week, equivalent to the total in-class and out-of-class time commitment of an in-person 3-credit course. Additionally, there will be three exams and exam review sessions that will occur at set times throughout the semester.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All assignment instructions and required readings will be provided on Carmen under the navigation tab for each week. This syllabus merely provides a synopsis of the exams and assignments, as well as an overview of the schedule of events for the course.



LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

There are six learning goals and objectives for this course:

- General understanding of the policymaking process in the United States
- Familiarity with techniques for providing rational advice to public-sector decision-makers
- Familiarity with techniques for evaluating the impact of public policies on societal outcomes
- Familiarity with techniques for managing public and non-profit organizations
- Ability to apply public affairs concepts and frameworks to real-world public challenges
- Ability to communicate course subject matter through written and oral formats

GE LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Public Affairs 2110 fulfills the GE credit requirement for Social Science:

GE Goals for Social Science

Students understand the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources.

Expected GE Learning Outcomes of Public Affairs 2110

Human, Natural, and Economic Resources

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of the use and distribution of human, natural, and economic resources and decisions and policies concerning such resources.
2. Students understand the political, economic, and social trade-offs reflected in individual decisions and societal policymaking and enforcement and their similarities and differences across contexts.
3. Students comprehend and assess the physical, social, economic, and political sustainability of individual and societal decisions with respect to resource use.

How Does Public Affairs 2110 Help Students Attain these Learning Outcomes?

The two core crafts of public affairs—policy analysis and management—deal with informing and implementing societal decisions about how to allocate scarce societal resources. The class introduces students to theories and methods of social scientific inquiry used to inform this societal decision-making, which entails identifying political, economic, and social trade-offs across policy options and assessing the effectiveness of public policies and programs. These topics are covered throughout the entire class as students learn about policymaking and administrative processes. But the most explicit focus on these GE learning outcomes occurs when we cover policy analysis during the last third of the class. The third exam, which focuses on policy analysis, will be used to assess student understanding of the three GE learning outcomes.



BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

Your grades will be based on the following items:

EXAMS (60% of class grade; weeks 5, 10, and 15)

There will be three in-class exams on the content covered in lecture. The exams will include a random sample of the weekly quiz items and one short essay. **I do not give make-up exams.**

- **Exam #1** (20% of grade; Wednesday, February 10, 11:00-11:45am)
- **Exam #2** (20% of grade; Wednesday, March 23, 11:00-11:45am)
- **Exam #3** (20% of grade; Wednesday, April 20, 11:00-11:45am)

ASSIGNMENTS (35% of class grade; every week in which no exam is administered)

The details of weekly assignments will be given to you on Carmen as the semester progresses. Here is a general overview of these assignments:

- **Postings to class discussion boards** (15% of grade)

You will be required to post write-ups of short research activities on our online discussion boards throughout the semester. These write-ups will primarily entail identifying examples of what we discuss in class. You will complete some of these write-ups individually and some with your assigned groups.

- **Weekly Current Events** (10% of grade)

Each week, you will be given an article dealing with a current event. You must read the article and write a 4 or 5 sentence explanation of how a concept from the week's lectures relates to the current event it details. You must submit these write-ups via a Carmen Dropbox by Thursday at 5pm of each week.

- **Short problem statement** (2.5% of grade; week #6)

During the sixth week of class I will request that you submit a short statement describing a public problem that is of concern to you. The statement should be concise, clear, and objective, in that it convinces the reader that the problem is significant simply by stating the facts regarding the magnitude of the problem, whom it affects, its societal consequences, and, if possible, its causes. An effective problem statement cites reputable sources to substantiate all claims and, when possible, uses statistics to document the severity of the problem. The problem statement should be no more than a single double-spaced page using 1 inch margins and 12 point font (i.e., about 250 words).



- **Public affairs plan** (7.5% of grade; week #16)

On the last day of class, you must submit a career plan for addressing the public problem of greatest concern to you. Specifically, you must detail what kind of public affairs career you would pursue to help address that problem, including what degrees you would get, what coursework you would take, and what professional jobs you would pursue to be part of the solution. The essay should be about 3 double-spaced pages using 1 inch margins and 12 point font (i.e., about 750 words).

WEEKLY QUIZZES (5% of grade)

You are required to complete an online quiz every week. The quiz draws on lecture material from that week. You get credit for completing the quiz by 5pm on Thursday of each week, after watching the lecture videos. You can take the quizzes an unlimited number of times. I encourage you to take the quizzes until you get all items correct, as a random sample of these items will be on each exam.

GRADING

I will provide you with provide you with specific rubrics for each of the above assignments. Transformation of numerical grades to letter grades will correspond to this schedule:

A	93-100	C+	77-79.9	E <	59.9
A-	90-92.9	C	73-76.9		
B+	87-89.9	C-	70-72.9		
B	83-86.9	D+	67-69.9		
B-	80-82.9	D	60-66.9		

TEXTS

There are no mandatory texts for this class. All content will be covered in the video lectures. However, if you'd like a text that covers some of our topics, you might consider the following texts (any edition—older is cheaper) to **supplement** lecture:

- Donald F. Kettl. 2014. *The Politics of the Administrative Process, 6th Edition*. Washington, DL: CQ Press. (ISBN-10: 1483332934 | ISBN-13: 978-1483332932)
- Michael E. Kraft and Scott R. Furlong. 2015. *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives, 5th Edition*. Washington, DC: CQ Press. (ISBN: 978-1-4833-4578-9)

* Additional readings will be posted to Carmen. Please note that optional readers do not exactly correspond to content in covered in lectures.



Students can access textbook information via the Barnes & Noble bookstore website: www.shopOhioState.com as well as from their BuckeyeLink Student Center. This information is disseminated by B&N to all area bookstores. You may buy from a store of your choice and/or shop for books (always use ISBN# for searches) online.

COURSE TECHNOLOGY

For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

- **Self-Service and Chat support:** <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>
- **Phone:** 614-688-HELP (4357)
- **Email:** 8help@osu.edu
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

Technical skills necessary for this online course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen
- CarmenConnect text, audio, and video chat for office hours

Necessary equipment

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection

SPECIFIC POLICIES FOR THIS ONLINE COURSE

- **Quizzes and exams:** You must complete the exams yourself, without any external help or communication.
- **Written assignments:** Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in, but no one else should rewrite your work for you.
- **Reusing past work:** In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.
- **Falsifying research or results:** All research you will conduct in this course is intended to be a learning experience; you should never feel tempted to make your results or your library research look more successful than it was.
- **Collaboration and informal peer-review:** The course includes many opportunities for formal collaboration with your classmates. While study groups and peer-review of major written projects is encouraged, remember that comparing answers on a quiz or assignment is not permitted. If you're unsure about a particular situation, please feel free just to ask ahead of time.



SCHEDULE

Week 1 (1/11-1/15): Introduction to the Course

Assignment: Post to discussion board (due by 5pm on Thursday, 1/14)

Extra Credit: Carmen profile and messaging me

PART 1: THE POLICYMAKING PROCESS

Week 2 (1/18-1/22): Policymaking Process

Assignments: Post to discussion board and submit current even blurb (due by 5pm on Thursday, 1/21)

Optional Reading: "Public Policy and Politics" (KF, Ch. 1)

Week 3 (1/25-1/29): Policymaking Process

Assignment: Political typology quiz (due by 5pm on Tuesday, 1/26)

Assignments: Post to discussion board and submit current even blurb (due by 5pm on Thursday, 1/28)

Optional Reading: "Government Institutions and Policy Actors" (KF, Ch. 2)

Week 4 (2/1-2/5): Policymaking Process

Assignment: Post to discussion board and submit current even blurb (due by 5pm on Thursday, 2/4)

Optional Reading: "Understanding Public Policymaking" (KF, Ch. 3)

Week 5 (2/8-2/12): Exam Week

Review Session: Tuesday, 2/9, 11am-noon (office hours)

Exam #1: Wednesday, 2/10, 11:00-11:45am (office hours)

PART 2: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Week 6 (2/15-2/19): Public Administration

Assignment: Submit problem statement via Carmen dropbox (due by 5pm on Thursday, 2/18)

Optional Reading #1: "What is Public Administration?" (Kettl, Ch. 3)

Optional Reading #2: "What Government Does—And How It Does It" (Kettl, Ch. 2)

Week 7 (2/22-2/26): The Federal Bureaucracy

Assignments: Post to discussion board and submit current even blurb (due by 5pm on Thursday, 2/25)

Optional Reading #1: "Accountability" (Kettl, Ch. 1)

Optional Reading #2: "The Executive Branch" (Kettl, Ch. 5)

Week 8 (2/29-3/4): Personnel Management

Assignments: Post to discussion board and submit current even blurb (due by 5pm on Thursday, 3/3)

Optional Reading: "The Civil Service" (Kettl, Ch. 8)

Week 9 (3/7-3/11): Recent Trends and Reforms of U.S. Public Administration

Assignments: Post to discussion board and submit current even blurb (due by 5pm on Thursday, 3/10)

Optional Reading: "Administrative Reform" (Kettl, Ch. 7)



Week 10 (3/14-3/18): Spring Break

Week 11 (3/21-3/25): Exam Week

Review Session: Tuesday, 3/22, 11am-noon (office hours)

Exam #2: Wednesday, 3/23, 11:00-11:45am (office hours)

PART 3: POLICY ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

Week 12 (3/28-4/1): Policy Analysis & Evaluation

Assignments: Post to discussion board and submit current even blurb (due by 5pm on Thursday, 3/31)

Optional Reading #1: "Policy Analysis: An Introduction" (KF, Ch. 4)

Optional Reading #2: "Public Problems and Policy Alternatives" (KF, Ch. 5)

Week 13 (4/4-4/8): Assessing Policy Alternatives

Assignment: Read sample policy analysis

Optional Reading: "Assessing Policy Alternatives" (KF, Ch. 6)

Quiz: Quiz on reading

Week 14 (4/11-4/15): Evaluating the Impact of Public Policies and Programs

Assignment: Read sample policy evaluation

Quiz: Quiz on reading

Week 15 (4/18-4/22): Exam Week

Review Session: Tuesday, 4/19, 11am-noon (office hours)

Exam #2: Wednesday, 4/20, 11:00-11:45am (office hours)

Week 16 (4/25): Last Day on Monday, 4/25

Assignment: Submit your final papers via dropbox (by 5pm on Monday, 4/25)

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the **Office of Student Life Counseling and Consultation Services (CCS)** by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292- 5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 4th Floor of the PAES Building. 24 hour emergency help is also available through the National 24/7 Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org



ADA Statement

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT)

The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's [Code of Student Conduct](#), and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct may constitute "Academic Misconduct." Sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

In the Ohio State University's [Code of Student Conduct](#), Section 3335-23-04 defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's [Code of Student Conduct](#) is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct.