

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Department of Public Policy
PLCY/PWAD 101: American Public Policy
Fall Semester 2008
TR, 12:30 pm - 1:45 pm
Stone Center 103

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Graduate Teaching Assistants

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Background

The College

This course satisfies the social and behavioral sciences requirement (non-historical analysis). For more information, see <http://www.unc.edu/depts/uc/06description.html>.

The Major

Public Policy @ Carolina is an interdisciplinary major within the College of Arts and Sciences. Through rigorous coursework in multiple fields, including economics, statistics, political science, and ethics; through electives in substantive policy fields; and through a policy oriented internship, students learn social science research can be used to address domestic and international policy problems. For more information, see <http://www.unc.edu/depts/pubpol/>.

Burch Field Research Seminar in Domestic Policy (Washington DC)

Burch Field Research Seminars offer some of the most adventurous, hands-on, off-campus educational experiences in the world. They showcase the relationship between faculty research and undergraduate education by combining traditional course work with active, experiential learning. For more information, see <http://www.honorsstudyabroad.unc.edu/>.

The Burch Domestic Policy seminar explores the policy-making roles of Congress, the President, executive branch agencies, policy research think tanks, and the advocacy community. Students have an opportunity to examine a range of important domestic policy issues, including the federal budget, Social Security and health policy, education, trade, and the environment. For more information, see <http://studyabroad.unc.edu/programs.cfm?pk=1838>.

The Course

The course provides a general overview of the policymaking process and substance of major public policy debates in the United States. It exposes students to the key conceptual and analytical perspectives necessary for understanding and playing a direct role in the policy making process. This course will illuminate both the policy and political challenges in areas such as economic policy; tax policy; income support and health care policy; education; environment and energy policy; national security and foreign policy; and immigration.

The course is divided into four sections: 1) the “rules of the game” and the structure of the policymaking process; 2) policy formulation, implementation and the budget process; 3) the role of policy analysis, ethics, and evaluation in the policy process; and 4) overview of key debates in major policy areas.

- Students will discuss/debate real political and policy choices with *Congressional Quarterly’s Researcher* “Issues for Debates” in American Public Policy.
- Students will learn about the work of one major policy research and/or advocacy organization each week—“up close and in focus”—throughout the semester.

Course Assignments

Mid-term and final exam format *will be part short answer and part essay in-class exam*. Students can prepare and use one-page (front and back) notes during exam. Preparation for class assignments and participation in class discussions are a vital part of the class. Students are expected to complete all readings and assignments, and to be active in class and case discussions. Students will be expected to write one (5-7) page policy brief in their own public policy area of interest. Several of the "up close and in focus" links will provide exposure to and models of policy briefs. Details on policy brief format and due date will be posted on blackboard.

In preparing for class debates, students will receive credit for posting on a class discussion board.

Grading/Evaluation

Midterm	30%	
Final	35%	
Policy Brief	25%	
Class/Case Participation	10%	[Please buy a package of 3 X 5 index cards]

Mid-Term Exam: Tues, Sept 30

Final EXAM: Friday Dec 12, 12:00 P.M. (12:30 P.M. T TH)

Required Texts (on sale at UNC-CH Bookstore):

Kettl, Donald. 2007. *System under Stress: Homeland Security and American Politics*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly (CQ) Press (2nd edition).

Peters, B. Guy. 2007. *American Public Policy*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly (CQ) Press. (7th edition).

The *CQ Researcher* debates can be downloaded directly at:
<http://library.cqpress.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/cqresearcher/index.php>

Schedule of Topics in American Public Policy

Tues, Aug 19	Course Introduction “Making” American Public Policy
Thurs, Aug 21	What is Public Policy? <i>Peters</i> , Chapter 1, "What is Public Policy?"
Tues, Aug 26	The “Rules of the Game” <i>Peters</i> , Chapter 2, "The Structure of Policymaking in the U.S."

**Up Close and in Focus*: FirstGov.gov, <http://www.firstgov.gov/>

FirstGov.gov, the official U.S. gateway to all government information, is the catalyst for a growing electronic government. Our work transcends the traditional boundaries of government and our vision is global—connecting the world to all U.S. government information and services.

The Making of Public Policy I

Thurs, Aug 28	<u>Debate:</u> <i>CQ Researcher</i> “Gun Violence”
Tues, Sept 2	<i>Peters</i> , Chapter 3, "Agenda Setting and Public Policy"

*Up Close and in Focus: Center for Media and Public Affairs, <http://www.cmpa.com/>

The Making of Public Policy II

Thurs, Sept 4 *Peters*, Chapter 4, "Legitimizing Policy Choices"
Peters, Chapter 5, "Organizations and Implementation"

Analyzing Policy: Policy Analysis and Ethics

Tues, Sept 9 *Peters*, Chapter 16, "Cost-Benefit Analysis"
Background: *CQ Researcher* "Mass Transit Boon"

Thurs, Sept 11 *Peters*, Chapter 17, "Ethical Analysis of Public Policy"
Debate: *CQ Researcher* "Student Aid"

*Up Close and in Focus: RAND, <http://www.rand.org/about/>

The Making of Public Policy III: Budgets and Evaluation

Tues, Sept 16 *Peters*, Chapter 6, "Budgeting"
Peters, Chapter 7, "Evaluation and Policy Change"

*Up Close and in Focus: The CBO, <http://www.cbo.gov/about.shtml> and
The GAO, <http://www.gao.gov>

Thurs, Sept 18 **Debate:** *CQ Researcher* "Mortgage Crisis"

Policy I Economic-Tax Policy

Tues, Sept 23 *Peters*, Chapter 8, Economic Policy

Thurs, Sept 25 *Peters*, Chapter 9, Tax Policy

*Up Close and in Focus: Center for Budget and Policy Priorities,
<http://www.cbpp.org/eic2002/index.html> and Urban Institute,
<http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/>.

Tues, Sept 30 **In-Class Mid-Term Exam**

Policy II **Income Security/Health Care**

Thurs, Oct 2 *Peters*, Chapter 10, Health

Tues, Oct 7 **Debate: CQ Researcher “Universal Coverage”**

**Up Close and in Focus:* Kaiser Family Foundation, <http://www.kff.org/docs/about/>

Thurs, Oct 9 *Peters*, Chapter 11, Income Maintenance

Tues, Oct 14 **Debate: CQ Researcher “Domestic Poverty”**

***No class Thurs, Oct 16 (Fall Break)**

Policy III **Energy and Environment**

Tues, Oct 21 *Peters*, Chapter 13

Thurs, Oct 23 **Debate: CQ Researcher “Buying Green”**

**Up Close and in Focus:* Weathervane/RFF, <http://www.weathervane.rff.org/>

Policy IV **Education**

Tues, Oct 28 *Peters*, Chapter 12

Debate: CQ Researcher “No Child Left Behind”

**Up Close and in Focus:* Mathematica, see, <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/about.htm>
and <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/educate.htm>

Policy V **Special Topic**

Thurs, Oct 30 **Debate: CQ Researcher “Fighting Superbugs”**

Policy VII **National Security and Foreign Policy**

Tues, Nov 4 *Peters*, Chapter 14

Thurs, Nov 6 **Debate: CQ Researcher “Cost of the Iraq War”**

**Up Close and in Focus:* CSIS, <http://www.csis.org/about/index.htm#1>

PLCY/PWAD Homeland Security

Tues, Nov 11 *Kettl*, Chapters 1-4.

Thurs, Nov 13 *Kettl*, Chapters 5-7.

Tues, Nov 18 **Debate: *CQ Researcher* “*Torture Debate*”**

Policy VIII “Divisions”

Thurs, Nov 20 *Peters*, Chapter 15

Tues, Nov 25 **Debate: *CQ Researcher* “*Immigration Debate*”**

****No class Thurs, Nov 27 (Thanksgiving Break)**

Conclusion

Tues, Dec 2 Toward a “Hopeful” American Public Policy

Final EXAM: Friday Dec 12, 12:00 P.M. (12:30 P.M. T TH)

Key Resources

Academic Integrity

In order to ensure effective functioning of the Honor System in this institution, students are expected to:

- A. Conduct all academic work within the letter and spirit of the Honor Code, which prohibits the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid in all academic processes. If unsure about the limits of group work versus individual work on papers and projects, ask the instructor. Do not guess.
- B. Consult with faculty and other sources to clarify the meaning of plagiarism; to learn the recognized techniques of proper attribution of sources used in written work; and to identify allowable resource materials or aids to be used during completion of any graded work.
- C. Sign a pledge on all graded academic work certifying that no unauthorized assistance has been received or given in the completion of the work.
- D. Treat all members of the University community with respect and fairness.
- E. Report any instance in which reasonable grounds exist to believe that a student has given or received unauthorized aid in graded work or in other respects violated the Honor Code. Reports should be made to the office of the Student Attorney General. Students are expected to cooperate with the Office of the student Attorney General in the investigation and resolution of any complaints.

The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance requires that you sign a pledge on all written work. Please type the following on ALL your written work, and sign your name next to it: **“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.”**

If you have any questions about your rights and responsibilities, please consult the Honor Code at: <http://honor.unc.edu/>.

Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with The Academic Success Program for Students with LD/ADHD 962-7227, SASB North (Student and Academic Services Building), The Learning Center, 450 Ridge Road, Suite 2109, CB# 3447. For more information, see, <http://www.unc.edu/depts/lds/>

Writing

The Writing Center offers free, one-on-one help with all aspects of writing at any stage in the writing process. To make an appointment, browse the Writing Center's online resources, or submit a draft online, please visit <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb> . Located in the lower level of the new Student and Academic Services Building (SASB), the Writing Center is open for appointments Monday through Thursday from 9:00 AM until 8:00 PM and Friday from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM. To make the best use of your time there, please bring a copy of your assignment with you. The Writing Center will not proofread papers or talk with you about grades.