

**Making Public
Policy**
11.002J / 17.30J
Fall 2017

Lecture: Mondays and Wednesdays, (9:30am-11:00, 4-237) Recitation: [to be determined]

Phil Thompson
Department of Urban Studies & Planning 9-517
jt71@mit.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30 - 2:00

Teaching Assistants

Nicholas Kelly Clara Vandeweerdt
nkelly@mit.edu claravdw@mit.edu

Course Objectives and Organization:

This course aims to get students thinking about politics and policy as a part of their everyday life. We treat politics as a struggle among competing advocates trying to persuade (or force) others to see the world as they do, working within a context that is structured primarily by institutions and cultural ideas. Over the course of the semester, we raise the following questions: How do conditions become problems for government to solve, while other problems fail to attract government's attention? What sorts of political arguments are persuasive, and why? Why do we choose the policies we do? Do policies ever "work," and how would we know? We spend the first week of the course developing a policymaking framework—taking a whirlwind tour of the American political system. After that, we examine six policy issues: energy and climate change, gun control, health care, the federal budget, financial regulation, and gay marriage. We wrap up with a student-driven, in-class oral project.

Requirements and Evaluation:

The course is organized around two 90-minute lecture sessions and a one-hour recitation section each week. Attendance in both the lectures and recitation is mandatory. Missing more than two classes without prior permission from the instructors will result in an automatic deduction of a full grade for the course, regardless of grades received on assignments. (We're not kidding about this.)

Students write four short (five-page) essays over the course of the semester. Papers are submitted via Stellar and are due by the time and date noted on the syllabus. Papers turned in after that time/date will be considered late and will lose one half-grade per day. Students are also required to rewrite one of the first two essays.

The final project for the course consists of an in-class exercise, with questions prepared by students and answers delivered orally on the last two days of class.

We grade student performance according to the following general formula:

- Class participation (in both lecture and recitation): 20%
- Essays: 65% (10% (essay #1), 15% (essay #2), 20% (essay #3), 20% (essay #4))
- Oral Presentation: 15%

(Note that this course contributes to your communication-intensive requirement and so aims to provide substantial opportunity for oral and written expression. See the HASS- CI guidelines for a full explanation of the requirements for communication-intensive courses.)

Reading:

Required book:

Gerstle, G. (2015). Liberty and Coercion: The Paradox of American Government From the Founding to the Present. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

We expect students to do the assigned reading prior to each class and come prepared to discuss the material. All required readings, with the exception of one book, are posted on the [Stellar site for the course](#).

In addition to reading the material listed on the syllabus, we strongly urge students to read a daily newspaper—the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, or the Boston Globe. All are available online through the MIT library system (see Factiva).

Academic Integrity:

We encourage students to talk to one another outside of class about issues discussed in class and to brainstorm about essays. You often learn best from your peers. That said, we expect each student to write his or her own essays individually. For more on academic integrity, please see the MIT Web site: <http://web.mit.edu/academicintegrity/index.html>.

Writing Guidelines:

As you compose your essays, please keep the following points in mind--

Format

- *All essays should be double spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman type, and with pages numbered.
- *Page limits are firm; we will not read beyond the assigned length.
- *Use reference-list format for all cited work. (You can find a guide to reference-list format in the Chicago Manual of Style.)

Style

Write for your reader, and make your writing lively and interesting. That means:

- *Short, simple sentences are always better than long, complicated ones.
- *In nearly every case, the active voice is preferable to the passive voice.
- *Direct, concrete statements are better than vague, indirect statements.
- *Write for an audience that consists of educated generalists who are unfamiliar with the topic, not for your TA or your professors.
- *Along those lines, avoid jargon.

Submission

- *Submit your essay via Stellar, and please submit a Word document, not a pdf.
- *Late essays lose one half-grade per day. We grant extensions only in emergencies and with advance notification.
- *Finally, be vigilant about plagiarism, as it is an extremely serious offense and quite easy to avoid. Whether you are quoting another author, or simply paraphrasing her ideas, you must cite the source. There are no exceptions, so when in doubt, cite the source. [For guidance see MIT's Comparative Media Studies website on "Avoiding Plagiarism".](#)

In addition to the writing advisor assigned to this course, please consider using the services of the Writing and Communication Center (12-132), which offers free, one-on-one, professional advice from published writers about oral presentations and about all types of academic, creative, and professional writing. Go to <http://writing.mit.edu/wcc> and click on "Appointment." If you cannot find an open appointment slot, do not despair. There are always cancellations on the day of the appointment. Click on the clock in the upper left-hand corner of each day's block. Whenever a cancellation occurs on that day, you will be automatically notified by email. Because several people might receive that same message, go online ASAP to schedule that open spot; 96 percent of clients who want an appointment end up with one if they use the Wait List. The center's hours are listed on the online scheduler. The best way to guarantee yourself an appointment is to schedule early!

I. Introduction

Wednesday, September 6th

II. The U.S. Constitutional Framework

Monday, September 11th

(Nedelsky 1990), Chapter 2, "The Madisonian Vision," p. 16-66; Chapter 5, "The Madisonian Constitution," p. 141-202.

Wednesday, September 13th

(Gerstle 2015), Chapter 1, "A Liberal Central State Emerges," p. 17-54

III. The Abolitionist Critique

Monday, September 18th

(Lynd 1965), "The Abolitionist Critique of the US Constitution"

Finkelman, Chapter 1, "Making a Covenant with Death"; Chapter 2, "Slavery and the Northwest Ordinance, 1787: A Study in Ambiguity."

Frederick Douglass, "The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro," speech, July 5th, 1852.

Supplementary reading:

Charles W. Mills, "Whose Fourth of July? Frederick Douglass and 'Original Intent'," in Bill E. Lawson and Frank M. Kirland, *Frederick Douglass: A Critical Reader* (New York: Blackwell Press, 1999).

IV. State's Rights

Wednesday, September 20th

(Einhorn 2006), Introduction and Prologue, p. 1-23; Chapter 3, "Variations," p. 73-109.

Gerstle, Chapter 2, "The States and Their Police Power"

V. The “Private Economy” and Governance

Monday, September 25th

(Bowles 2016), Chapter 1, “The Problem with *Homo economicus*,” p. 1-8; Chapter 2, “A Constitution for Knaves,” p. 9-38.

Wednesday, September 27th

(Hudson 2015), “Introduction”, p. 1-26; Chapters 1-4, p. 29-69.

David Ciepley, “Beyond Public and Private: Toward a Political Theory of the Corporation.” *American Political Science Review* 107, no.1 (2013), p. 139-158.

David M.P. Freund, “Marketing the Free Market: State Intervention and the Politics of Prosperity in Metropolitan America,” in (Kruse and Sugrue 2006), p. 11-32.

VI. Comparative Perspective on U.S. and Europe

Monday, October 2nd

(Esping-Anderson 1985), Chapter 10, “Pre-conditions and Conditions for Social Democracy,” p. 314-324.

VII. The Expansion of Federal Government Power

Wednesday, October 4th

Gerstle, Chapter 8, “An Era of Permanent War,” p. 251-274; Chapter 9, “Breaking the Power of the States,” p. 275-310; Chapter 10, “Conservative Revolt,” p. 311-344.

<<<< Essay #1 DUE at 9:30am on Wednesday, October 4th via Stellar
>>>>

October 9th Columbus Day

VIII. Problems with Democracy

Wednesday, October 11th

(Achen and Bartels 2016), Chapter 1, “Democratic Ideals and Realities”

IX. Race, Politics, and Policy

Monday, October 16th

(Baptist 2014), Introduction, p. xiii-xxvii

(Roediger 2015), Chapter 4, "Falling Apart: The First Rainbow Coalition and the Waning of Revolutionary Time," p. 147-198.

(Roediger 2008), Chapter 5, "A Nation Stays White: How Race Survived Mass Immigration," p. 136-168; and Chapter 6, "Colorblind Inequalities: How Race Survived Modern Liberalism," p. 169-211.

X. The Policy-Making Process

Wednesday, October 18th

Kingdon, John W. 1995. "Wrapping Things Up." In *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, 2nd edition. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Mathew D McCubbins, Roger G Noll, and Barry R Weingast. Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control. *Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization*, 3(2):243-277, 198

(Rosenberg 2008), Chapter 1, "The Dynamic and the Constrained Court," p. 9-38.

<<<< Essay #2 DUE at 10:30am on Monday, October 23rd via Stellar >>>>

XI. Healthcare Reform

Monday, October 23rd

Interest Groups and Public Opinion

Citizens' Health Care Working Group. 2006. "Section I—A Snapshot of Health Care Issues in America," and "Section V— Access Problems: Not Getting the Health Care You Need." *The Health Report to the American People*, March 31.

Blendon, Robert J., and John M. Benson. 2010. "Public Opinion at the Time of the Vote on Health Care." *New England Journal of Medicine* 362(2): 55.

Daschle, Tom and David Nather. 2010. "Part 2: The Plan." *Getting It Done: How Obama and Congress Finally Broke the Stalemate to Make Way for Healthcare Reform*. New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press.

Wednesday, October 25th Passing Congress

[Cohn, Jonathan. 2010. "How They Did It." The New Republic, June 10.](#)

Oberlander, Jonathan. 2010. "Long Time Coming: Why Health Reform Finally Passed." *Health Affairs* 29(6):1112-1116.

Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 3-16.

Daschle, Tom and David Nather. 2010. "Part 3: No Margin for Error." Getting It Done: How Obama and Congress Finally Broke the Stalemate to Make Way for Healthcare Reform. New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press.

Monday, October 30th Implementation

[Liptak, Adam. 2011. "Health Law Puts Focus on Limits of Federal Power." New York Times, November 13.](#)

[Luthra, Shefali. 2013. "Promoting Health Insurance Exchange, With No Help from State." New York Times, July 18.](#)

[Abelson, Reed. 2013. "Choice of Health Plans to Vary Sharply from State to State." New York Times, June 16.](#)

Wednesday, November 1 Medicaid Reform: Brooklyn Case Study

[Campbell, Andrea Louise. 2012. "The Future of U.S. Health Care." Boston Review, August 13.](#)

"Caring for Today, Planning for Tomorrow," Executive Summary.
[More to come]

<<<< Essay #3 DUE at 9:30am on Monday, November 6th via Stellar
>>>>

Monday, November 6 **An (Overly?) Aggressive Police**

Getting a Handle on Police Brutality
["The Counted." The Guardian, ongoing.](#)

[Graham, David A. 2015. "Why Is It So Hard to Track Police Killings?" The Atlantic Monthly, June 3.](#)

[Grothaus, Michael. 2015. "The U.S. Doesn't Track Deaths By Police, So Citizens Are Doing It." Fast Company, June 18.](#)

[Swaine, Jon, Oliver Laughland, and Jamiles Lartey. 2015. "Black Americans Killed by Police Twice as Likely to be Unarmed as White People." The Guardian, June 1.](#)

Policing and Use of Force

[Williams, Timothy. 2015. "Long Taught to Use Force, Police Warily Learn to De-escalate." The New York Times, June 27.](#)

[Apuzzo, Matt. 2015. "Police Rethink Long Tradition on Using Force." The New York Times, May 4.](#)

[Walters, Joanna. 2015. "High Gun Ownership Linked to High Rate of Police Officer Deaths, Study Shows." The Guardian, August 14.](#)

[Walters, Joanna. 2015. "Former British Police Official Disputes US Police Rationale for Killing Armed Suspects." The Guardian, June 2.](#)

[Swaine, Jon, Oliver Laughland, and Jamiles Lartey. 2015. "Moving Targets." The Guardian, September 1.](#)

[Harwood, Matthew. 2014. "How Did America's Police Get So Militarized?" Mother Jones, August 14.](#)

[Reuters. 2015. "Police Militarization in Honduras has Helped Cut Violence, but Soldiers are Being Accused of Murder and Torture." Business Insider, July 9.](#)

[Berman, Russell. 2014. "Obama's Cautious First Step toward Demilitarizing the Police." The Atlantic, December 1.](#)

Reform and Pushback

[Noack, Rick. 2015. "Five Countries Where Police Officers Do Not Carry Firearms—And It Works Well." The Guardian, February 18.](#)

[Carrol, Rory. 2013. "California Police Use of Body Cameras Cuts Violence and Complaints." The Guardian, November 4.](#)

[Hill, Kashmir. 2014. "A Future in Which Every Police Officer Wears a Body Cam Isn't Entirely Rosey," Forbes, November 5.](#)

[Sansburn, Josh. 2015. "Sheriffs Are Lonely Holdouts as Police Body Cameras Grow in Use." Time, July 7.](#)

Wednesday, November 8th

(Taylor 2016), Chapter 6, "Black Lives Matter: A Movement, Not a Moment," p. 153-190; Chapter 7, "From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation," p. 191-219.

XII. Climate Change and Public Opinion

Monday, November 13th Climate Policy and Economics

Alex Bowen, Simon Dietz and Naomi Hicks. Why do economists describe climate change as a 'market failure'?, 2012. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2012/may/21/economists-climate-change-market-failure>

Stern, Nicholas. Executive Summary (Long) of the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change. Report to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Economics of Climate Change, 2006. Retrieved from: http://www.wwf.se/source.php/1169157/Stern%20Report_Exec%20Summary.pdf

Frank Ackerman. Climate Economics in Four Easy Pieces. *Development*, 51, 325-331, 2008.

Michael Greenstone and Adam Looney. Paying too much for energy? The true costs of our energy choices. *Daedalus*, 141(2): 10-30, 2013.

Wednesday, November 15th Climate Politics: Interest Groups

Coral Davenport and Eric Lipton. How G.O.P. Leaders Came to View Climate Change as Fake Science. *New York Times*, 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/03/us/politics/republican-leaders-climate-change.html?mcubz=0>

Henrik Selin and Stacy D. VanDeveer. US climate change politics and policymaking. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews Climate Change*, 2(1): 121-127, 2011.

Frank Grundig. Political Strategy and Climate Policy: A Rational Choice Perspective. *Environmental Politics*, 18(5):747-764, 2009.

InfluenceMap. Corporate Carbon Policy Footprint. September 2017. Retrieved from: https://influencemap.org/site/data/000/299/CPF_Report_Aug_2017.pdf

Monday, November 20th Climate Politics: Public Opinion

A. M. McCright and R. E. Dunlap. The politicization of climate change and polarization in the American public's views of global warming, 2001-2010. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 52(2):155-194, 2011b.

van der Linden, S., Maibach, E., & Leiserowitz, A. (2015). Improving public engagement with climate change: Five "best practice" insights from psychological science. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10(6), 758-763.

P. J. Egan and M. Mullin. Turning personal experience into political attitudes: The effect of local weather on Americans' perceptions about global warming. *The Journal of Politics*, 74(03):796-809, 2012.

L. Scruggs and S. Benegal. Declining public concern about climate change: Can we blame the great recession? *Global Environmental Change*, 22(2):505-515, 2012.

XIII. Fair Housing [Forthcoming] Nov. 22, 27, 29.

<<<< Essay #4 DUE at 9:30am on Monday, December 4th via Stellar >>>>

XIV: **Student Presentations** December 4, 6.

THIS SYLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE INSTRUCTORS' DISCRETION

References:

Achen, C. H. and L. M. Bartels (2016). Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Baptist, E. E. (2014). The Half Has Never Been Told; Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism. New York, Basic books.

Bowles, S. (2016). The Moral Economy: Why Good Incentives Are No Substitute for Good Citizens. New Haven Yale University Press.

Einhorn, R. L. (2006). American Taxation, American Slavery. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Esping-Anderson, G. (1985). Politics Against Markets: The Social Democratic Road to Power. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Gerstle, G. (2015). Liberty and Coercion: The Paradox of American Government From the Founding to the Present. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Hudson, M. (2015). Killing the Host: How Financial Parasites and Debt Destroy the Global Economy. Germany, ISLET-Verlag.

Kruse, K. M. and T. J. Sugrue, Eds. (2006). The New Suburban History. Chicago, U. of Chicago Press.

Lynd, S. (1965). The Abolitionist Critique of the US Constitution. The Anti-Slavery Vanguard. M. Duberman. Princeton, Princeton University Press: 209-239.

Nedelsky, J. (1990). Private Property and the Limits of American Constitutionalism: The Madison Framework and Its Legacy. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Roediger, D. (2015). Seizing Freedom. New York, Verso Press.

Roediger, D. R. (2008). How Race Survived U.S. History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon. Brooklyn, Verso.

Rosenberg, G. (2008). The Hollow Hope: Can Courts Bring About Social Change? Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Taylor, K.-Y. (2016). From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation. Chicago, Haymarket Books.