

Public Policy Analysis
PS 3306: W01
Fall 2018
Sul Ross State University
SYLLABUS

Professor: Dr. Tiffany Vincent
Office Hours: Available via email.
Email: tiffany.vincent@sulross.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed with a focus on the development, assessment, and evaluation of the complexities of the public policy making process. To this end, we will study several domestic policy areas discuss their strengths/weaknesses, as well as identify and evaluate areas of improvement.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The graduating student will be able to:

1. Evaluate the political intricacies surrounding the policy process.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 1
2. Identify and apply major conceptual policy models.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 1
3. Describe the role of public and non-public actors in the formulation of policy.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 2
4. Identify strengths and weaknesses of contemporary domestic policy areas.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 2
5. Demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate statistical tools for quantitative analysis.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 3

COURSE FORMAT & EXPECTATIONS:

This is an online distance education course. As such, it is open throughout the semester but there are assigned due dates for submitting assignments and exams (see class schedule on the last page of this syllabus). This course is designed to allow for a more peer-led learning vs. instructor-led lecture environment. The role of the instructor will be to guide the students through the process of understanding the course subject matter. The role of the student will be to read the assigned chapters from the required textbook each day and participate in the online class discussion forums. Specifically, it is required that each student:

1. Read and be prepared to discuss the assigned materials online.
2. Raise relevant questions and contribute relevant observations to the topic at hand.
3. Fully participate in online discussion forums.
4. Demonstrate appropriate and respectful communication with classmates and the instructor.

DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT:

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Without full participation and being prepared for each daily activity, students shall find themselves at a severe disadvantage for achieving success in this course. *Keep in mind that your computer problems are NOT an excuse for any lack of completion of course material. YOU will need to maintain access to a reliable Internet connection (keep in mind there are computers available for your use in the Sul Ross Library). I am not responsible for any technological glitches that may occur in the online environment.* Sul Ross State University does not tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or collusion. Procedures for dealing with these acts are outlined in the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy.

CIVILITY STATEMENT:

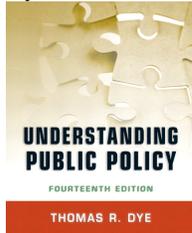
In the classroom environment I hold each of you accountable for both your actions and words. Therefore, you should commit yourself to behave in a manner that recognizes personal respect and demonstrates concern for the personal dignity, rights, and freedoms of every individual in the classroom, including respect for University property and the physical and intellectual property of others. If a student is asked to leave the classroom because of uncivil behavior, the student may not return to that class until he or she arranges a conference with the professor, it is the student's responsibility to arrange for this conference. –*Note: This *DOES* apply to this online course.

DISABILITY POLICY:

In order to receive accommodations on exams or assignments, proper documentation must first be provided to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services. Contact Mary Schwartz (Office: 112 Ferguson Hall) to set up an accommodations meeting, or call (432) 837-8203. Students must then present this documentation to the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations may be arranged.

TEXTBOOK (Required):

Dye, Thomas. *Understanding Public Policy*, 14th edition. 2012. ISBN: 9780205238828

**GRADING SCALE:**

- 60% Exams (3 exams worth 20% each)
- 30% Chapter Reflections/Discussion Board Posts
- 10% Participation

*There is NO EXTRA CREDIT for this course, so please do not ask.

This course follows the traditional percentage based grading system below.

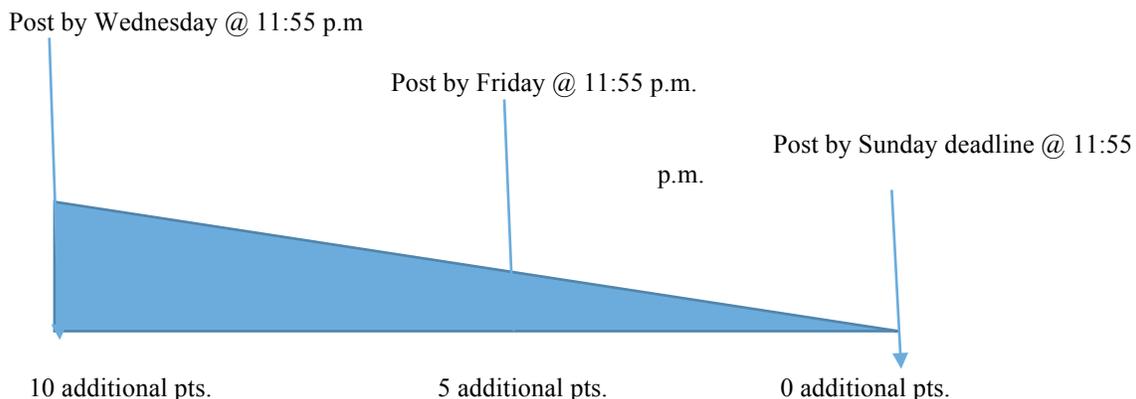
- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59 & below.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

EXAMS- Each student will complete three exams in this course. This course will consist of written essay responses to question(s) that I will create to determine your ability to think critically about the assigned material. Exams (and directions) will be emailed to your email address on file via Banner and Blackboard (*each exam is worth 20% of your overall final course grade*). I will email you the exams on the week in which they are assigned (see course schedule on the next page), and you will submit your answers on Sunday of the same week (this means that you will have 1 week to complete the exam and submit it to me). This also means that you must think extraordinarily critically and constructively about your responses to the questions especially given the generous one-week submission deadline. **Missed exams will result in a grade of zero. Exam deadlines are inflexible and absolute – no excuses.**

CHAPTER REFLECTIONS/DISCUSSION BOARD POSTS- As an online course, your active engagement, participation, and demonstration of reading comprehension is vital to your success in this class. In the discussion section of Blackboard each week, I will pose a discussion question or two over the assigned reading(s). Discussion post(s) will appear every Monday and will be due on Sunday @ 11: 55 p.m. of the same week, so you will have 7 days to think about and construct your answers. Each week you are required to respond to my question, create a question of your own, and respond to a classmate’s question. *For each week then, a total of 3 discussion posts are required.* The questions/answers should be analytical (theoretical) over the topic at hand and/or an attempt to develop a closely related line of inquiry. The purpose is to generate productive classroom discussion and demonstrate critical thinking ability with regard to the assigned reading(s). The questions/answers are meant to be evaluative/analytical for the sake of discussion rather than trivia questions from the readings. Failure to be respectful and civil in your responses/questions with classmates or with the instructor will result in no credit—and potential removal from the course. At the end of the semester, I will take the average of your grade on these weekly submissions and that grade will be worth 30% of your overall final course grade.

TIMELY PARTICIPATION- Worth 10% of the course grade, your active and productive participation in this course is expected and required. This category is directly related to the section above (chapter reflections/discussion board posts). To encourage productive and thoughtful discussion, the earlier you complete your readings and post your discussion question, the more you will be rewarded (this way you hopefully will not have to wait until Sunday to answer a classmate’s posted question). If over a majority (51%) of your posts throughout the semester are completed using the submission cut-off dates in the chart below, you will receive additional points toward this category. For example, if you post your question by Wednesday you can get up to 10 additional points added to this category; post by Friday, 5 additional points. No additional points are given for submitting work by the required Sunday deadline. If you submit your questions between the days, the points for the next day will be added; for example, if you post by Tuesday, you will get the Wednesday total of 10 pts.; if you post by Thursday, you will receive the Friday total of 5 pts. **NOTE: If you choose to complete your posts by the Sunday deadline you are not penalized, but there will not be any additional points being added to your grade in this category.*



Course Content/Class Schedule:

WEEK	ASSIGNED READINGS
SECTION 1 THEME: Frameworks and Foundations	
Week 1 (8/27)	Course introduction, syllabus, and Blackboard navigation
Week 2 (9/3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1: Policy Analysis • Chapter 2: Models of Politics
Week 3 (9/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3: The Policymaking Process • Chapter 4: Policy Evaluation
Week 4 (9/17)	EXAM 1
SECTION 2 THEME: Applications	
Week 5 (9/24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5: Federalism and State Policies • Chapter 6: Criminal Justice
Week 6 (10/1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7: Welfare • Chapter 8: Health Care
Week 7 (10/8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9: Education
Week 8 (10/15)	EXAM 2
SECTION 3 THEME: Applications Cont.	
Week 9 (10/22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10: Economic Policy • Chapter 11: Tax Policy •
Week 10 (10/29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12: International Trade • Chapter 13: Energy and the Environment
Week 11 (11/5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 14: Civil Rights
Week 12 (11/12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 15: Defense Policy
Week 13 (11/19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanksgiving Holiday Break – No Assignments Due
Week 14 (11/26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 16: Homeland Security
Week 15 (12/3)	EXAM 3

*NOTE: This schedule is tentative and therefore subject to change at my discretion.