I. OVERVIEW
This class is concerned with the politics of policymaking. Specifically, when, why and how do governments choose to enact policy change? To answer this question, we will explore theories of the policy process developed by scholars in policy studies and comparative politics. We will also examine central debates on the origins of welfare state and the constraints for policy change.

This course starts with some analytic questions, including definitions of public policy and debates over theory-building exercises in political science. We then read works on the evolution of the welfare regimes as well as the role of institutions and ideas on policymaking. The latter part of the course explores the prospect for reform in several policy domains including: feminist policy, pension reform, and social policy (poverty) reform. We end the semester on policy diffusion, a topic which has captured the attention of scholars in American, comparative politics, and international relations. Throughout the semester, readings will draw on case studies from around the world, including the United States, Europe, and Latin America.

Students will note the readings span across traditional disciplinary subfields by drawing on research developed in American (U.S. state politics, policy studies) and comparative politics. As such, this course should interest students of public administration, public policy, American, and comparative politics.

II. OBJECTIVES
The course is designed to introduce graduate students to some of the key debates in policy studies and social sector reform. By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1) Explain the main currents in theory building exercises in policy studies, including the analytic strengths and weakness of the field.
2) Access the competing approaches scholars have employed to explain policy continuity and change.
3) Explain why place (country, state, or other unit of analysis) and time may be important factors for understanding policy processes and outcomes.
4) Develop a research project to explain the politics of a comparative public policy topic, including a full review of the literature from complementary political science subfields.

III. Grading
Class Participation: 20%
Analytic Essays (3): 30%
Research Proposal Draft: 10%
Research Proposal & Class Presentation: 40%

IV. Important Dates
February 4th Submit first analytic essay on theories of the policymaking process. Students may select the material they wish write about for their second and third submissions. Those essays will be due in class on the day we discuss the material.
March 13th Target Deadline to discuss research proposal topics.
April 26th Draft Research Proposal Due (by 5pm)
May 6th Class Presentations
May 10th Final Research Proposal Due (by 5pm)

V. Assignments
Class Participation:
Students are expected to actively participate in weekly class discussion. For effective participation, come to class having read all the assigned material and bring the assigned reading to class.

Each week, 2-3 students will guide the rest of the class in discussion. All students will serve as discussion leaders for at least 3 sessions.

Discussion leaders will present brief overviews of the readings (5 mins) and provide the class with questions to generate discussion. Handouts with summaries of core arguments and assessments of each article/book should be short (no longer 2 pages). Questions for discussion should focus on core arguments and critiques of the works. Members of the group should meet before class to prepare presentations and questions for the session. Optional: discussion leaders may circulate a set of questions prior to the class meeting. If you do this, I suggest you circulate questions 48 hours before we meet.
Analytic Essays (3): 30%

Analytic essays should address one week’s readings and are due on the day we are scheduled to discuss them in class. Essays should be 4-5 pages in length and explore the central debates from the readings (e.g. conceptual and methodological approaches). Avoid excessive summary, instead focus on critiques of the books/articles and concentrate on the strengths and weaknesses of the analysis.

(Note: You may submit analytic essays on the weeks you are also serving as a discussion leader.)

Research Proposal Draft:

The draft research proposal is designed to provide early feedback on the final proposal. Plan to submit a complete first draft, including the entire narrative and references. You will also share your drafts with the rest of the class, circulating them one week prior to your oral presentations in class.

Final Research Proposal and Class Presentation:

Students will design a research project on a comparative public policy issue of their choice. The proposal should include a discussion of the research question, scholarly significance (including relevant discussion of the scholarly literature), and methods you would employ to carry out the project. Each proposal should be 15 pages in length (not including bibliography).

Please read the following resource as you think about and write your proposals:


Proposals developed must be original efforts designed specifically for this course. As this course focuses on “comparative public policy” projects should have some type of comparison in their research design (e.g. comparison across policy arenas, comparison across time, or comparison across place (e.g. subnational, cross-national). All students should discuss their research topics with Prof. Sugiyama by Spring Break.

Students who strongly prefer to develop a full research paper may discuss this as an alternative to the research proposal.
VI. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Books to Purchase:
The following books are available for purchase at the UWM bookstore:


Additional Readings:
Other assigned materials, including articles, book chapters, and working papers will be available via the UWM Electronic Reserve system. For a direct link, see D2L course website under the “Contents” section.

CLASS POLICIES (READ CAREFULLY):

Attendance Policy: This course is designed to be an intensive seminar with student participation and discussion. In order for rich classroom discussion to take place, students must attend all sessions. If you have an emergency or scheduling conflict, please notify me.

Office Hours: My office hours are Wednesday 10-12, or by appointment.

E-mail: The best way to contact me is via e-mail. Please do not leave me a voicemail message as I don’t check it frequently.

Academic Misconduct: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and disciplinary sanctions by the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies
on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. If you are unfamiliar with university rules related to cheating and plagiarism, please consult: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html

Disability Accommodations: At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations are provided, students should contact the SAC Office. For more information, see: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/SACltr.pdf

Religious Beliefs Accommodation: On occasion, students may find it necessary to miss class in order to observe a religious holiday. In order to ensure reasonable accommodation, students should inform the instructor of the conflict prior to the holiday. http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm

Military Duty: Students called up for active military duty should contact the instructor for accommodation. For more information on the university’s policies, see: http://www3.uwm.edu/des/web/registration/militarycallup.cfm

Discriminatory Conduct: For information on definitions of discrimination, harassment, abuse of power, and the reporting requirements of discriminatory conduct, see: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S47.pdf

Dropping the Course and Incompletes: Be sure you know the university deadlines for dropping courses (see the UWM Calendar for details). Incompletes are only given under extenuating circumstances (e.g. serious illness or injury, family emergency, etc.). Students must provide proper documentation and communicate with the instructor as soon as possible.

VI. READINGS SCHEDULE

PART I: Foundations

Week 1: Course Introduction - What is Public Policy? January 28th


Week 2: Theories of the Policymaking Process 
February 4


Read: Parts 1-3 (pp. 1-222)

Recommended:


Week 3: Conceptualizing the Welfare State 
February 11


Recommended:

Part II: Approaches

Week 4: Macro-Historical 
February 18

Recommended:

Week 5: Role of Institutions


**Recommended:**


Week 6: Institutions Cont: Decentralization


**Week 7: Ideas & Norms**


*Recommended:*


*Spring Break* March 18th

*No new readings*

*Week 8: Policy Diffusion* March 25th


*Recommended:*


*Part 3: Public Policies & Outcomes*

*Week 9: Policy Reform – Social Policy* April 1st


**Recommended trade books:**

**Week 10: Policy Reform – Social Policy Cont. April 8th**


**Week 11: Policy Reform – Pensions/Social Security April 15th**


**Week 12: Gendered Outcomes of The Welfare State April 22nd**

**Draft Research Proposals Due Friday, April 26th by 5pm **

**Recommended:**

Week 13: Citizenship Development  
Sugiyama, Natasha Borges, and Wendy Hunter. Whither Clientelism. *Comparative Politics.* Forthcoming. {D2L}

**Reminder – circulate your draft proposal to the class by April 29th **

Week 14: Student Research Workshop  
Student Research Proposal Presentations

**Final Research Proposals Due: May 10**