PUBLIC POLICY (PPOL)

Courses

PPOL 4100 American Public Policy System (4 Credits)
The American Policy Agenda, which is required for MPP students, will provide an intensive overview of the development of American public policy in the 20th century, with special emphasis on the interconnection between the values of the public and private sectors. Through the lens of a useful descriptive model, graduate students will learn concepts of the role of government have evolved from: the (1) constitutional period, wherein political society was thought to be a rational device for the protection of property and liberty and prosperity was equivalent to the free management of affairs; to the (2) administrative period, wherein powerful regulatory agencies were created to control concentrations of corporate power and the idea developed that the market does not always reflect the social good; to the (3) bureaucratic period, wherein the stock market collapse of 1929 and the Great Depression reversed key ideas of limited government inherent in the constitution and, beginning with the New Deal, social engineering in the "public interest" defined virtually every problem as "national;" to the (4) social welfare period, wherein government became the source of vast entitlements and benefits and interest groups came to dominate the policy debate; to the (5) current period of stalemated, gridlock, and reconsideration, wherein big government is a given, along with a utilitarian social contract defined as that which provides the most efficiency, the most productivity, and the most consumption for the most people.

PPOL 4200 Microeconomics for Public Pol. (4 Credits)
Microeconomics for Public Policy Analysis will provide a comprehensive, case-based overview for the MPP student of the consequences of contemporary public policies for individuals, households, and firms. Public policy is often said to consist of the distribution of scarce or valuable resources or benefits through the mechanisms of the public sector. This course will provide the opportunity to gain fluency and expertise in the application of economic analysis to such problems as transfer payments, entitlements, government subsidies, taxation, housing, education, labor, welfare and crime. Issues concerned with exploring the government's role in encouraging innovation, maintaining a growing economy, and budgeting under conditions of "surplus," will be explored using contemporary policy initiatives. Two competing visions of public policy will be examined: the role of economic policy in securing the benefits of "ordered liberty," which accружеs to the individual; and (2) the vision of public policy as fundamental to the correction of anomalies in the market and in the distribution of scarce resources, often based on interest group claims of "disparity" and "inequality".

PPOL 4300 Quantitative Analysis-Pub Pol (4 Credits)
This course will provide the MMP student with the tools of mathematical analysis needed for the advanced study of public policy issues and evaluation of alternatives. Topics will include descriptive statistics, probability, sampling, estimation, inference and hypothesis testing, variable analysis and correlation, regression theory, reliability and validity, and prediction and simulation. Students needing review of college-level algebra will be referred to appropriate tutorials.

PPOL 4400 Analytical & Critical Skills (4 Credits)
This course will provide the student with the analytical tools necessary to evaluate competing points of view, using empirical techniques, logic, and statistical inference. Case studies will be drawn from the current legislative and regulatory environment and will provide the MPP student with opportunities to construct a course of action, based on the use of logically consistent arguments and on the persuasive use of facts and empirical data. Students in this course will also learn the history and development of the scientific method, how to distinguish speculation, theory, fact, and opinion, how to identify the validity, ideological content or irrationality of data, how to identify the intentional obfuscation of issues, and how to evaluate one's own prejudices and vulnerability to argument not based on evidence.

PPOL 4500 Cost-Benefit Analysis/Pub Pol (4 Credits)
How do we determine if programs have met their objectives? Increasingly, this is a matter for empirical evaluation. This course will focus on quantitative approaches to program evaluation and on the primary tool available to the policy analyst in the modern organizational framework, cost-benefit analysis. Various issues will be considered, including the "costs" associated with taxes (and tax expenditures), governmental mandates, health and safety regulation, environmental regulation, government "investments," such as those in education, defense, law enforcement, and the regulation of financial industries.

PPOL 4501 Great Issues Forum (2 Credits)
The Great Issues Forums are unique short courses devoted to a single policy issue and taught by a nationally-recognized authority in the area. These courses will occur on a periodic basis, with at least two forums to be offered each academic quarter. Participation in these courses is required for graduate students in the MPP program. Each course will be taught on an intensive workshop basis, over the course of two or more days, for example, all-day sessions on Friday and Saturday. Specific topics will be determined by the immediacy of the policy issue and its relevancy to the curriculum of the MPP.

PPOL 4502 Issues Forum II (2 Credits)
The Great Issues Forums are unique short courses devoted to a single policy issue and taught by a nationally-recognized authority in the area. These courses will occur on a periodic basis, with at least two forums to be offered each academic quarter. Participation in these courses is required for graduate students in the MPP program. Each course will be taught on an intensive workshop basis, over the course of two or more days, for example, all-day sessions on Friday and Saturday. Specific topics will be determined by the immediacy of the policy issue and its relevancy to the curriculum of the MPP.
PPOL 4504 The Policymaking Environment (2 Credits)
This forum aims to provide MPP students with a robust understanding of the essentials of the policymaking process in the United States. We will be examining in sequence three basic topics: 1) The political values and principles that establish the parameters for the policymaking environment; 2) The set of governmental and non-governmental actors who participate in policymaking and how they relate to each other; and 3) What policymaking models can help to explain the way policy is made by those actors.

PPOL 4506 The American Fiscal Future: Solvency, Security, and Sovereignty in the 21st Century (4 Credits)
This course provides the opportunity for students to gain a comprehensive understanding of American fiscal policy, the derivation of the social welfare state, the consequences of debt and deficits for American public policy and social stability, and the policy alternatives to current dysfunctional policies.

PPOL 4600 Regulatory Policy (4 Credits)
This course will provide the MPP student with a solid understanding of the legal basis for policy action, through a case-based examination of executive and legislative authority, judicial policy-making, the expansion of the due process and equal protection clauses of the 14th Amendment, and the expansion of administrative authority under the Administrative Procedure Act. Such issues as affirmative action, government contracting, school finance, antitrust, and substantive due process will be presented utilizing a combination of traditional legal analysis and the cost-benefit approach of the policy specialist.

PPOL 4700 Public Management & Budgeting (4 Credits)
This course introduces students to the topic of public management, which includes concepts such as organizational structure, performance management, and strategy development. In addition, the instructor will teach the techniques and concepts of government and non-profit budgeting/financial management. The budgeting process includes program development/implementation, cost and revenue estimation and projection, and budget evaluation. The relationship between public management and budgeting will be explored.

PPOL 4701 Topics in Public Policy (4 Credits)
Various topics in public policy are covered. Topic subjects to change each term as deemed appropriate with local, regional and federal policy issues and regulation changes. Prerequisite: PPOL 4100.

PPOL 4806 Decision Making in Public Policy (4 Credits)
Provides a new perspective on the process of decision-making in the public and private sectors. Viewed from the perspective of a significant paradigm shift, the "rational model" of policy-making is contrasted with emerging theories based on a view of human nature that is unpredictable, idiosyncratic, and context-based. Case studies are drawn from the current financial crisis and from the ongoing debate over economic stimulus and recovery. Additional examples are provided from the New Deal era, the Vietnam war, Watergate, and from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

PPOL 4807 The Public Policy Implications of Retiring the Baby Boomers (4 Credits)
The first baby boomers start drawing Social Security in 2008, and they they start turning 65 in 2011. American Retirement Policy has long undertaken three major obligations with regard to the elderly: Social Security, Health Care and Long Term Care. The shock of 76 million baby boomers impacting these three systems (and related programs like Veteran’s programs, Military retirement, Federal Civil Service Retirement, etc.) will be profound. Your generation will soon be running a nation of 50 Florida’s. This class will look at the public policy options of these three programs. We will also look at the politics of retirement policy, the demography of the next 50 years, tax policy in an aging society, how other developed countries are handling similar problems, and we will develop a comprehensive plan for meeting these multiple challenges.

PPOL 4808 Health Care Policy (4 Credits)
No prerequisites. The purpose of this course will be to explore the assumptions, the history, the development and the current practices of the U.S. health care systems. What are its strengths and what are its weaknesses? How do we explain its paradox of excess and deprivation? We will spend some limited time examining other nation’s health care systems for comparative purposes. The course will cover a broad range of topics and will explore a systems approach to health, obtaining an understanding of the integration of the public and private sector, free-market and government regulation; the effects on the doctor/patient relationship, the new health care demands, the search for quality, the role of new technologies and the changing ethical standards. Such a course cannot be designed to describe a functional world of health care delivery for even as the description is being formulated, the practical and functional aspects of that world are changing.

PPOL 4810 Building a Sustainable America (4 Credits)
This course has a viewpoint: endless economic and population growth are sustainable. Opposing viewpoints are welcomed, even encouraged, but the purpose of this class is to start developing a new, more sustainable agenda for America. No trees grow to the sky and no geometric growth curves are sustainable. The first census in 1790 found four million Europeans living in North America. (Estimate of Native Americans vary widely.) That means that between 1790 and 1990, America had six doublings of its population (4, 8, 32, 64, 128, 256). Note that two more doublings would give us one billion Americans. Sustainable? Desired Public Policy? Similarly, U.S. and world economic growth has been growing exponentially. America’s GDP is now 13 trillion dollars and there are serious questions whether the world’s eco-systems can provide 6.5 billion people (the current world population) anything close to an American standard of living. Nor can the eco-system tolerate economic growth at historic rates. Many thoughtful observers think that a whole new phase of human development has been reached, call it the Sustainability Revolution, which will have as profound impact on human history as did the Industrial Revolution. Our globe is warming, our glaciers are melting, our oceans are expanding, our coral dying, our rainforest dying, our deserts creeping, our water-tables falling: we seem to be headed to a time of convergence. For the first time in history, humankind has itself become a geological force. New public policy solutions need to be brought forth and debated. We will attempt to do exactly that.
PPOL 4811 The Strategy of Public Policy (4 Credits)
Public Policy is formed in many ways: legislation, court rulings, initiative campaigns, executive orders, and regulations, not to mention many other subtle instruments that are often invisible to the public. All of these tools make analyzing policy a difficult task, and they make choosing the right strategy for getting a policy implemented even more complicated. How is it that policy makers choose to implement their policies? Are any options more effective than others? To understand the policy process in the U.S., policy analysts must understand the institutions that exist in government.

PPOL 4812 Supreme Court & Public Policy (4 Credits)
This course, which is specifically designed for graduate students in public policy, provides the necessary professional background for students to understand the role of the Supreme Court of the United States in the formulation of public policy. Central to the course are the due process and equal protection clauses of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which are the key to understanding the vast expansion of Supreme Court power since the New Deal. The course also provides a basis for the student to understand the constitutional basis for administrative regulation, as well as freedom of expression issues inherent in the 1st Amendment.

PPOL 4820 What Works in Public Policy - and What Doesn't (4 Credits)
The goal of this course is to analyze the implications for public policy of significant public policy failures and successes. Selected major public policy initiatives are examined with a view toward judging their ultimate success or failure and the reasons for these outcomes. There is an emphasis on discussing unintended consequences and the role of modern economic theory. The role of ideology and politics in policy outcomes is also a focus. Policy areas that are evaluated include: Social Security and Medicare; the decline of the cities; federal fiscal and tax policy; and deregulation of financial markets.

PPOL 4900 Public Sector Internship (0-10 Credits)
Students will gain hands-on experience with policy issues in a variety of settings.

PPOL 4910 Private Sector Internship (1-10 Credits)
Students will gain hands-on experience with policy issues in a variety of settings.

PPOL 4920 Non-Profit Sector Internship (1-10 Credits)
Students will gain hands-on experience with policy issues in a variety of settings.

PPOL 4991 Independent Study (1-10 Credits)
Students will work in collaboration with faculty from the Institute for Public Policy Studies to complete an independent study project.

PPOL 4992 Directed Study (1-5 Credits)

PPOL 4995 Independent Research (1-10 Credits)
The Policy Memorandum research project is designed to provide the MPP student with a capstone experience that will synthesize the knowledge and skills that were acquired during the 60 quarter hours of formal coursework. Included among the skills that students will apply are research, quantitative methods, economic analysis, cost-benefit analysis, budgeting and project management.