

PUBLIC POLICY (PPOL)

PPOL 1910 Hard Choices in Public Policy (4 Credits)

This course provides an opportunity to develop comprehensive knowledge of America's most intriguing public policy dilemmas. Policy issues to be discussed include intergenerational equity, competitiveness, the budget and trade deficits, crime, AIDS, education, health care, the environment, entitlements, immigration, race and affirmative action, public involvement, and social welfare. This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement.

PPOL 2000 The Politics of American Policymaking (4 Credits)

This course is designed as a rigorous, analytical introduction for public policy majors to the ways in which American public policy is actually made and includes discussion of (1) Congress; (2) the President; (3) the Supreme Court; and (4) Regulatory agencies. The course is problem-centered and core policy dilemmas are discussed from both cost-benefit and decision-making perspectives. Key topics include the following interrelated issues: (a) fiscal policy and the federal budget; (b) entitlement reform; (c) health care; (d) national security; (e) the financial crisis and economic growth; (f) education; (g) criminal justice; and (h) environmental policy.

PPOL 2701 Topics in Public Policy (4 Credits)

Various topics in public policy are covered. Topics change each term as deemed appropriate with local, regional, and federal policy issues and regulation changes. Prerequisite: PPOL 2000.

PPOL 2710 Demography of Public Policy (4 Credits)

Demography is destiny." The consequences for American public policy are profound. America is aging, but becoming more diverse. A society in the midst of dynamic change is a society full of possibilities, but vulnerable to conflict. Values become indeterminate, with traditional communities vying for legitimacy with emergent cultures. Social movements, often populist in nature, challenge the established political order. This course focuses on the delineation of effective public policies to deal with demographic challenges, including (1) immigration policy; (2) the process of assimilation; (3) education; (4) geographic realignment; (5) competitive advantage of the United States relative to the European Union, Russia, and China. This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement.

PPOL 2802 Supreme Court & Public Policy (4 Credits)

Students examine the policy-making role of the Supreme Court in such areas as civil rights, economic policy, freedom of expression, and criminal justice, while studying the overall power of the Court to determine social policy.

PPOL 2804 Federal Budgetary Policy (4 Credits)

Students gain knowledge of the basics of government fiscal planning through a simulation of the federal budget process.

PPOL 3115 Economics for Public Policy I: Aggregates and Production (4 Credits)

The tools and techniques of economics are essential for policy analysis. This course provides an intensive and comprehensive introduction to the field of economic analysis, with a specific emphasis on the applicability of economics to public policy and problem solving within the field of policy analysis. Topics include supply and demand; gross domestic product; business cycles; classical and neo-classical economic theory; Keynesianism and Keynesian equilibrium; the "Chicago School"; fiscal policy; inflation; stimulation of aggregate demand; employment and unemployment equilibrium; creation of money; the Federal Reserve system; national debt; the financial sector; public and private debt. Prerequisite: sophomore standing. Recommended Prerequisite: PPOL 2000.

PPOL 3116 Economics for Public Policy II: Choices and Competition (4 Credits)

This course is the sequel to PPOL 3115. Core topics include consumer choice; choices in the public and private sector; the role of private self-interest; the role of governmental self-interest ("public choice"); utility maximization; price elasticity of demand; short and long-run costs; competition; monopoly; efficiency; oligopoly; antitrust policy; positive and negative externalities, such as taxes and regulations; effects of governmental uncertainty; market distortions; trade policy; profitability; productivity; the economics of health care and environmental regulation; leading and lagging indications of economic activity; creation of economic policy; "theory" vs. "applied" considerations. Prerequisites: PPOL 3115 and sophomore standing. Recommended Prerequisite: PPOL 2000.

PPOL 3118 Public Policy-Money & Finance (4 Credits)

This course is about money—the fuel that powers American society. Students will develop a sophisticated understanding of the American financial system, while coming to terms with the relationship between money, markets, and government. Students will learn key concepts in public finance, along with the operation of financial instruments like stocks, bonds, commodities and derivatives. Students who take this course will understand monetary and fiscal policy, taxation, exchange rates, and the vital role of credit.

PPOL 3125 Power and Policy (4 Credits)

This course focuses on the historical development of American 20th-century policy trends and will emphasize (1) the creation of the regulatory state, beginning in the late 1890s and accelerating through the Progressive Era; (2) the Great Depression, the New Deal, and the rise of entitlement culture; (3) World War II, the rise of the military-industrial state and the suburbanization of the 1950s; (4) the Civil Rights Revolution, the New Frontier and Great Society of Kennedy and Johnson—together with the value changes of the 1960s; (5) the Regan Era and the conservative challenge to big government; and (6) the policy dichotomies and uncertainties.

PPOL 3230 Analytical & Critical Skills (4 Credits)

Students gain the tools necessary to analyze competing points of view using empirical techniques and statistical inference. Students also learn the history and development of the scientific method; how to distinguish between speculation, theory, fact, and opinion; how to identify the validity of data; how to identify the intentional obfuscation of issues; and how to evaluate one's own prejudices and vulnerability to argument.

PPOL 3250 Evidence & Logic in Public Policy (4 Credits)

This course provides a focus for public policy majors on actual decision-making process within the executive and legislative branches of the federal government. Consideration is given to (1) the role of evidence, empirical analysis, and logic; (2) the role of politics; (3) the role of party affiliation and ideology in the decision-making process; (4) the role of key actors and agencies and the distribution of responsibility; (5) the role of outside experts, such as think tanks and journalists; and (6) the influence of lobbyists and other "rent seekers." Students consider such critical examples of decision-making as the Cuban Missile Crisis; the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution; the decision to invade Afghanistan and Iraq; congressional decisions relating to "health care reform" in 2009 and 2010; and the executive branch decisions involving the financial crisis of 2008, including the emergency implementation of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). Students write a detailed policy memorandum to a member of the executive branch or to a congressional leader, containing a situational analysis and action recommendation pertinent to a significant "real time" policy controversy.

PPOL 3300 Ethics in Public Policy (4 Credits)

1. Survey prominent fields of ethical discourse—academic and public intellectual—ranging from ancient understandings of virtue through contemporary humanism. 2. Evaluate these approaches to ethical decisions by examining a number of current moral issues. 3. Analyze the fundamental relations between morality and the law in general and in a pluralistic, democratic society in particular. 4. Practice civil dialogue. Consider the absolute necessity, but also the limits, of publicly reasoned discourse on this country's most pressing moral challenges. 5. Consider the role of normative theory in personal decision-making, community decision-making, and overlap between the two.

PPOL 3470 Congressional Internship (1-10 Credits)

PPOL 3701 Topics in Public Policy (4 Credits)

PPOL 3980 Internships in Public Policy (0-4 Credits)

Experience is an important asset when applying for any job. As you will find after graduation, the job market is incredibly competitive, and becoming more so. Gaining real world experience during college will make you a much stronger candidate when seeking that first position after graduation. Through PPOL 3980, you have the opportunity to earn between 0 and 4 quarter credit hours for internships, depending on the number of hours worked. The internship portfolio facilitates a student's academic, professional, and personal growth by providing documentation and representation of the internship experience. Elements of the portfolio will help bridge academic experience with career possibilities, and provides an opportunity for self-reflection through your experience. Analysis of your internship will help identify areas of success and points where you could improve overall. The objective of all aspects is to enable you to be more competitive in a global job market. Internships require departmental approval and must be undertaken during the quarter in which you register for credit. The BA program in PPOL will not award credit retroactively for internships completed prior to the quarter in which students are registered. Prerequisites: Must be a PPOL major and receive departmental permission.

PPOL 3990 Thesis (4 Credits)

The Departmental Distinction Program in Public Policy is geared towards advanced students who wish to pursue their study in public policy in a more intensive manner. The thesis provides an opportunity for students to do in-depth research on a topic of their choice, focusing on providing evidence-based solutions to a real-life policy issue.

PPOL 3991 Independent Study (1-10 Credits)

PPOL 3995 Independent Research (1-5 Credits)