

PUBP 804.3: Public Policy Analysis and Methodology

University of Saskatchewan Campus	
Instructor:	JSGS faculty and special guests
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Office Hours:	For questions about a specific lecture, contact the relevant instructor when needed in order to make an appointment.
Office Location:	Diefenbaker 150 (Course Coordinator)
Term:	Term 1 (fall)
Room:	All classes will be held in the Diefenbaker Theatre, with the exception of the first class (September 14), which will be held in Arts 105
Time:	Mondays, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

COURSE CONTENT AND APPROACH

Involving “team teaching” on the part of JSGS faculty and guest speakers, this course aims at improving the analytical, methodological, and communication skills of future civil servants and policy practitioners. After the introductory lecture, the first part of the course focuses on methodological issues ranging from statistical analysis to research evaluation. The second part discusses concrete analytical and writing skills relevant for policy students and practitioners. The topics covered include how to prepare briefing notes, how to assess legal documents, and how government reports are produced. Finally, the third part focuses on presentation and networking skills for policy students. This part culminates in a set of public presentations where each student will have to discuss a major policy issue assigned by the course coordinator.

REQUIRED READINGS

In general, Daniel Béland or the instructor for each class will send you the readings by e-mail or leave copies in the graduate student room (Diefenbaker 159) at least seven days before their lecture. One exception is the readings for the November 9 lecture, which are available online at any time – Readings: *Report of the Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada*: “A message to Canadians” (pp. xv-xxi); chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1-73) (www.cbc.ca/healthcare/final_report.pdf).

EVALUATION

Economics analysis: 20% of final grade; due date – October 5; person in charge: Murray Fulton (murray.fulton@usask.ca). This is a two-part assignment:

Students, working in groups of three, will be asked to write a 2000 word report on a policy question facing Canada. A list of policy questions will be provided. The report should highlight the key issues that the policy issue raises, and then delve more deeply into one (or perhaps two) of these issues. The report should focus on the economic issues. As a guideline for the reports, please see the publications put forward by the Australian Government Productivity Commission [<http://www.pc.gov.au/>].

Research Proposal Evaluation: 12.5% of final mark; due date – October 19; person in charge: Evelyn Peters (evelyn.peters@usask.ca).

Evaluate a research funding application according to SSHRC guidelines. Students will receive a SSHRC evaluation form that will formulate the questions they must answer when evaluating the application. This form will allow them to know exactly what criteria to use and what topics to discuss in their evaluation. Students must write between 500 and 750 words.

Article evaluation: 12.5% of final mark; due date – October 26; person in charge: Peter Phillips (peter.phillips@usask.ca).

Evaluate an article submitted for publication to a scholarly journal according to that journal's criteria. Students will receive and use the evaluation form used by the journal. This form will allow them to know exactly what criteria to use and what topics to discuss in their evaluation. Students must write between 500 and 750 words.

Legal analysis: 25% of final mark; due date – November 16; person in charge: Heather Heavin (heather.heavin@usask.ca).

Students will be given a consultation paper from the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan on a topic with important policy implications. Students will also be provided with various sources of information, including legislation and court judgments, to aid in their understanding of the issues involved. Each student will be asked to draft response to the consultation paper and provide appropriate recommendations to the policy questions posed. Students must write between 2000 and 2500 words, excluding notes and references.

Policy presentations: 25% of final mark; held during the last two weeks of class; persons in charge – Daniel Béland (daniel.beland@usask.ca).

A 10-minute public presentation on a major policy topic, followed by a 7-minute question and answer period. The presentation must discuss both sides of the current debate about the issue at stake before advocating a specific policy solution. Please use plain language to communicate your ideas. On the first day of class, Daniel Béland will assign a specific presentation topic to each student. For questions about the assignment, please contact Professor Béland.

Class participation: 5% of final mark; persons in charge – all the instructors for this course.

Attendance and class participation are required; a sign-in sheet will be available during each lecture. When they miss a lecture, students must write to Daniel Béland to explain their situation.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Without compelling reasons, late assignments will not be accepted and will result in a mark of zero.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All students who have special needs are encouraged to register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). Access to most services and programs provided by DSS is restricted to students who have registered with the office. Once you have registered, please contact the professor to discuss accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

Ensuring that you understand and follow the principles of academic integrity and conduct as laid out in the University of Regina's Graduate Calendar and the University of Saskatchewan's Guidelines for Academic Conduct is vital to your success in graduate school. Ensuring that your work is your own and reflects both your own ideas and those of others incorporated in your work is important: ensuring that you acknowledge the ideas, words, and phrases of others that you use is a vital part of the scholarly endeavour. If you have any questions at all about academic integrity in general or about specific issues, contact your course instructor and to discuss your questions.

Tentative Schedule for PUBP 804.3: Public Policy and Methodology

Session 1 – September 14: Getting Started (Daniel Béland and Michael Kpessa)

Module A: Methodological and Research Skills

Session 2 – September 21: Understanding Economic Publications (Murray Fulton)

Session 3 – September 28: Reading Statistical Accounts (Haizhen Mou)

Session 4 – October 5: How to Assess Research Proposals and Documents (Daniel Béland and Peter Phillips)

Module B: Applied Writing and Policy Skills

Session 5 – Thanksgiving (no class)

Session 6 – October 19: How to Write Memos and Briefing Notes (Dan Perrins)

Session 7 – October 26: Title TBA (Lorne Calvert)

Session 8 – November 2: Understanding Legal Documents and Jurisprudence (Heather Heavin)

Session 9 – November 9: Government reports and Research Documents (Greg Marchildon and Roy Romanow)

Module C: Oral Communication

Session 10 – November 16: Networking, Conferences, and Presentations (Keith Walker)

Session 11 – November 23: Student Presentations I

Session 12 – November 30: Student Presentations II