

**POLI-2555-WA**  
**Approaches to Public Policy**  
**Winter 2017**  
**Monday & Wednesday: 1:00-2:30 PM**  
**ROOM: RB 3024**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

Professor: Dr. Zahir Kolia  
Office: Ryan Building 2033  
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**Course Description:**

The course aims at introducing students to several main areas of Canadian public policy. Covering both conceptual approaches, and case study analysis, we will be exposed to the theory and practice of Canadian public policy. This course will critically assess how shifting social conditions, which shape the Canadian political landscape, relate to specific policy outcomes. By staging an interdisciplinary examination of the social and political forces that shape the policy process, we will consider how particular policy areas can be improved to better reflect Canadian society.

Students are encouraged to critically think about the contextual political terrain and shifting relations of power that impact the development of policy.

**Format:**

Weekly lectures will focus on identified topics. Lectures complement assigned readings and are not meant to be summaries. Students should do the assigned reading prior to the lecture, as the class will use active learning approaches throughout. Students are responsible for lecture material, required readings, films and other material covered in class.

Class will also use brief student presentations to engage the readings covered. Accordingly, policy concepts and areas covered in class will be assessed and presentations will propose a policy brief along with a “policy pitch” regarding any recommendations for improvement. In turn, non-presenting students will then consider the “policy pitch” and vote using the Socratic online learning tool as to whether they would implement the possible changes and why.

**Course Materials:**

REQUIRED TEXT (available from the book store)

Lydia Mijan, *Public Policy in Canada, Sixth Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2012)

Other readings may include journal articles and be available via the library catalogue, or via D2L.

The class will use an online learning tool: Socrative. This application is free to download and will be used each class: you may use it either on your phone or laptop device. If you do not use electronic devices, you may write them down when required.

**Socrative:** <<https://www.socrative.com/>> [Go to “apps” section and download the **Student App**]

## **Course Requirements:**

1. Participation (15%): Attendance, contribution in lecture, presentation interaction, and Exit Ticket completion via *Socrative*
2. Presentation (20%): Policy Brief and “Policy Pitch”
3. Midterm/Assignment (20%): Take-Home Interactive Module
4. Final Term Paper (25%): 10-12 page essay (approx. 2,500-3,000 words),
5. Final Exam (20%)

## **E-mail:**

E-mail will be answered within two business days. Do not submit any class assignments by e-mail, unless instructed to do so. Please use e-mail only for quick queries and to set up appointments out of regularly scheduled office hours.

I welcome e-mail queries and comments. All students are required to have a valid Lakehead e-mail address. It is your responsibility to maintain your e-mail address in good working order. The University expects you to correspond with me through your official e-mail address, and not through a commercial e-mail account.

Failure to receive important class announcements and messages from me because of a faulty e-mail account (for example, an account which screens out my e-mails as junk mail; bounced messages because of overloaded caches) are not legitimate excuses.

Forwarding your Lakehead email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of e-mail account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from your Lakehead addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that e-mails from me may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

## **Accessibility:**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me, and/or Accessibility Services. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

## **Essays:**

You are to complete two essay format assignments. The goal of these written assignments is to provide a clear, response (argument) to the research question backed by rational consideration of the evidence. Essay topics will be distributed in class.

Summarize your response (argument) in a sentence or two – the thesis statement – and appear in the first paragraph of your essay. Be explicit. The reader should be clear on what you are arguing. Assume an educated reader. Do not spend more than a few paragraphs providing background

information. Focus on providing information that advances your argument. While the balance of the paper will defend your argument, you should also acknowledge counterarguments and seek to demonstrate that your argument is superior.

*Formatting bibliographies, references:*

The written assignments will all be in 12 pt Times New Roman font with standard margins. Essays should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. They must include appropriate citations and complete bibliography.

Include a title page with your name, the date, the course number, and my name.

In completing the written assignments, students must cite all facts and figures that are not common knowledge and must cite all ideas that are borrowed from other authors. Students must use a recognized standard format (I suggest MLA) correctly in their bibliographies, and references. *Failure to do so will result in substantial penalty in calculating your assignment grade.*

The University takes instructional offences (including plagiarism) very seriously. Please make sure that you are familiar with the regulations regarding instructional offences. Also, it is not acceptable to submit the same assignment in two different courses.

**I would suggest you use MLA citation style (below is a link for quick guidelines):**

[http://library.csun.edu/egarcia/documents/mlacitation\\_quickguide.pdf](http://library.csun.edu/egarcia/documents/mlacitation_quickguide.pdf)

Also, consider consulting reference books on research and writing:

1. Margot Northey, Lorne Tepperman and Patrizia Albanese, *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing: Social Sciences*, 4th ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2009)
2. Diane E. Schmidt, *Writing in Political Science: A Practical Guide*, 4th ed. (Boston: Longman, 2010)

**\*\*\* Late Penalties**

Assignments are due on the dates specified in the course outline. Late papers will be subject to a penalty of 2% a day including weekends. Assignments will not be accepted two weeks after the due date.

No retroactive extensions will be permitted. Exceptions will be made only in those cases of special circumstances, (e.g. illness, bereavement) and where the student has verifiable documentation.

**Tentative Schedule:**

Subject to change

**Week 1**

***Introduction & Basic Concepts in the Study of Public Policy:***

Monday, January 9

No readings assigned

Wednesday, January 11

Miljan: Basic Concepts in the Study of Public Policy: pp. 1-23

**Week 2:**

***Theories of Public Policy:***

Monday, January 16

Miljan: Theories of Public Policy [Part 1]: pp. 23-38 \*stop at “Public Choice Model: Homo Economicus and Homo Politicus”

Wednesday, January 18

Miljan: Theories of Public Policy [Part 2]: pp. 38-51

**Week 3**

***Policy Context and Implementation:***

Monday, January 23

Miljan: The Context of Policy-Making in Canada [Part 1]: pp. 51-69 \*stop at: “Living in the Shadow of a giant”

Wednesday, January 25

Miljan: The Context of Policy-Making in Canada [Part 2]: pp. 69-87

**Week 4**

***Policy Evaluation:***

Monday, January 30

Miljan: Policy Evaluation: pp. 87-106

Wednesday, February 1

Video: TBA

**\*Mid-Term Assignment Provided**

## **Week 5**

### ***Macroeconomic Policy:***

Monday, February 6

Miljan: Macroeconomic Policy: pp. 124-162

Wednesday, February 8

**Presentation**

## **Week 6**

### ***Social Policy:***

Monday, February 13

Miljan: Social Policy: pp. 162-185

Wednesday, February 15

**Presentation**

**\*Mid-Term Assignment Due**

## **Week 7**

### ***Reading Week***

## **Week 8**

### ***Health Policy:***

Wednesday, February 27

Miljan, Health Policy: pp. 185-210

Wednesday, March 1

**Presentation**

## **Week 9**

### ***Family Policy:***

Monday, March 6:

Miljan, Family Policy: pp. 210-243

Wednesday, March 8:

**Presentation**

**Week 10**

***Aboriginal Policy:***

Monday, March 13:

Miljan, Aboriginal Policy: pp. 175-203

Wednesday, March 15:

**Presentation**

**Week 11**

***Environmental Policy:***

Monday, March 20:

Miljan, Environmental Policy: pp. 279-312

Wednesday, March 22:

**Presentation**

**Week 12**

***Open Policy:***

Monday, March 27:

Reading TBA

Wednesday, March 29:

**Presentation**

**Week 13**

***Final Reflections:***

Monday, April 3:

Final Thoughts and reflections

Wednesday, April 5:

Student Evaluations

**\*Final Paper Due (One week after class)**

**\*(Final Exam Assignment Due During Exam Period)**