

**Fulbright Economics Teaching Program**  
**Academic year 2013-2015**  
**MPP6**

**RESEARCH METHODS FOR PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS**

**Teaching Team**

General Introduction, Applied Microeconomics, Finance, and Project Appraisal	Nguyen Xuan Thanh	<a href="mailto:thanhnx@fetp.vnn.vn">thanhnx@fetp.vnn.vn</a>
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**Class Meetings**

Lectures: Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 8:30 – 10:00

**Office Hours**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Nguyen Xuan Thanh	15:30-17:30		15:30-17:30		
James Riedel					
Dinh Cong Khai					
Pham Duy Nghia					

Members of the teaching team are also available at other times by appointment.

**Course Objectives**

This course is designed to prepare students to write their thesis, which is in essence a public policy analysis exercise. It introduces the conceptual foundation for and the process of doing policy analysis. It also reviews and introduces the methods, models, and tools used in the analysis of public policy so that at the end of the course, students are equipped with sufficient methodological grounding to undertake the thesis.

**Course Description**

The first half of the course is devoted to a general introduction of the analytical framework for and the process of doing public policy analysis. This part starts from the principle that the government has rationale to intervene when markets fail to achieve efficient and equitable outcomes, and the intervention decision should be based on the government's capability in improving economic efficiency and social welfare. Perspectives from microeconomics,

macroeconomics & development, and finance & project appraisal (i.e., the three thesis policy areas) with respect to important conceptual foundations and policy issues will be introduced to help students in choosing their thesis topics.

The course then introduces the process of undertaking a policy analysis exercise, from identifying and structuring a public policy problem to designing a strategy to address that policy problem. This strategy should specify the approach (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods), sources of data/information, models and tools that will be used to formulate and evaluate policy options and finally make policy recommendations.

The first half of the course ends with general guidelines on how to write and present a policy analysis paper effectively. This section also raises the issue of research ethics and discusses situations in which there exist conflicts of values and/or interests.

In the second half of the course, students will be divided into three groups according to their thesis areas. Students are then introduced to methods, models, and tools that are more specific to their policy analysis areas. They also have opportunities to present their policy research ideas and methodology and receive feedback from their classmates and lecturers.

### **Text Books and Readings**

There is no single text book for this course. Required and suggested readings are selected from books and other sources. Required readings are marked with an asterisk (\*) in the course outline below. Students are expected to read the required readings prior to coming to class. Suggested readings, which are not necessarily translated into Vietnamese, will also be provided. The following books, which are on reserve in the library, are useful references:

#### ***Main text books***

Dunn, William N. (2008). *Public Policy Analysis: An Introduction*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Pearson: Prentice Hall

Creswell, John W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Sage Publications.

Stokey, Edith and Richard Zeckhauser (1978). *A Primer for Policy Analysis*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Weimer, David L. and Aidan R. Vining (2005). *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Pearson: Prentice Hall.

### ***Other readings***

Bardach, Eugene, (2005). *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Berg, Bruce L. (2006). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, Pearson.

Bickers, Kenneth N. and John T. Williams (2001). *Public Policy Analysis: A Political Economy Approach*, Wadsworth Publishing

Fischer, Frank; Gerald J. Miller; and Mara S. Sidney (2005). *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis: Theory, Politics, and Methods*, CRC Press.

Friedman, Lee S. (2002). *The Microeconomics of Public Policy Analysis*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press;

Kaye, Sanford (1989). *Writing Under Pressure*, New York: Oxford University Press.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Judd, Charles M. (1991). *Research Methods in Social Relations*. Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Kraft, Michael E. and Scott R. Furlong (2004). *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*. CQ Press.

Marshall, Catherine and Gretchen B. Rossman (1995). *Designing Qualitative Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Sage Publications

Seidman, Irving (2006). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Teachers College.

Singleton, Royce A. and Bruce C. Straits (2010). *Approaches to Social Research*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford University Press.

Strauss, Anselm and Juliet Corbin (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications

### **Requirements**

Students are required to attend class regularly, read the assigned readings before class, actively participate in class discussions and complete all course requirements.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Part I: Introduction to and Conceptual Foundation of Policy Analysis

#### 1. [08/04/2014] Introduction to Policy Analysis (Xuan Thanh)

- a. What is policy analysis?
- b. Process of doing policy analysis
- c. Thesis guide discussion and clarification

##### Readings:

- \*Dunn, Chapter 1: *The Process of Policy Analysis*
- \*Weimer and Vining, Chapter 2: *What is Policy Analysis?*
- \* FETP, "Thesis Guide"

#### 2. [15/04/2014] Conceptual Foundation for Policy Problem Analysis: Trade Policies (Dinh Cong Khai)

- a. Identify research issues in international trade and investment.
- b. Introduce analytical frameworks and research methodologies popular in trade and investment studies.
- c. Collect data on trade and investment.

##### Readings:

- \* Enhancing the textile and garment industry in the global chain (FETP case study) - CV11-52-54.0 ).

#### 3. [17/04/2014] Conceptual Foundation for Policy Problem Analysis: Applied Microeconomics (Xuan Thanh)

- a. Idealized competitive benchmark
- b. Rationales for government intervention
- c. Limits to government intervention
- d. Weighting market vs. government failures
- e. Correction of market and government failures

##### Readings:

- \*Weimer and Vining, Chapter 4: *Efficiency and the Idealized Competitive Model*
- \*Weimer and Vining, Chapter 8: *Limits to Public Intervention: Government Failures*
- \*Weimer and Vining, Chapter 10: *Correcting Market and Government Failures*

#### 4. [22/04/2014] Conceptual Foundation for Policy Problem Analysis: Finance and Public Investment Appraisal (Xuan Thanh)

- a. Corporate finance
- b. Development finance
- c. Benefit and cost analysis of public investment

**Readings:**

\*The World Bank, *Economic Analysis of Investment Operations*, Chapter 1.

John Campbell, Andrew Lo, and Craig MacKinlay, *The Econometrics of Financial Markets*, Chapter 1.

Huynh The Du and Jay Rosengard, "Funding Economic Development: A Comparative Study of Financial Sector Reform in Vietnam and China, *UNDP Policy Dialogue Paper*, forthcoming.

**5. [24/04/2014] Conceptual Foundations for Policy Problem Analysis: Macroeconomics (James Riedel)**

- a. The relation between theory and policy analysis
- b. How economists theorize
- c. The framework of macroeconomic analysis
- d. Major topics of macroeconomic policy analysis
- e. Some case studies of macroeconomic policy analysis for Vietnam

**Readings:**

\*James Riedel, "Notes on the Framework of Macroeconomic Analysis" (Vietnamese)

James Riedel, "An assessment of the Macroeconomic Challenges Facing Vietnam Post WTO," 2008 (Vietnamese)

Thi Thu Tra Pham and James Riedel, "On the Conduct of Monetary Policy in Vietnam," *Asia Pacific Economic Literature* (Blackwell), 2012 (English)

Thi Thu Tra Pham and James Riedel, "Expectations and the Cost of Disinflation in Vietnam," *Journal of Asia Pacific Economy* (Routledge), 2013 (English).

**6. [29/04/2014] Conceptual Foundations for Policy Problem Analysis: Economics of Development and Trade (James Riedel)**

- a. The evolution of theory and empirics in development economics
- b. Methodological challenges to development policy analysis
- c. Macro development policy analysis
- d. Micro development policy analysis

**Readings:**

\*Angus Deaton, "Instruments, Randomization, and Learning about Development," *Journal of Economic Literature*, vol. 48 (2), June 2010, 424-455.

Beatriz Armendariz de Aghion and Jonathan Morduch, *The Economics of Microfinance*, MIT Press, 2005, Chapter 8 (199-230)

Ravi Kanbur, editor, *New Directions in Development Economics: Theory or Empirics*, Economic and Political Weekly, 2005.

## Part II. Doing Policy Analysis

### 7. [06/05/2014] Defining the Public Policy Problem (Xuan Thanh)

- a. Identifying public policy problem
- b. Structuring public policy problem
- c. Looking ahead: Designing a strategy to address the policy problem

#### **Readings:**

\*Dunn, Chapter 3: *Structuring Policy Problems*

Bardach, Part 1: *The Eightfold Path*

### 8. [08/05/2014] Approaches to and Models in Policy Analysis (Xuan Thanh)

#### ***a. Methodology of and approaches to policy analysis***

- Qualitative approach
- Quantitative approach
- Mixed approach

#### **Readings:**

\*Creswell, Chapter 1: *A Framework for Design*

\*Creswell, Chapter 9: *Quantitative Methods*

\*Creswell, Chapter 10: *Qualitative Procedures*

\*Creswell, Chapter 11: *Mixed Method Procedures*

Berg, Chapter 2: *Designing Qualitative Research*

#### ***b. The Role of Models in Policy Analysis***

- Types of models
- Deciding the “right” model for a given policy analysis exercise
- The pros and cons of models

#### **Readings:**

\*Stokey and Zeckhauser, Chapter 2: *Models: A General Discussion*

Stokey and Zeckhauser, Chapter 3: *The Model of Choice*

\*Creswell, Chapter 7: *The Use of Theory*

### 9. [13/05/2014] Gathering Information and Analyzing Public Policy Problem (Xuan Thanh)

- a. Gathering information
  - Secondary source of data/information
  - Primary source of data/information
- b. Analyzing Public Policy Problem
  - Formulating policy options
  - Evaluating policy options
  - Making policy recommendations

**Readings:**

\*Weimer and Vining, Chapter 13: *Gathering Information for Policy Analysis*

\*Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 5: *Public Problems and Policy Alternatives*

\*Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 6: *Assessing Policy Alternatives*

**10. [15/05/2014] The MPP Thesis (Xuân Thành, Duy Nghĩa)**

- Review of an actual MPP thesis
- Public Policy, Law and Public Governance: Fundamental Perspective from Review of an actual MPP Thesis

**Readings:**

\*An MPP4 Thesis

**Part III. Writing and Presenting Policy Analysis Paper**

**11. [20/05/2014] Writing and Presenting Policy Analysis Paper (Duy Nghia)**

- a. Writing Policy Analysis Paper
  - Organizing your policy analysis paper
  - Choosing your writing style
  - Writing a first draft
  - Writing the executive summary
  - Writing the final draft
  - Revising, editing , and formatting
- b. Presenting Policy Analysis Paper
- c. General guideline for thesis presentation
- d. Preparing for thesis presentation
- e. Preparing and answering the questions during presentation

**Readings:**

- WB, *Recognizing and reducing corruption risks in land management in Vietnam*, NXB Chính trị Quốc gia, Hà Nội, 2011
- Harvard Kennedy School, *The Policy Analysis Exercise: The Writing Guide*.
- Dunn, Chapter 9: *Communicating Policy Analysis*

**12. [20/05/2014] Ethical Considerations in Doing Policy Analysis (Duy Nghia)**

- a. Analytical integrity
- b. Respect for persons, beneficence, and justice
- c. Value and interest conflicts: Voice, exit, and loyalty

**Readings:**

\*Weimer and Vining, Chapter 3: *Toward Professional Ethics*

Hoyle, Harris, and Judd, Chapter 3: *Ethical Principles*