

**Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management  
Master in Public Policy  
Academic Year 2017-2018  
Fall Term**

**SYLLABUS  
Introduction to Public Policy  
(2 credits)**

**Teaching Team**

Instructor: David Dapice ([David\\_Dapice@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:David_Dapice@hks.harvard.edu))  
Instructor: Nguyen Xuan Thanh ([thanh.nguyen@fuv.edu.vn](mailto:thanh.nguyen@fuv.edu.vn))  
Tutor: Tran Huong Giang ([thgiang@ymail.com](mailto:thgiang@ymail.com))

**Class Times**

Tuesday and Thursday: 13:30 – 15:00, October 17 – November 23, 2017

*Exception:*

Classes 7 and 8 are on Thursday, November 9, from 13:30 to 16:45.

Classes 9 and 10 are on Tuesday, November 14, from 13:30 to 16:45.

**Group Presentation**

Tuesday and Thursday: 08:30 – 11:45, December 05 & 07, 2017

**Office Hours:**

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
N. X. Thành	16:30-17:30		16:30-17:30		15:30-16:30
T. H. Giang		17:00-18:30		17:00-18:30	

If the scheduled office hours are not convenient, please make specific appointments with the instructors.

**Course Objective**

The objective of this course is to introduce students to the process of public policy making, key concepts in the study of public policy, and relate them to concrete policy issues. The course also aims at equipping the students with important soft skills such as critical thinking, public speaking, working in groups, and presentation skills.

The key learning outcomes are as follows.

- To participate in and contribute to the policy process
- To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions
- To articulate and apply a public service perspective.
- To communicate policy issues, problems, and solutions effectively.
- To understand the challenges facing policy makers in a transitional economy that is going through economic and administrative reforms.

## Course Description

The course consists of 12 classes held over eight weeks (half of the Fall Semester). A new topic will be introduced each week with one lecture and one case study. Students are encouraged to participate in discussions and draw out policy and theoretical implications as a group.

The course introduces the process of public policy making, and the role of government and other stakeholders in that process. It also introduces the students to the study of public policy, and addresses key concepts including market and market failures, the role of institutions, and equity.

## Readings

Thomas A. Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making*. 4th Edition. (New York: Routledge, 2016)

John W. Kingdon. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Update Edition. (Pearson, 2013)

Required readings are provided in English or Vietnamese and suggested readings may only be available in English. Students must read the required readings before coming to class, and must be ready to demonstrate that they have read and understand the required readings.

## Requirements

Students are expected to attend every class, to read the assigned readings before class, to participate actively in class discussions and to complete all course requirements. Participants are encouraged to meet with teaching team members to discuss any aspect of the course.

Each student will produce four policy memos based on case study questions. The memos will be submitted by 08:20 am every Thursday from Week 2 to Week 5. Each policy memo should be at the minimum 450 words, optimally 750 words, and maximum 1,200 words.

During the first week of class, students will be divided into separate groups. Each group will work together throughout the course to produce a report on a current public policy problem, the controversies and debates surrounding it, and the group's suggested course of action. During the last week of the course, each group will present their report to the class.

Students' grades will be based on:

Policy Memo	30%
Class Participation	30%
Group Report	40%

**Regulations on assignment submission, complaints, plagiarism, exam cheating, or other exceptions are specified in Student Handbook which are delivered to all students.**

## Class Schedule

Week/Date	Class	Topic
Week 1		<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
17 Oct	1	Lecture: Public Policy and the Public Policy Making Process
19 Oct	2	Case Study: Tan Son Nhat or Long Thanh
Week 2		<b>PUBLIC POLICY AND GOVERNMENT</b>
24 Oct	3	Lecture: Public Policy and the Role of Government
26 Oct	4	Case Study: Nike versus New Balance
Week 3		<b>POLICY DESIGN, DECISIONS, AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>
31 Oct	5	Lecture: Policy Design, Decisions, and Implementation
02 Nov	6	Case Study: Uber in Vietnam
Week 4		<b>ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS</b>
09 Nov	7	Lecture: Economics and Public Policy Analysis
09 Nov	8	Case Study: India Shedding Tears over Onion Prices
Week 5		<b>INSTITUTIONS</b>
14 Nov	9	Lecture: The Role of Institutions in the Public Policy Making Process
14 Nov	10	Case Study: Ho Chi Minh City Ports
Week 6		<b>VALUES AND DISTRIBUTION</b>
21 Nov	11	Lecture: Income Distribution and Inequality
23 Nov	12	Case Study: Liconsa and the Program of Social Assistance for Milk
Week 7		<b>READING WEEK</b>
Week 8		<b>GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATION</b>
05 Dec		5 teams
07 Dec		5 teams

## **Detailed Schedule and Reading List**

- Required Reading
- Optional/Supplemental/Recommended Reading

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### **WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION**

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#### **Lecture 1: Public Policy and Public Policy Making Process**

What is public policy?

What is the process of policy making?

- Thomas A. Birkland, An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making, Chapters 1 & 2.
- John W. Kingdon. Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, Chapter 1.

#### **Case Study 1: Tan Son Nhat or Long Thanh**

- Tan Son Nhat or Long Thanh, FETP Case.
- Learning by the Case Method, HKS Case Program.

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### **WEEK 2: PUBLIC POLICY AND GOVERNMENT**

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#### **Lecture 2: Public Policy and the Role of Government**

What is the role of government in the public policy making process?

What should governments do and what should political actors do?

- Thomas A. Birkland, An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making, Chapters 4 & 5.
- John W. Kingdon. Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, Chapters 2 & 3.

#### **Case Study 2: Nike versus New Balance**

- Nike versus New Balance: Trade Policy in a World of Global Value Chains, HBS Case.

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## WEEK 3: POLICY DESIGN, DECISIONS, AND IMPLEMENTATION

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### Lecture 3: Policy Design, Decisions, and Implementation

How is a policy designed through technical analysis and through political process?

How is a policy enacted?

How is a policy implemented?

- Thomas A. Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making*, Chapters 8 & 9.

### Case Study 3: Uber in Vietnam

- Uber in Vietnam, FSPPM Case Study.

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## WEEK 4: ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS

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### Lecture 4: Economics and Public Policy Analysis

What is public policy analysis?

How to structure a public policy problem?

What are the theoretical approaches used to examine public policy?

How economics is used to analyze public policy?

- William Dunn (2008). *Public Policy Analysis: An Introduction*, 4th edition, Pearson: Prentice Hall. Chapter 3: Structuring Policy Problems.
- Harvey Rosen, Ted Gayer and Abdulkadir Civan (2014), *Public Finance*, Tenth Edition, McGraw-Hill. Chapters 2 & 3.
- Edith Stokey and Richard Zeckhauser (1978). *A Primer for Policy Analysis*, New York: W.W. Norton and Company. Chapter 2
- Hal Varian (1989). What Use is Economic Theory? Mimeo.  
<<http://people.ischool.berkeley.edu/~hal/Papers/theory.pdf>>

### Case Study 4: India Shedding Tears over Onion Prices

- India Shedding Tears over Onion Prices, *International Journal of Case Studies in Management*.

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## WEEK 5: INSTITUTIONS

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### Lecture 5: Public Policy and Institutions

What is the role of institutions in the public policy making process?

Why is institution an important determinant of economic development?

- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson (2012). *Why nations fail: the origins of power, prosperity and poverty*, New York: Random House. Chapter 15: “Understanding prosperity and poverty.”

### Case Study 5: Ho Chi Minh City Ports

- Ho Chi Minh City Ports, FETP Case.

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## WEEK 6: EQUITY AND DISTRIBUTION

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### Lecture 6: Income Distribution and Income Inequality

- Thomas Piketty (2014). *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Harvard University Press. Introduction.
- Michael Sandel (2009). *Justice: What’s the Right Thing to Do?* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Chapter 8: “Who deserves what?”

### Case Study 6: Liconsa and the Program of Social Assistance for Milk

- Liconsa and the Program of Social Assistance for Milk, HKS Case.

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## WEEK 7: READING WEEK

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Assigned Reading:

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## WEEK 8: GROUP PRESENTATION

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