

## Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management

### MPP20

### Spring Term

## RESEARCH METHODS FOR PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS

### Teaching Team

Vu Thanh Tu Anh	<a href="mailto:anh.vu@fulbright.edu.vn">anh.vu@fulbright.edu.vn</a>
Yooil Bae	<a href="mailto:yooil.bae@fulbright.edu.vn">yooil.bae@fulbright.edu.vn</a>
Pham Duy Nghia (guest lecturer)	<a href="mailto:nghia.pham@fulbright.edu.vn">nghia.pham@fulbright.edu.vn</a>
Huynh Ngoc Chuong	<a href="mailto:chuong.huynh.fsppm@fulbright.edu.vn">chuong.huynh.fsppm@fulbright.edu.vn</a>

### Class meetings

Lectures: Tues and Thurs, 10:15 – 11:45

### Office Hours

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Vu Thanh Tu Anh		15:00–17:00		15:00–17:00	
Yooil Bae					
Huynh Ngoc Chuong					

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

## Objectives

This course is designed to prepare students to write their thesis, which is in essence a *academics research* or 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. Important topics for research will also be suggested for master thesis.

## Description

The course is structured in two parts. *The first part* will introduce the fundamentals of research design and methodology choices, both quantitative and qualitative approaches but more emphasis is placed upon quantitative approaches. By the end of this part, students will be able to explain basic concepts of research methodology, criticize and assess a research design of a policy paper, as well as his or her own research design.

*The second part* will present policy analysis process, starting from identifying/framing a policy issue to solving it. During the process, the students will learn different analytical methods (be it quantitative, qualitative or mixed), data/information sources, models and tools for constructing solution options and evaluating them and making policy recommendations accordingly. The course ends with general guidance on how to write and present an effective policy analysis, including morality concerns and discussion of instances where values and interests are in potential conflict.

## Course outcomes

Upon course completion, the students will be able to:

- Apply acquired knowledge to assess and criticize a research design and methodology of a policy paper of different topics
- Make proper choice of research design and methodology to his/her own policy questions/topics
- Conduct a complete policy analysis, starting from identifying a policy issue, asking *the* policy question, to choosing analytical framework and providing policy recommendations
- Make effective presentation, both in writing and oral forms, of research paper/policy analysis
- Be aware of moral issues in policy research, understand instances where values and interests are in potential conflict, and know how to deal with these situations.

## Requirements and grading

Students are expected to read all required readings before classes, actively apply class lessons in comment, assessment, and criticism of policy papers and research. Active participation in class discussion and completion of class assignments are compulsory. All assignments should meet the deadline of 8:20 AM and are original works of each student. Plagiarism is prohibited. Please refer to the Students' Handbook for guidelines on plagiarism and other related issues.

Course grading will be structured as follows:

- Class participation: 10%
  
- Research design criticism: 30%
  - Each student will choose a policy paper or analysis (including course readings), then write a paper of 1000 words assessing/criticizing the reading's research design. Deadline of submission is 8:20 am **18 March 2019**.
  
- Research design paper: 60%
  - Provides clear research question, argument and hypothesis, reasoning and alternatives; proposes a research method and explains why it is most appropriate in assessing arguments and testing hypothesis, thus providing best answers to the research question. The paper must not exceed 2500 words and due by 8:20 am **8 April 2019**.

## 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, available in the library, are useful references:

### *Main readings*

Brady, Henry and David Collier (2010). *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, Second Edition. Rowmand and Littlefield Publishers.

Dunn, William N. (2008). *Public Policy Analysis: An Introduction*, Fourth Edition, Pearson: Prentice Hall.

Creswell, John W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Second Edition. Sage Publications.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [short form as **KKV**]

Weimer, David L. và Aidan R. Vining (2005). *Phân tích chính sách: Khái niệm và thực tiễn (Policy Analysis: Concepts và Practice)*, tái bản lần thứ 3. Pearson: Prentice Hall.

### *Reading References*

Bardach, Eugene, (2005). *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*, Second Edition. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Berg, Bruce L. (2006). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, Sixth 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;

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

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

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

Seidman, Irving (2006). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, Third Edition, Teachers College.

Singleton, Royce A. and Bruce C. Straits (2010). *Approaches to Social Research*, Fifth Edition, Oxford University Press.

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

Yin, Robert (2002). *Case Study Research: Design and Method*, Third Edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Part I: Introduction to Research Design and Method

#### 1. Tuesday (19/2): Introduction to Research Design and Method

- a. Qualitative and Quantitative Methods
- b. Components of Research Design

##### Readings:

\* King, Keohane, and Verba (KKV), Chapter 1.

\* Winston Phan Đào Nguyễn (2017). Minh oan cho Petrus Trương Vĩnh Ký về câu “ò với họ mà không theo họ” (“Absolving Petrus Trương Vĩnh Ky in his quote “sic vos non vobis” ([http://www.viet-studies.net/PhanDaoNguyen\\_PetrusKy.htm](http://www.viet-studies.net/PhanDaoNguyen_PetrusKy.htm)).

Shively, W. Phillips. 2001. “Chapter 2. Political Theories and Research Topics.” *The Craft of Political Research* (5th Edition), Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

De Vaus, David (2001). *Research Design in Social Science*, Chapter 1.

#### 2. Thursday (21/2): Descriptive Inferences

- a. General Knowledge and Particular Facts
- b. Purpose of Data Collection
- c. Criteria for Judging Descriptive Inferences

##### Readings:

\* King, Keohane, and Verba (KKV), Chapter 2.

#### 3. Tuesday (26/2): Casualty and Casualty Inferences

- a. Defining Casualty
- b. Assumptions Required for Estimating Causal Effects
- c. Criteria for Judging Causal Inferences
- d. Rules for Constructing Causal Theories

##### Readings:

\*King, Keohane, and Verba (KKV), Chapter 3.

Jones, Benjamin F. and Benjamin A. Olken. 2009. “*Hit or Miss? The Effect of Assassinations on Institutions and War.*” *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics* 1(2): 55-87.

#### **4. Thursday (28/2): Determining What to Observe**

- a. Indeterminate Research Designs
- b. The Limits of Random Selection
- c. Selection Bias
- d. Intentional Selection of Observations

Readings:

\*King, Keohane, and Verba (KKV), Chapter 4.

#### **5. Tuesday 3 (5/3): Understanding What to Avoid and How to increase the Number of Observations**

- a. **Understanding What to Avoid**
  - i. Measurement Error
  - ii. Excluding Relevant Variables
  - iii. Including Irrelevant Variables
  - iv. Endogeneity
- b. **How to increase the number of observations**
  - i. Single-Observation Design for Causal Inference
  - ii. "Crucial" Case Studies
  - iii. How many observations are enough?
  - iv. How to increase the number of observations?

Readings:

\*King, Keohane, and Verba (KKV), Chapter 5.

\*King, Keohane, and Verba (KKV), Chapter 6.

#### **6. Thursday (7/3): Case Studies**

Readings:

\*Yin, Robert K. (2014). Case Study Research: Design and Methods, Chapter 3-4 (p.71-130).

King, Keohane, and Verba (KKV), Chapter 4.

#### **7. Tuesday (12/3): Comparative Cases**

Readings:



\*Lagin, Charles C. (2014). *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Oakland: University of California Press, Chapter 3-4.

#### 8. Thursday (14/3): "Process Tracing" and Causality

\*Ricks, Jacob and Amy Liu. 2018. "Process-Tracing Research Designs: A Practical Guide." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 51(4): 842-846, and Appendix Material (<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096518000975>), Read Application 3 and 4 (p.19-39).

[In-class exercise] Use the example mentioned in David Collier (2018), "Teaching Process Tracing: Examples and Exercises" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44(4): 823-830.

#### 9. Tuesday (19/3): Interviewing Techniques

\*Bryman, Alan. 2016. "Chapter 20. Interviewing in Qualitative Research." *Social Research Methods* (5th Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[In-class exercise] Choose a decision or a set of decisions issued by your provincial authorities. Senior politicians or civil servants who participate in the decision-making process should be interviewed. Write the interview guide for the conversation you are going to conduct with these officials. Specify how the interview is carried out and be adequately specific in intended interview questions. State the theoretical grounds for your interview design.

If you plan to do political interviews aimed at non-authority subjects as part of your thesis, these interviews can be replaced by those with protest movement leaders, community members or anyone deemed suitable for your research. Explain what you are looking from the interview and how the interview is planned to be.

### Part II: Methods for Policy Analysis

#### 10. Thursday (21/2): Introduction about policy analysis

- a. What is policy analysis?
- b. Process of analysis
- c. Policy analysis vs. Policy research
- d. Discussion and Explanation of "Thesis Guide"

##### Readings:

\*Dunn, Chapter 1: *Process of analysis*

\*Weimer and Vining, Chapter 2: *What is policy analysis?*

\* FSPPM, "*Thesis Guide*"

### 11. Tuesday (26/3): Defining Public Policy Issue

- a. Identification
- b. Forming
- c. Statement
- d. Strategic design for solution

Readings:

\*Dunn, Chapter 3: *Defining Public Policy Issues*

Bardach, Part 1: *"Eightfold Paths"*

### 12. Thursday (28/3): Using Models in Policy Analysis

- a. Types of models
- b. Identify appropriate models
- c. Pros and cons of a model

Readings:

\*Stokey and Zeckhauser, Chapter 2

Stokey and Zeckhauser, Chapter 3

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

### 13. Tuesday 3 (2/4): Data Collection for Policy Analysis

- a. Information Collection
  - Secondary Sources
  - Primary Sources
- b. Policy Analysis
  - Devise options
  - Evaluate options
  - Make recommendations
- c. Policy Research
  - Construct qualitative hypothesis
  - Test qualitative hypothesis

- Conclude

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*

**14. Thursday (4/4): Writing a Policy Paper and Moral Issues in Policy Analysis**

**a) Writing a policy paper**

- Organization
- Styles
- First Draft
- Summary
- Final Draft
- Editing, fixing and formatting

Readings:

\*Harvard Kennedy School, Policy paper guide

Dunn, Chapter 9: Communicating Policy Analysis

**b) Moral Issues in Policy Analysis**

- Integrity
- Respect, public value and justice
- Conflicts of interests and values: voice, exit, and loyalty

Readings:

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

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