

Fulbright Economics Teaching Program

Academic year 2011-2012

MPP4

RESEARCH METHODS FOR PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS

Teaching Team

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| General Introduction and Micro | Nguyen Xuan Thanh Vu Thanh Tu Anh | thanhnx@fetp.vnn.vn anhvt@fetp.vnn.vn |
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Class Meetings

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

Office Hours

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Vu Thanh Tu Anh | 17:00–18:00 | | 17:00–18:00 | | 17:00–18:00 |
| Tran Thi Que Giang | | | | | |
| Dinh Vu Trang Ngan | | 15:30–17:30 | | 15:30–17:30 | |
| Pham Duy Nghia | | | | | |
| Jonathan Pincus | | | | | |
| Nguyen Xuan Thanh | | | | | |
| Dinh Cong Khai | | | | | |

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*, 4th edition, Pearson: Prentice Hall

Creswell, John W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2nd 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*, 3rd edition. Pearson: Prentice Hall.

Other readings

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

Berg, Bruce L. (2006). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 6th 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*, 2nd edition, Sage Publications

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

Singleton, Royce A. and Bruce C. Straits (2010). *Approaches to Social Research*, 5th 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. [Tue, April 10] 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. [Thu, April 12] Conceptual Foundations for Policy Problem Analysis: Macroeconomic Perspective (Jonathan Pincus)

- a. How economists think about methodology
- b. Macroeconomic policy research
- c. Development policy research

Readings:

*Nola Reinhardt (2008) "The Conundrum of Low Saving Rates in Latin America," *Development Policy Review*, 26:6, 727-744.

Deborah Fahy Bryceson, Annabel Bradbury and Trevor Bradbury (2008) "Roads to Poverty Reduction? Exploring Rural Roads' Impact on Mobility in Africa and Asia," *Development Policy Review*, 2008, 26:4, 459-482.

Kevin D Hoover (2004) *The Methodology of Empirical Macroeconomics*, Cambridge University Press, Chapter 5 "Pragmatism, Realism and the Practice of Macroeconomics."

Nanak Kakwani, Fabio Soares and Hyun H. Son (2006) "Cash Transfers for School-Age Children in African Countries: Simulation of Impacts on Poverty and School Attendance," *Development Policy Review*, 24:5, 553-569.

3. [Tue, April 17] Conceptual Foundations for Policy Problem Analysis: Development Perspective (Trang Ngan)

- a. Field research in development
- b. Policy evaluation in development

Readings:

Quy-Toan Do and Lakshmi Iyer (2008), "Land Titling and Rural Transformation in Vietnam," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 56:3, 531-579.

4. [Thu, April 19] Conceptual Foundation for Policy Problem Analysis: Applied Microeconomic Perspective (Tu Anh)

- 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*

5. [Tue, April 24] Conceptual Foundation for Policy Problem Analysis: Finance and Project Appraisal Perspective (Que Giang)

- 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.

6. [Thu, April 26] Conceptual Foundation for Policy Problem Analysis: Law and Public Governance Perspective (Duy Nghia)

- a. The role of law in economic development
- b. The role of law in public policy
- c. Challenges in establishing accountability
- d. Social participation in public governance

Readings:

* Vietnam Development Report 2010: Modern Institutions

Part II. Doing Policy Analysis

7. [Tue, May 08] 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. [Thu, May 10] 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. [Tue, May 15] 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. [Thu, May 17] Policy Problem Analysis: Trade and Foreign Direct Investment Perspective (Cong Khai)

- a. Trade policy research
- b. Foreign Direct Investment research

Readings:

* Upgrading of the Vietnamese Textile and Garment Industry in the Global Apparel Value Chain (Dang Thi Tuyet Nhung, FETP Thesis, 2011)

Part III. Writing and Presenting Policy Analysis Paper

11. [Tue, May 22] 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:

*Harvard Kennedy School, *The Policy Analysis Exercise: The Writing Guide*.

*Dunn, Chapter 9: *Communicating Policy Analysis*

12. [Thu, May 24] 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*