

**Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management  
Academic Year 2019-2020  
Fall Term**

**SYLLABUS  
Introduction to Public Policy**

**Teaching Team**

Instructor: Nguyen Xuan Thanh ([thanh.nguyen@fuv.edu.vn](mailto:thanh.nguyen@fuv.edu.vn))  
Tutor: Tran Huong Giang ([giang.tran.fsppm@fulbright.edu.vn](mailto:giang.tran.fsppm@fulbright.edu.vn))  
Nguyen Thanh Huong ([huongnguyen.nro@gmail.com](mailto:huongnguyen.nro@gmail.com))

**Class Times**

Tuesday to Saturday: 08:30 – 11:45, October 15 – 19

**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	
N. T. Hương				16:45-18:15	16:45-18:15

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, the role of government, 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.

Within the MPP program, the key learning outcomes of the course 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.

## Course Description

The course will cover the following key topics: (i) The public policy process; (ii) Market and the role of government; (iii) Market failures (monopoly, public goods, externalities, asymmetric information) and public policy responses; (iv) Distribution and the efficiency/equity tradeoff; and (v) Institutions.

Students are required to study the materials, in particular the flipped-classroom materials, posted in Microsoft Team.

During the one-week in-class study at the Fulbright campus, classes include traditional lectures and case study sessions.

## Readings

The main readings are chapters from the following books and other selected readings and case studies.

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

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

Joseph E. Stiglitz & Jay K. Rosengard (2015). *Economics of the Public Sector* 4th Edition, Norton & Company.

## 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 two policy memos based on case study questions. The memos will be submitted by 08:20 am on October 16 and October 19.

The class will be divided into groups. Each group will work on a policy analysis exercise and write a group paper. The group paper will be submitted by 08:20 am on November 11.

Students' grades will be based on:

Class Participation	25%
Policy Memo	30%
Group Paper	45%

## Class Schedule

<b>Day 1, Oct 15</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
Session 1	Public Policy and the Public Policy Making Process
Session 2	Case: Nike versus New Balance
<b>Day 2, Oct 16</b>	<b>MARKET AND THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT</b>
Session 3	Market and Market Failures
Session 4	Case: Uber in Vietnam
<b>Day 3, Oct 17</b>	<b>MONOPOLY, PUBLIC GOODS, AND EXTERNALITIES</b>
Session 5	Case: Retail Electricity Price Regulation
Session 6	Public Goods, Externalities
<b>Day 4, Oct 18</b>	<b>ASYMMETRIC INFORMATION, EQUITY</b>
Session 7	Case: Interest Rate Control and Liberalization in Vietnam
Session 8	Distribution and Equity
<b>Day 5, Oct 19</b>	<b>INSTITUTIONS</b>
Session 9	Case: HCMC Port Relocation
Session 10	Public Policy and Institutions

## Detailed Schedule and Reading List

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### DAY 1: INTRODUCTION

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#### Session 1: Public Policy and the Public Policy Making Process

- Birkland (2016). Chapters 1 & 2.
- Kingdon (2013). Chapter 1.

#### Session 2: Case Study Method in Public Policy (Case Discussion Session)

- Nike versus New Balance: Trade Policy in a World of Global Value Chains, HBS Case.
- Learning by the Case Method, HKS Case Program.
- Birkland (2016). Chapters 4 & 5. (*not required*)
- Kingdon (2013). Chapters 2 & 3. (*not required*)

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### DAY 2: MARKET, MARKET FAILURES AND THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

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#### Session 3: Market and Market Failures

- Stiglitz & Rosengard (2015). Chapter 3 (3.1: The Invisible Hand of Competitive Markets, 3.2: Welfare Economics and Pareto Efficiency).
- Jonathan Pincus (2012). *Public Policy in a Market Economy*, FETP Teaching Note.
- Stiglitz & Rosengard (2015). Chapter 4.

#### Session 4: Regulation (Case Discussion Session)

- Uber in Vietnam, FETP Case
- Jonathan Pincus & Đinh Vũ Trang Ngân (2013). *Public Policy and Critical Thinking*, FETP Teaching Note.
- Harvey S. Rosen (2005). *Public Finance*, 7th Edition, McGraw-Hill, Chapters 2 & 3. (*not required*)

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## **DAY 3: MONOPOLY, PUBLIC GOODS AND EXTERNALITIES**

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### **Session 5: Monopoly and Regulation (Case Discussion Session)**

- Retail Electricity Price Regulation, FSPPM Case.
- Peter Debaere (2011). *Imperfect Competition and Monopolies*, Darden Business Publishing, University of Virginia.

### **Session 6: Public Goods and Externalities**

- Stiglitz & Rosengard (2015). Chapters 5 & 6.  
(Students may skip sections on diagrams and analytical models.)

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## **DAY 4: ASYMMETRIC INFORMATION, EQUITY**

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### **Session 7: Asymmetric Information (Case Discussion Session)**

- The Cycle of Interest Rate Control and Liberalization, FSPPM Case.
- HBS (1997). *Asymmetric Information: Market Failures, Market Distortions, and Market Solutions*.

### **Session 8: Distribution and Equity**

- Thomas Piketty (2014). *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Harvard University Press. Introduction

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## **DAY 5: INSTITUTIONS**

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### **Session 9: Institutional Fragmentation (Case Discussion Session)**

- Ho Chi Minh City Port Relocation, FETP Case.

### **Session 10: Public Policy and Institutions**

- 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.”
- Dinh Vu Trang Ngan (2013). *Institutions*, FETP Teaching Note.