Course Meetings: Tuesday 9:30 – 12:15
Course Location:
Office Hours: By appointment (I respond to all e-mails within 24 hours so a response should be immediate); e-mail: neil.kleiman@nyu.edu

COURSE GOALS
The goal of this course is to deepen our understanding of the policy lifecycle: policy formation, implementation and institutionalization. This course is designed with a particular emphasis on the role of political actors, institutions and the context within which they operate. From interest groups to mayors and the role of the media we will continually ask: how and why do some issues gain traction with policymakers (and the public) and others ignored? We will examine how public policy is crafted, negotiated and enacted. It is a complicated story – one worth untangling and mastering.

We will place a premium on understanding policy in practice and you are to choose a policy area (e.g. immigration, job creation, crime) at the beginning of the semester. You will be asked to comment on the policy area throughout the course and use that area as the subject of your final paper.

REQUIRED BOOKS & READINGS: You are required to purchase John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (this book is not at the NYU bookstore and should be purchased through Amazon or another bookstore or outlet. Ideally purchase the 2nd edition, 1995). All other course readings will be made available on the NYU Classes site.

Note: there is an expectation that you will be reading outside publications of your choosing such as the *New York Times, Washington Post, Politico, Governing and the Economist*. You should build your own body of supporting literature throughout the semester.

ASSESSED VALUATION:

Participation: 10%
Policy Memos: 25%
Mid-term exam: 30%
Final Policy Report: 35%

A word about participation. You are expected to come to every class having completed the assigned readings and ready to engage. Other assignments will be described at greater length in a separate assignment sheet.

**Late assignments are not accepted.** This is not to penalize anyone but to create a fair and equal policy for all students. Any extra time that one student is given over another creates an unfair disadvantage.
**Class Absences are taken seriously:** Class participation and attendance is critically important. You must attend all class sessions. If for any reason you are unable to make class you must e-mail the professor as soon as you know of a coming absence.

**Accommodations:** Any students requiring accommodations should contact me to make proper arrangements. Please be prepared to share your documentation from the NYU disabilities office regarding appropriate accommodations.

**Academic Honesty:** This course follows NYU’s policy on plagiarism. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter with serious consequences. In short, don’t cheat.

**January 26  Overview**

Readings: Smith and Larimer, “Public Policy as a Concept & Field of Study”
Sabatier “Toward Better Theories of the Public Policy Process”
Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 1

**Feb.  2  Agenda Setting**

****Memo writing workshop**

Readings: Kingdon, Ch. 4-6; Ch. 8

Memo writing presentation

**Feb.  9  Public Opinion & Media**

Readings: Lawrence Jacob and Suzanne Mettler, “Why Public Opinion Changes: The Implications for Health and Health Policy”

Baumgartner, Linn and Boydstun, “The Decline of the Death Penalty: How Media Framing changed Capital Punishment in America”

Shirky, “The Political Power of Social Media” from *Foreign Affairs*

Kingdon, Pages 65-67, 145-150

**Guest Speaker: Jeff Plaut, Global Strategy Group**

**Feb.  16  Interest groups and social movements**

****Policy Memo #1 Due in Class** **
Readings:

Kingdon, Pages 46-53, 150-153

Armstrong, et al “Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape”

Grigoriadis “Meet the College Women Who Are Starting a Revolution Against Campus Sexual Assault”


Frances Fox Piven (2006), Challenging Authority. Ch 1 and 2

Feb. 23  The role of ideas: Research, think tanks and foundations

Readings: Michklethwait & Wooldrich, The Right Nation: Conservative Power in America, Ch 6

Andrew Rich, Think Tanks, Public Policy and the Politics of Expertise. Pages 1-6; 204-220.


Guest speaker: Emma Oppenheim, Open Society Foundation

March 1  The Executive Branch; Is the President Still Relevant?

Readings: Kingdon, Ch. 2
Heftz, Ch. 1 and 2
Remnick (2014) “Going the Distance” from the New Yorker
Watch “Inside Obama’s Presidency” from Frontline, available online at pbs.org

March 8  Congress


Guest Speaker: Glenn Thrush, Politico
March 15th  –  NO CLASS

March 22  State Government
Readings:  Rivlin (1992), Reviving the American Dream. Ch 1, pages 122-125


Bruce Katz white paper on federalism

Guest Speaker: Suri Duitch, City University of New York

**POLICY MEMO #2 DUE IN CLASS**

March 29  Local Government

Lipsky, Street-Level Bureaucracy. Ch 1 & 2

Scan either the CityLab.com or NextCity.org web sites

April 5    Mid-Term Exam

April 12  Implementation
Readings:  Sabatier and Mazmanian, “The Implementation of Public Policy”

Elmore, “Backward Mapping”

Bloomberg Philanthropies, Ch. 3 & 4
April 19  
Evaluating and Sustaining policy

Readings:  
Weiss, The Interface between Evaluation and Public Policy
Ellen Schall, Public Sector Succession: A Strategic Approach to Sustaining Innovation

April 26  
NO CLASS

May 3  
Class presentations

May 10  
Class presentations

**Final papers due May 13**