Focus and Scope of the Course

This course introduces and explores basic issues in the study of public policy in Canada. Not many policy areas can be treated here, but students should gain an encapsulated understanding of Canadian policy fields and processes in a comparative perspective. The course is theory-driven and requires students to apply concepts to particular cases.

The course focuses, first, on the institutional grammar and societal norms of Canadian public affairs, and, then, on critical issues in policy making and implementation. In the process, the course draws attention to (1) the variety of ways we understand public affairs in a federal system; (2) the tendency to treat many life goods as “in care of the state” when in fact they tend to be coproduced by citizens as well; and (3) why we need to go beyond the dichotomy of “state and market” to understand public governance in Canada.

Items on Order in the McGill Bookstore

The following books have been ordered with the McGill University Bookstore and are available for you to acquire as part of your working library. Other works, listed under the topical outline, can be found in the Course Pack, or are on line.

Course Pack available in the McGill University Bookstore.
Method of Work and Requirements

The lectures will follow the general sequence of the topical outline. The development of effective work habits for independent scholarship is essential if students are to be able to pursue their scholarly and educational interests on their own. Each person will be responsible for sustaining an active reading program. Your readings should be distributed proportionate to the time spent on each topic.

Lectures: Your attendance is required. Specific material presented in the lectures will not be posted and cannot be accessed in any other way. Should you have to miss a number of lectures for reasons of illness or other types of emergency, you must notify me or the Teaching Assistant. The required readings complement the lectures. Hence class attendance, an active reading and listening commitment plus conference participation are required for the successful completion of the course.

Conferences: Conferences, scheduled to start after the 2nd week of class, will be held at various times to accommodate different student schedules. The attendance of the conferences is mandatory. The conferences are meant to facilitate the discussion of issues raised in the lectures as the conferences are designed to examine in greater depth particular questions or controversies.

Grading: For grading reasons, you will need to tell me in writing, and no later than a week after the mid-term exam results are in, which grading system you choose for the course, from one of two options listed below:

Option A: Mid-term exam (25%), conference participation (10%), paper (25%), and final, non-cumulative, exam (40%)

Option B: No paper, just: mid-term exam (35%), conference participation (15%), and final, non-cumulative, exam (50%).

Please note that your paper option should come from one of the policy areas covered in class. Please remember, papers must look professional in appearance - typed or word processed-containing a title page, authors properly cited for ideas and inspiration, bibliography and a list of sources. Consult a style manual if in doubt. Students who wish to plan ahead may want to devote some days early in the term to thinking about their topics. Students must individually consult with the professor before finalizing their paper topics. My office is Leacock 518.

Deadlines:
(1) There will be a midterm exam on February 15, 2018. Please note: there will be no make-up midterm exam.
(2) If you choose Grading Option A, the individual paper is due 10 April 2018.
(3) The final exam is scheduled by the University.
Written work can be done in either English or French.

Integrity: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offenses under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information in English and French.)

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**TOPICAL OUTLINE AND ASSIGNED READINGS**

**The World of Public Policy: Organized Complexity**

1. Introduction: How do we understand organized complexity? (first week)
   Course Pack:

   **Part I: Theories of Public Policy**

2. The Responsible Gov’t Model Reconsidered: (one lecture)
   Required Readings:
   Course Pack:

3. Alternative and/or Complementary Perspectives (2 weeks)
   Required Readings:
   Course Pack:
   - Recall esp. the readings by Jane Jacobs and J.Farrell

Part II. Rethinking the Context of Policy Making: The Challenge Posed by Confronting the Indigenous Reality:

4. “Fishing” for a new constitutional and institutional setting (2 week)

Required Readings:
Miljan, Public Policy in Canada, 51-146.
Course Pack:
• J. Lear. Radical Hope.
• L. Miljan, Public Policy in Canada 267-304.

Reading Week March 5-9, 2018
Part III. Policy Fields:
Old and New Experiments

5. Health (2 weeks)
Required Readings:
Miljan, Public Policy in Canada, 209-233.
S.E. D. Shortt. The Doctor’s Dilemma.
Course Pack:

6. Education (2 weeks)
Required Readings:
Miljan, Public Policy in Canada, 234-266.
Course Pack:

7. Social Learning and Collective Action (2 weeks)
Required Readings:
Miljan, Public Policy in Canada, 243-277.
Course Pack:
  • The Evangeline Cooperative Experience in PEI.
8. A New Public Economy in Legal Cannabis (2 week)
We will collectively apply what we have learned to make sense of the legislation and creation of this new political economy:
- collection of news items and other relevant information. Begin to collect material as soon as class starts.

Conclusions