**Course Description**

This is a course about the political sources of public policies. Our aim is to discern the forces that act upon policymakers, determining what they can and cannot do—from the institutions in which they are embedded, to the social organizations with which they have to contend, to the social, cultural, and economic legacies within which they have to maneuver.

This iteration of DPI-101C is tailored to students enrolled in the International and Global Affairs concentration. As such, it supplements the IGA curriculum’s focus on the interactions between countries with an attention to the domestic factors that help shape those interactions. The course is designed to help you understand the constraints faced by political leaders acting on the world stage. It will also provide you a firm grounding in the analysis of political systems, which will be useful for those wishing to specialize in particular geographic regions. Students interested in the policy domains of democratization and human rights will gain from this course a deeper understanding of the domestic processes that make regimes more respectful of the personal freedom and physical integrity of their citizens. And students interested in questions of international development will benefit from the course’s exploration of the interplay between political institutions and economic growth.

An important additional aim of this course is to help you hone your analytical skills and presentational abilities. In your professional lives, you will often be required to explain complex policy choices with verbal economy and analytical precision. Though it takes an entire career to master these skills, the exercises in this class are designed to help you on your journey. They will also help to prepare you for Spring Exercise, the policy simulation that is the capstone of the first year of the Master in Public Policy program.

**Expectations, Assignments, Grading**

**Expectations:** This class combines lectures, discussions (both of specific cases and of conceptual issues suggested by the readings), and in-class exercises. On some occasions, you will be cold-
It is important that you complete the readings and come to class ready to participate, ask questions, debate with your colleagues, and contribute to our collective enterprise. Attendance is mandatory, and 10% of your grade will be based on class participation.

**Assignments:** The bulk (70%) of your final grade is determined by your performance on four assignments—two policy memos and two group briefings. In addition to the 10% for class participation, the final 20% of your grade is determined by a take-home, open-book final.

Assignment schedule TBA.

**Grading:** Each assignment will be scored along the six point performance index used in Spring Exercise:

- 6 = Distinction even by the standards expected of a professional practitioner
- 5 = Fully meets the standards expected of a professional practitioner
- 4 = Distinction by the standards expected of a professional school graduate student
- 3 = Average by the standards expected of a professional school graduate student
- 2 = Below average by the standards expected of a professional school graduate student
- 1 = Unacceptable by the standards expected of a professional school graduate student

A copy of the standard assessment sheet that I will use for each assignment is appended to this document. I use this system instead of assigning letter grades because it gives you the clearest possible sense of how your performance would be evaluated in the real world, against an absolute standard of professionalism. It is a very high standard: past experience in this and other sections of DPI-101 has been that scores of 6 and 5 are rarely, if ever, awarded.

Please note that your final grade for the course will not be based on your absolute score on any of the graded exercises, but rather on how well you performed relative to other students in the class. The Kennedy School’s grading curve is as follows: the top 10 to 15% of the class will receive a grade of A; the next 20 to 25% will receive a grade of A-; the next 30 to 40% will receive a grade of B+; the next 20 to 25% will receive a grade of B; and the lowest 5 to 10% will receive a grade of B- or lower.

**Academic Honesty:** It is important that you adhere to the Kennedy School’s policies regarding proper academic practice. The academic code can be found here. Please pay particular attention to the section on plagiarism, which is the appropriation of others’ words and ideas without proper attribution. The disciplinary consequences of this violation are dire, so please take care to quote and cite your sources. I will discuss strategies for avoiding plagiarism throughout the course, but it is your responsibility to make sure that the words and ideas that appear in your work are your own, and that you give credit where credit is due.

**Policy on laptops and smart-phones:** Please turn off your phone before coming to class. You may use your laptop to take notes in class or to refer to the readings, but you may not surf the web or check your email.

**Readings:** You are required to purchase three books for this class, as well as a course packet:

The course packet contains both required and recommended readings, and is available for purchase from the CMO. To reduce the exorbitant cost of course packets, and to mitigate the environmental impact of all that paper, materials that are available electronically are not included in the course packet.

A few more things:

- Due to the large class size, there will be assigned seating.
- Please schedule a meeting with me in my office hours during the first three weeks of class. A signup sheet is available outside my Ash Center office.
- Lecture slides will be uploaded to the course page every two weeks or so. They are intended to serve as study guides, but they are not substitutes for doing the readings.
- You are strongly encouraged to attend the Ash Center’s seminars on democracy, the schedule of which can be found here: http://ash.harvard.edu/Home/News-Events/Events/Democracy-Seminar.

Schedule of meetings and readings

January 29: Introduction

January 31: The demand side of public polices

  Recommended

February 5: The state

  Recommended

  Part I: Political Regimes

February 7: Regime types
- Miriam Kornbluth and Vinay Jawahar, “Elections versus Democracy,” Journal of


Recommended
- Robert Dahl, Polyarchy, 1971, Yale University Press, pp. 1-16

February 12: Democracy and development

Recommended

February 14: Democracy and inequality

Recommended
- Pepper Culpepper, 2010, Quiet Politics, Cambridge University Press, pp. 177-198

February 19: Dictatorship and Resistance

February 21: The Economics of Democratization

February 26: The shackles of culture?

Recommended

February 28: Case study: The Arab Spring 1
• Masoud, “The Road to and From Liberation Square,” *Journal of Democracy*, August 2011

March 5: Case study: The Arab Spring 2
• Larry Diamond, 2010, “Why are there no Arab Democracies,” *Journal of Democracy*, 21(1)

March 7: Making democracy work: constitution-writing

Recommended

Part II: Pillars of Governance

March 12: Parties and representation
March 14: Legislatures and executives


March 15: Legislative and executive systems


March 14: Legislatures and executives


March 18-20, Spring Recess

March 26: Local and participatory democracy


March 26: Local and participatory democracy


March 28: The Welfare State


March 28: The Welfare State


April 2: Governing across divides

**April 4: In-class exercise (joint with API-102)**
• Background readings TBA

**April 9: Concluding lecture**
• Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, Chapter 9