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Syllabus

Putting Policy into Action: Strategic Implementation of Public Objectives PPG 1007H

Winter 2014

Instructors

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Class: Mondays, 9-12 (Sec. IV); Tuesdays, 9-12 (Sec. I, II, III)

Location: CG 361 (Section I, IV); CG 150 (Section II); Munk, Transit House (Section III)
Except as noted below for plenary sessions Feb. 3 and Mar.10.

Office Hours: By appointment, or Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30 (Bryant)
By appointment, or Tuesdays, 2:00-3:00 (Forward)
By appointment only (Mason)

Introduction

Meeting the complex public policy challenges of this century requires not only good ideas, arrived at through rigorous analysis and open debate, but also strong implementation. Policy failure can be caused by many factors, ranging from poor problem definition, inadequate framing and analysis of policy options and inappropriate choice or mix of implementing instruments, to inadequate understanding of the delivery chain, weak risk assessment and lack of clarity around assigned accountabilities. The ability to successfully execute policy requires an integrated consideration of these types of factors. This constitutes implementation capacity.

This is a foundational course in policy practice. It is interdisciplinary, drawing on key concepts from science, social science, business and public administration as well as the world of the policy practitioner. It introduces you to thinking in a critical, integrated way about how to deliver on public policy objectives in the context of a dynamic political and stakeholder environment. Specifically, it examines key considerations in developing an implementation strategy for a policy initiative. Your instructors, Pamela Bryant, Janet Mason and William Forward have built this course drawing on their significant experience as senior leaders in both policy and delivery in the Ontario Public Service and elsewhere.

This course has two main objectives:

1. To provide you with an overview and basic understanding of implementation strategy and of certain critical success factors in developing and executing one.

2. To help you hone your analytical, problem-solving and communications skills in arriving at a recommended course of action (your advice to a decision maker), applying these critical success factors.

What Students Can Expect to Learn

The course is organized throughout the twelve-week term along three thematic lines:

- I. **What is implementation and implementation 'space'?** We start by examining the policy/delivery continuum, or where implementation fits in the policy cycle. We will look at how the upfront choice of policy tool or mix of tools (legislation, regulation, tax incentives, direct spending, etc.) influences implementation options and strategies. We will build an understanding of what constitutes an implementation strategy. Seminars 1 and 2.
- II. **How does the broader context affect implementation?** Policy implementation unfolds in an environment where there are a range of constraints, including time, money, legal, institutional, organizational and other real world influences on what can be accomplished. The fiscal and political context of any government are major factors that determine implementation strategy. Significant too are the roles that stakeholders and the media (conventional, social) play in influencing and shaping ideas and public opinion on how well policy is being delivered. We will come to understand the complexity of the implementation landscape, where there are many players beyond government itself and where it is critical to know and understand the distinctive competencies of each and the role each can play in determining implementation success or failure. Seminars 3, 4 and 5.
- III. **What are some of the critical success factors in implementation?** Building an implementation strategy requires an understanding of not only context but also of key factors that will contribute to implementation success. In this section of the course, we delve in detail into the creation of the delivery network and how getting the governance and accountability relationships right will drive performance and achieve the desired outcomes. We will also learn how to analyse risk and compare different implementation strategies, or options, in terms of their ability to mitigate implementation risks. Seminars 6 through 9.

The common thread running through the seminars week to week is that effective implementation is typically hard. It requires analysis, problem solving and course alteration at every step of the process. It frequently requires rethinking of assumptions and approaches and synthesis of these into something new. During the semester we use practical examples to help you understand how decision makers think about implementation and what they do. In addition, in several seminars, an invited guest speaker brings their professional experience and insights into the class, providing 'live' case material for you to consider.

Through readings, class discussion and both group and individual assignments, you should seek to become comfortable engaging in debates around implementation choices and challenges, be able to offer alternative strategies or choices based on your assessment of critical success factors and to discuss how these might lead to the same or different outcomes.

Course Outline and Reading List

The Required readings for each seminar provide important background to the work you will do in class, in work teams and on your own. To the extent possible, all readings are available online or via Blackboard. Some modifications to the Required readings may be made during the semester in response to new developments or reports. If so, your Instructors will advise you and update Blackboard. **Please check the Course Documents section each week** to ensure you have the right readings for the next class.

I –What is Implementation?

Seminar 1: Course Overview, Discussion of Key Themes and Students' Special Areas of Interest January 6 (Sec. IV)/ 7 (Sec. I, II, III)

Class meets by Section.

This seminar provides an introduction to the implementation of public policy and to some of the underlying concepts such as the policy/delivery continuum or cycle, the tools of public policy, and how the choice of tool influences how policy is implemented. We will also review the overall learning objectives, course design and mandatory requirements, leaving time to discuss any special areas of interest to you as a class.

Required Reading

Course Syllabus. PDF on Blackboard.

Bardach, Eugene. *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*. (Washington: CQ Press, 2009). Part 1. 'The Eightfold Path, Step One: Define the Problem', 1-10 and Appendix B, 'Things Governments Do', 127-135. PDF on Blackboard.

Optional Reading

Graham, Andrew, "Pressman/Wildavsky and Bardach: Implementation in the public sector, past, present and future", *Canadian Public Administration*, Vol. 48, No. 2, 2005. pp. 268-273. Book Review. <http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/39439>

Seminar 2: The Demand for Effective Implementation January 13/14

Class meets by section, 9 to 11. In addition, plenary session for Writing and Communicating Workshop scheduled for **Jan. 13, 11 – 1**, Medical Sciences Building, Room 3163.

This week we continue to develop some of the basic implementation concepts, aiming to help you build a good foundation of understanding on what effective implementation is and why it matters. We discuss the constant interplay between policy (the 'what' of decision making) and delivery (the 'how'), why there is new urgency in examining how government achieves its objectives and what constitutes implementation strategy.

Required Reading

Osborne, D. and T. Gaebler, 'Catalytic Government: Steering Rather than Rowing', in *Reinventing Government* (New York: Penguin, 1993). Chapter 1, 25-48. PDF on Blackboard.

Salamon, Lester M., ed. *The Tools of Government: A Guide to the New Governance*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). Chapter 1, 1-18. PDF on Blackboard.

Dean, Tony, "Is Public Service Delivery Obsolete?", *Literary Review of Canada*, September 2011. PDF on Blackboard.

Plus, as background for today's workshop (quick scan): 'How to write a Cabinet Submission', OPS internal document. PDF on Blackboard.

Optional Reading

Abraham, Mark, Jonathan Breul, John Kamensky. *Six Trends Transforming Government*. (2006: IBM Centre for the Business of Government). PDF on Blackboard.

Tiernan, Anne, 'Building Capacity for Policy Implementation', in *Improving Implementation: Organizational Change and Project Management*, edited by John Wanna, 2007, pp. 113-118. <http://epress.anu.edu.au/anzsog/imp/pdf/imp-whole.pdf>

Briefing Note #1 assigned. Due February 3, 4.

Students sign up for group project teams (Minister's Briefing) and register for "Smart Research" workshop date (Jan. 27 or Jan. 28). Note: Pre-workshop survey due January 20.

II –The Context of Implementation

Seminar 3: The Political and Fiscal Context January 20/ 21

Class meets in section, 9:00-12:00.

This week we move from basic implementation concepts to look at the broader context for implementation. We place particular emphasis in this seminar on how the fiscal and political context continually interact to determine priorities, implementation strategies and eventual policy outcomes.

Required Reading

Michael Moran, Martin Rein and Robert E. Goodin, eds. *Oxford Handbook of Public Policy*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), Chapter 1, 'The Public and Its Policies'. 25 pages. PDF on Blackboard.

Michael Prince, 'Avoiding blame, doing good and claiming credit: reforming Canadian income security', *Canadian Public Administration*, September 2010, pages 293-296, 315-319. PDF on Blackboard.

'Rob Ford: Toronto Mayor becoming province's problem', Martin Regg Cohn, *Toronto Star*, 9/11/13. PDF on Blackboard.

Optional

Winship, Christopher, "Policy Analysis as Puzzle Solving", in Moran, Rein and Goodin, *ibid.*, pp. 109-121. PDF on Blackboard.

Smart Research Workshop: pre-workshop survey due today.

Seminar 4: The Implementation Environment January 27/ 28

Class meets in section, 9:00-12:00.

This week we examine a second major contextual factor -the role of stakeholders and other critical players in implementation. The landscape or space for implementation is characterized by complex networks of players across public, private and non-profit sectors. How does the policy tool chosen shape this landscape? What does government bring to the implementation table, and what do other players? How do these get aligned?

Required Reading

Moore, Mark H. *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995). Chapter 1, 13-21, Chapter 3, 57-77. PDF on Blackboard.

'Alberta's and Ontario's liquor boards: why such divergent outcomes?', M.G. Bird, *Canadian Public Administration*, December 2010, pp. 509-527. PDF on Blackboard.

Eggers, William and Paul Macmillan. *The Solution Revolution*. (Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013). 'The Wavemakers', Chap. 1, 16-50. PDF on Blackboard. Quick read.

Optional Reading

Donahue, John D. and Richard J. Zeckhauser, "Public-Private Collaboration", in Michael Moran, Rein and Goodwin, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). 496-522. PDF on Blackboard.

Note: Smart Research Workshop this week, January 27 or 28. 1-3 pm. Please attend the one you registered for. Robarts Library Electronic

Classroom, Room 4033, 4th floor.

<http://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/electronic-classroom>

Seminar 5: Translating Context into Action February 3 (all Sections).

Class meets in plenary, 9-12:00. Medical Sciences, Room 4171. (All Sections)

Guest: Peter Wallace, Secretary of Cabinet, Government of Ontario and Head of the Ontario Public Service

The course of action that will maximize the chances of successful policy implementation depends heavily on the context: is the government in the early or late phase of its mandate? Where do the other parties stand on the issue? How contentious is the initiative? Does the government have a majority in the House? Where do stakeholder groups stand on the issue? What is the fiscal situation? How is the public mood? Where do other provinces and the federal government stand on the issue?

Required Reading

Report of the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, Executive Summary, pp. 1-67, 2012. PDF on Blackboard.

'Lacking consensus on a fiscal plan, Ontario Liberals cling to mantra of growth', Adam Radwanski, *Globe and Mail*, 8/11/13. PDF on Blackboard.

Briefing Note 1 due.

Briefing Note 2 assigned. Due March 3, 4.

III –Critical Success Factors in Implementation

Seminar 6: Designing the Delivery Network February 10/11

Class meets by section, 9:00 -12:00.

Moving from broader contextual considerations, we turn now to thinking very practically about how to build an implementation strategy. Over the next four seminars, we will look at a set of enabling conditions or critical success factors in effective implementation. This week we examine how policy leaders begin to structure and manage a delivery network where the key levers for change lie beyond government itself. What are the opportunities and the challenges of working in a network mode within and across sectors? How are relationships and trust built

Required Reading

Michael Barber. *Instruction to Deliver: Fighting to Transform Britain's Public Services*. (Cromwell Press, 2007) 43-48, 75-87 and 401-406. PDF on Blackboard.

'Delivery Chain', Cabinet Office Delivery Toolkit, OPS internal document, May 2011. PDF on Blackboard.

Bradford, Neil. *Canadian Social Policy in the 2000s: Bringing Place In*. CPRN Research Report, November 2008. PDF on Blackboard.

Lenihan, Don. *Rescuing Public Policy*. (Public Policy Forum, 2012) Chapter 6, "The Principles of Public Engagement", pp. 119-128. PDF on Blackboard.

Optional Reading

Donald Kettl, "Managing Indirect Government," in Lester Salamon, ed. *The Tools of Government*, *ibid.* Chapter 16, 490-508. PDF on Blackboard.

Stephen Goldsmith and William D. Eggers. *Governing by Network*. (Washington, Brookings Institution Press, 2004). Chap. 3, 'Challenges of the Network Model', 39-52. PDF on Blackboard

Reading Week February 17-21. No class this week.

Seminar 7: Outcomes, Governance, Accountability February 24/ 25

Class meets in section, 9:00-12:00.

This week we look at the importance of putting in place a strong accountability framework -a clear yet flexible set of roles and responsibilities- so that the overall delivery network can function well. This is not only about structures and processes. Innovative public purpose organizations increasingly use outcomes and measures to drive execution and performance.

Required Reading

Paul G. Thomas, "Why is Performance-Based Accountability So Popular in Theory and So Difficult in Practice?", in KPMG *Holy Grail or Achievable Quest: International Perspectives on Public Sector Performance Management*. 169-187. 2008. PDF on Blackboard.

Edgar, Laura, Claire Marshall and Michael Bassett, 'Partnerships: Putting Good Governance Principles in Practice', Institute on Governance, 2006. PDF on Blackboard.

Moore, Mark. *Recognising Public Value*. (2013; Cambridge, Harvard University Press) pp. 1-10, 410-416 plus Figures 2.1, 2.4 and Appendix. PDF on Blackboard

Gawande, Abul. 'Slow ideas –some innovations spread fast. How do you speed the ones that don't?', *The New Yorker*, 29/7/13. PDF on Blackboard.

Optional Reading

Carolyn Tuohy, 'Partnering for Public Purpose –New Modes of Accountability for New Modes of Governance', a paper prepared for the Symposium on Partnering for Public Purpose, School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Toronto, November 22, 2006. In The Report of the

Independent Blue Ribbon Panel on Grant and Contribution Programs, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 81-90. PDF on Blackboard.

Posner, Paul, 'Accountability Challenges of Third Party Government' in Salamon, Lester M., ed., *ibid.*, Chapter 18, 523-548. PDF on Blackboard.

Pearl Eliadis, Margaret M. Hill and Michael Howlett, eds. *Designing Government: From Instruments to Governance*. (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005). Introduction, 6-14. PDF on Blackboard.

'Implementing "new public management": the case of employment services in Quebec', C. Laurin and S. Wagner, *Canadian Public Administration*, March 2011, pp.23-39. PDF on Blackboard.

Stephen Goldsmith and William D. Eggers. *Governing by Network*. (Washington, Brookings Institution Press, 2004). Chapter 6, 'Networks and the Accountability Dilemma', 121-145. PDF on Blackboard.

Seminar 8: Assessing and Mitigating Risk March 3/4

Class meets in section, 9:00 – 12:00

In this class we focus on how to identify and prioritize risks in the environment and how to develop strategies to prevent or mitigate risks. Referencing examples, we will compare and analyse different implementation options in terms of how well they address risk, thereby learning how to think about and structure options when designing implementation strategy. This class continues to build on previous work including our understanding of context, the strengths and weaknesses of the delivery network and of the governance and accountability framework.

Required Reading

Eggers, William and John O'Leary. *If We Can Put a Man on the Moon: Getting Big Things Done in Government*. (Harvard Business Press, Boston, 2009) Chapter 4, The Overconfidence Trap, 107-134. PDF on Blackboard.

'Program and Policy Analysis: Guide to Risk Assessment Analysis', Government of Ontario internal document, September 2011. PDF on Blackboard.

Covello, Vincent and Peter Sandman, 'Risk Communication: Evolution and Revolution', 2001. PDF on Blackboard.

Optional Reading

Sparrow, Malcolm. *The Character of Harms*. (Cambridge University Press, 2008) Introduction, 1-18 and Chapter 6, 101-107. PDF on Blackboard.

Taleb, Nassim Nicholas. *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*. (Random House: New York, 2007). 300 pages.

Briefing Note 2 due.

Seminar 9: Evaluating Implementation Options March 10 (all Sections)

Class meets in plenary, 9 – 12. Medical Sciences, Room 4171.

Guest: David Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer, Region of Peel (tbc)

What implementation plan is most likely to take us to a successful outcome? The answer will depend on: the characteristics of the policy; the political, social and economic context; the evaluation of the plan against the types of critical success factors learned in previous seminars, including the understanding and effective mitigation of risk. The key is to identify and consider a range of implementation options, assess their relative strengths and weaknesses against clear evaluation criteria and be nimble in adapting and correcting course as necessary.

Required Reading

To be assigned –case examples of guest speaker’s choice. Come prepared to present and discuss your answers to assigned questions.

Seminars 10, 11 –Minister’s Briefing: Implementation Strategy March 17/18 and March 24/5

Class meets by section, 9:00-12:00. (Room change for section III March 25 tba). Small team presentations to an invited guest ‘Minister’. Class participation via assigned roles.

Required Reading

Group Presentations posted to Blackboard **by Sunday noon, March 16 and March 23**. From the perspective of the role assigned to you, critically assess the implementation analysis and recommendations, drawing on concepts and themes we’ve covered in the course. Come to class to prepared to provide constructive feedback in addition to questions posed by the guest Minister.

Group Project Final Reports due March 31, 12 noon.

Seminar 12: Review, Discussion, Wrap Up, Evaluation March 31/April 1

Class meets by Section, 9:00-12:00.

Graduate Teaching Evaluations due (in class)

Evaluation

Your final grades is comprised of:

I.	Class Participation	15%
II.	Briefing Notes (2)	45%
III.	Implementation Plan Report	40%

I. Class Participation (15%)

We expect each student to arrive at every class having completed the Required Readings and ready to contribute to lively discussion of the day's topic with classmates, your Instructors and guest speakers. In order to ensure all students contribute to the class, attendance will be taken. It is the student's responsibility to account for any absences. Your grade will be based on your consistent, constructive and high quality contributions to seminar discussions, demonstrated teamwork and your participation in:

- a) a library research techniques lab ('Smart Research: Effectively Locating Resources'), offered on both January 27 and January 28, 1 to 3:00 pm. The lab has been designed especially for this course and will be conducted by Roberts Library reference librarians Patricia Bellamy, Eveline Houtman and Sam-Chin Li. The purpose of this lab is to help you refine your skills in quickly accessing policy-relevant scholarly, professional and 'gray' sources across fields, disciplines and jurisdictions using the library's powerful search engines and other electronic tools. You will be asked to complete a survey in advance so that the lab can be tailored to class needs.
- b) a 'Writing and Communicating for Decision Making' workshop led by Natasha Mansoor and Jackie Lively, Teaching Assistants for the course (January 13, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., all Sections). This will build on the Briefing Note lessons learned in Prof. Josh Hjartarson's fall workshop with specific application to the assignments required for Putting Policy into Action.

II. Briefing Notes (45%)

This is a two-part, sequential assignment, worth 15 and 30% of your final mark. The first will require you to develop a background assessment of an assigned implementation issue; in the second you will take this further by developing options and a recommended course of action for a decision maker. Each Note will be a maximum of two pages in length (single spaced, 11 point font, standard margins) and be written in a concise, professional style based on what you learned in the above Communications Workshop. Notes are due electronically February 3/4 and March 3/4, 5 p.m. Each Note will be assessed on the quality of your research, your creativity, analytical and problem-solving skills, your ability to appropriately apply concepts covered in class to date and the clarity and focus of your writing.

III. Implementation Plan –Minister's Briefing (40%)

This assignment challenges you to integrate what you have learned in the course and provides you with experience in formulating and communicating to a decision maker rigorous implementation advice on a current policy problem. Your individual mark is the group mark.

Working in a three or four-person project team, you will select a topic from a list prepared by your instructor, research the implementation challenges, develop and assess options for addressing them, and prepare a concise presentation (10-12 power point slides) containing your recommended course of action. For the March 17/18 and 24/25 Briefings, the respective teams will give a 12 to 15- minute presentation of their analysis and recommendations to an invited guest panel, and respond to questions. Members of the class who are not presenting will participate in the discussion through role playing.

The final written products to be submitted by each team are 1) a maximum two page Outline and the research bibliography, submitted in advance of a team meeting that you will set up with your Instructor by early March, and 2) the presentation deck and speaking notes. These documents together are worth 30 out of 40 points, assessed on the quality and originality of your research, the rigour of your options and analysis and the clarity and focus of your writing. The remaining 10 points will be assessed against how well each team communicates and thinks on its feet during the simulated briefing, including your team's ability to field questions posed by the panel in real time.

Late Penalties

Because the knowledge in this course is cumulative, consistent adherence to deadlines is crucial for your learning. You are expected to submit all assignments on time. If you miss a deadline, your grade for this component will be reduced by 3% for the first full late day, including weekends, and 1% for every day late after that. The only exception is when a student meets conditions that will be accepted by the University as meeting conditions for missed exams.

Seminar Schedule and Structure

Each seminar will start promptly at 9:10 a.m. and finish at 12 noon, with one 15-minute break. The class meets by section except for the two plenary sessions where guest speakers will share their insights and experience with you.

Our Expectations of Students

Writing and Communication Skills

The quality of your writing will have a significant impact on your grade. In the world of public policy, whether inside or outside government, the ability to produce short, plain language analysis and advice (one-pagers, briefing notes, think pieces, slide decks, etc.), and to speak to it, is critical to survival. In this course, you are expected to produce clear, logical, concise and well-organized documents that demonstrate your critical and creative thinking, problem solving and communications skills.

Plagiarism

The university administration and faculty, including your instructors, take plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism means presenting work done by another person or source as your own, or using the work of others without acknowledgement. Heavy reliance on one or two resources constitutes plagiarism, as does cutting and pasting from web-based or other documents without proper citation. Any assignment that is plagiarized will be managed according to the U of T Code

of Behaviours on Academic Matters. The U of T web site www.utoronto.ca/writing contains useful tips on how not to plagiarize if you need a refresher in this area.

Accessibility Needs

U of T is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, please speak with your Instructor or contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>.