

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY
MAXINE LEVIN GOODMAN COLLEGE of URBAN AFFAIRS

Course: Urban Policy
Course Number: USA/UST 458
Class Time: Mondays @ 6:00 PM
Email: rsmith@lorainccc.edu

Professor: Ralph J. Smith
Office: LCCC - PS 106
Telephone: 1-800-995-5222, ext. 8712
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REQUIRED TEXT: Dye, Thomas, Understanding Urban Policy, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle, NJ

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an examination of current state and local political policy issues focusing on Ohio; perspectives on the legislative, judicial, and executive branches; as well as tax and spending policies, human services and education delivery systems; and the formulation of public transportation and environmental policies. ***This course is writing across the curriculum course. A grade of C must be earned in this course to meet the requirements of writing across the curriculum.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students should acquire or enhance their skills to be able to:

- 1) describe urban policies
- 2) analyze various aspects of urban policies
- 3) conduct research to produce reliable information for use in writing assignments
- 4) write clearly and concisely in response to various writing assignments in this class
- 5) discuss the process of policy making
- 6) compare intergovernmental relationships as they relate to policy process
- 7) demonstrate the ability to write through several writing assignments, (including a professional policy paper), consistent with the knowledge gained in this class and with the grammatical rules of the English language
- 8) meet the requirements of writing across the curriculum standards: page/word requirements and earn minimum of C in all written assignments in order to obtain writing across the curriculum credit for this course.

ASSIGNMENTS/LATE ASSIGNMENTS

ALL assignments must be submitted to the professor on time and by scheduled due dates. If there is an emergency situation, you should notify the professor and make arrangements to fax the assignment on the due date. Assignments that are late will result in the loss of points for each day the assignment is late. After three days, all points are forfeited. If a student encounters serious illness or death in immediate family, documentation (can be faxed to the professor at 440-366-4128) will be required in order to request an extension of time to complete assignments or tests.

Students who fall behind in reading assignments, written assignments or projects should talk with the professor. If too much time has lapsed, students may wish to withdraw from the course before the final withdrawal date to receive a "W" (See CSU website calendar for official withdrawal dates and other student information).

ASSIGNMENTS/POINTS - Each is identified with maximum points possible

All assignments will be described in written material and appropriate guidance will be given for each. Written assignments should be proofed carefully before turning them in. The quality of your work will be reflected in the grade you earn...grading is evaluated for content, spelling, presentation and grammar. Students must complete all components/assignments in this course in order to pass the course. Failed/missing assignments will lower the student's final grade.

KEY POLICY MEMORANDUM (12 points)

Students will identify a current key policy that is crucial to some important aspect of the future of a city or the state. Assuming the role of executive assistant, key aide or trusted employee, each student will write a memorandum to the mayor or governor urging his/her attention to this particular issue/policy. The policy issue/problem must be clearly identified with realistic, important solutions stated/outlined. This project should be two pages in length. This assignment is designed to help students focus on policy and to help them explore ways to influence change. This project must produce clear and succinct results/solutions. **Due September 17th at the beginning of class.**

Each student should bring a typed copy of his/her memorandum without identification for each student in class. One copy with the student's name should be turned in to the professor. These will be used for discussion (without identification) in class.

FIELD STUDY – (15 points) Students will visit a community meeting to study policy in action

Each student will identify a community meeting in his/her community to attend (city council, commissioners, community forum, political gathering, or other public meeting). One class meeting time (Class time on October 1st—no class) is provided so that students will have time to accomplish this assignment. Students may attend a meeting anytime that it is convenient for them, but the allocated time is available to them. Students will take notes and prepare an outline summary of the meeting attended (two pages). Topics to address in outline/summary: 1) complete information about the meeting: who, what when, where, purpose, policy-related topics addressed or mentioned, and was the meeting productive, successful – or not? This report should be brought to class on October 29th, and students will be prepared to discuss their field study experience that evening. The meeting chosen should have substance and have some relationship to a public policy issue.

FOCUSED RESEARCH AND MAJOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (up to 71 points)

Issues surround us. Very often these issues create problems. Problems can present complex situations that may be resolved with action. Action may ensue in the form of conversation and even heated debate. What follows may result in the development of public policy.

One of the challenges in the field of public policy is that problems and priorities can change. Current events can create havoc in the policy arena. Political agendas can lead policymaking down a long (and sometimes painful) path.

This project is designed to provide students the opportunity to become engaged in a policy issue about which he/she is interested. Each student must select a different focus for the project. The two final stages of this project will provide an opportunity for students to participate in peer review. The outline and description draft will be reviewed by each student

(papers not identified by name) as well as the draft of the paper. In each case, students will bring copies as follows: 1) outline and description draft – bring a copy for each student in class; and 2) four copies of the draft paper. In each case, no names are to be on the documents.

Approval of the research focus project must be given by the professor after students submit a description draft: via a one-page outline and two or three paragraphs that describe the student's plan of action and justification for focusing on the topic selected. Students should not assume approval will be given. Upon receiving positive feedback, students should begin developing the major paper in draft. See special directions below regarding submission of both the outline and justification step and the draft paper. Students will discuss their research findings and paper results in class.

Outline and description draft (16 points) is due October 22nd at the beginning of class (each student will bring copies for each student in the class - typed and without identification. One copy should be presented to the professor with the student's name on it).

Students will: 1) research an urban policy/topic, 2) write about its importance (or lack of) to life today, 3) recommend additions or changes, and 5) develop those changes as recommendations. Each student will write a 12 – 16 page paper (must use 12 point font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins), plus a cover page and a reference page (an appendix may be included as well – not to exceed five pages). A minimum of 6 reliable references are required (these may be from reliable journal articles/research produced and documented; government documents or websites (.gov); books, and current news magazines that are considered reliable. Do not use Wikipedia. It is expected that students will use a variety of resources for this project. If there are questions regarding reliable sources, check with the professor. Students should peruse libraries to identify newly published books focused on related issues. Students must follow American Psychological Association (APA) format for this project. Other guidance will be provided in class.

Draft paper (35 points) is due November 5th at the beginning of class (Again, each student will bring an assigned number of copies of the draft paper (without identification). One copy should be presented to the professor with the student's name on it). In each case we will explore the written documents through group process *without student identification* - this will be explained in detail in class. All documents must be typed and presented in good order.

The final paper (20 points) will be submitted to the professor for final review and grading at the beginning of class on November 19.

All drafts and papers need to be well-presented and completed according to instructions. Deviation from the format will result in loss of significant points.

Further guidance for the major project - each project focus should include:

- statement of the problem (not copied from anything – written in student's own words)
- Current policies related to the problem (additional information can be referenced in the appendix)
- Factors underlying the problem or somehow affecting the problem
- Your proposed policy and specific information about the organizations, institutions, and key people who would need to be involved to make the policy work

- Proposed plan and indicators for assessing the effectiveness of the policy once enacted and implemented
- evidence supporting your proposed policy: (graphs, charts, other illustrative resources). The number of these to be included in the 12 -16 page should not exceed 1 page, however, 3-4 more can be included in an appendix.

EXAMS (30 points each)

A mid term and a final exam will be given (true/false, multiple choice and/or essay questions will be given). The design of each will be announced in class so that students will be better prepared for the exams. The best preparation is to read all assignments thoroughly, make notes and participate in class discussions and projects. The exams will include material from written assignments and material presented in class. *Each* will be worth up to 30 points.

PARTICIPATION (30 points)

It will be necessary for students to read assignments and complete the work assigned weekly. Students should participate in class discussion and projects. Students should expect to exchange information, ask questions or help to clarify issues, provide answers and information. Regular attendance is required in order to be successful in this course. Students who are unable to attend class on a regular basis cannot expect to be successful in this course. Information provided in each session will build upon the initial foundation for this course to enhance the opportunity for students to acquire important information, and to be part of in-class discussions and projects. When students miss a class they miss lecture, media resources, field trips and guest lecturers. It is often impossible to acquire the essence of that which can be acquired only by being present. It will be the student's responsibility to collect information about missed sessions. The professor nor another student will not be expected (or able) to fully recap and provide exactly what is missed...we are talking about catching up on 3 + hours of class time in each weekly meeting. Students should make arrangements with another student in class who takes good notes and who will be willing to share those with students who must be absent.

ARTICLE COLLECTION (12 points)

Another part of participation will be in finding and clipping articles from print media and other sources to share in class. These will be used in discussion. Each student should plan to find a minimum of 6 to bring to class over the first twelve weeks (one every week or two). We will use them as time permits. Students should select articles that are focused on urban policy and that are particularly interesting to him/her. Clippings or copies should have the student's name written on them with the source and date (if not part of the document). This part of the course is planned to help students to follow urban policies and related activities and actions.

EARNING POINTS TOWARD THE FINAL GRADE

Students must complete all assignments made in this course in order to complete the course and earn a passing grade. If any assignments are not completed, the entire number of points assigned will be lost plus a penalty of ½ of the total points possible.

Key Policy Memorandum	@ 12 points
Field Study	@ 15 points
Focused Research Project	
Outline and Description Draft	@ 16 points
Draft	@ 35 points

Final Paper	@ 20 points
Mid Term Exam	@ 30 points
Final Exam	@ 30 points
Participation	@ 30 points
Article Collection	@ 12 points

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE 200

Grades may be earned by the accumulation of points *and* completion of all assignments (Points will be deducted for any assignments not completed). Again, a grade of C or higher must be earned to meet the Writing Across the Curriculum requirements. A student cannot pass this course without completing assignments:

200 - 190	= A
189 - 180	= A-
179 - 170	= B+
169 - 160	= B
159 - 150	= B-
149 - 140	= C+
139 - 130	= C
129 - 120	= C-
119 - 110	= D+
109 - 100	= D
99 and below	= F

OTHER INFORMATION THAT MAY BE IMPORTANT TO YOU

It is the responsibility of each student to complete all assignments and meet all requirements of the course... Cheating on tests, using the work of others, and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students found in violation of this policy will have earned an F in this course.

The textbook assignments must be read. Students will not be successful in this course if they do not keep up with reading and assigned work. Students are responsible for all reading assignment material. Lecture material will supplement the textbook. While you may find some overlap in what I provide, do not assume I will address all material contained in reading assignments, the textbook readings are up to each student to complete.

If there are adjustments in projects or reading assignments, notice will be announced during class. Students should pay attention to announcements of due dates, special assignments or other information provided.

Cell phones, beepers and any other noise makers should be turned off or left at home. Anything that makes noise is considered intrusive and will not be tolerated in this classroom and course. Should a student have a pending situation or emergency, those should be discussed before class with the professor. Arrangements can be made for serious issues.

Tape recorders or other recording devices will not be allowed, so that students will have the freedom to discuss serious policy issues and related information without fear of repercussion.

No visitors will be allowed without advance permission of the professor. No children anytime.

Special Needs - If you have special needs or disabilities, please contact the office for special needs.

IF YOU ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY, PLEASE LET ME KNOW! If, for some reason, you fall behind, communicate with me. I provided you with email, phone number (and voice mail). If I am not in, leave a message and your phone number and times you may be reached.

YOUR SUCCESS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME...I WANT EVERY STUDENT WHO WANTS TO BE SUCCESSFUL TO HAVE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL.

Tentative Schedule (Subject to change by professor): *Note dates contained in syllabus for completion and submission of assignments*

August 27 – First class session: get acquainted; overview of course; discussion of syllabus, text, and course requirements; discussion and assignment: read chapters 1, Policy Analysis and 2, Models of Politics

September 3-Labor Day Holiday—no class.

September 10 - Read chapters 3, The Policymaking Process and 4, Criminal Justice.

September 17 – Key Policy Memorandum Due (see requirements for completing and bringing copies to class), Key Policy Reviews, Read chapter 5, Health and Welfare

September 24 –Read chapters 6, Education and 7, Economic Policy

October 1–**No class.** Time may be used to attend meeting. Read chapters 8, Tax Policy and 9, International Trade

October 8-Columbus Day Holiday-No class

October 15– Mid term exam - Read chapters 10, Environmental Policy and 11, Civil Rights

October 22- Outline and Description Draft due at beginning of class (See requirements for completing and bringing copies to class) – Read chapters 12, American Federalism and 13, Defense Policy

October 29-- Field study discussion- Read chapter 14, Homeland Security

November 5-- Read chapter 15, Policy Evaluation –Bring paper draft to class. See syllabus for copy requirements.

November 12-Veterans Day-No class

November 19-Final papers due- Make certain they are in good order

November 26- More urban policy - TBA

December 3- More urban policy – TBA

December 10-Final test