

POSC 135 - Public Policy Analysis

Fall 2008

Prof. John McAdams

417 Physics

Phone: 288-3425

Office Hours:

MW 4-5, T 10-noon, F 1-3

(and by appointment)

Course Objectives:

The course will focus on and attempt to bring together two separate questions.

First, what are good policies? Just what makes a policy “good” anyway. We will analyze policy in terms of economic efficiency – maximizing the goods and services available to members of society, and equality – how these goods and services are distributed. We will examine several apparently disparate policy areas.

Secondly, the policy-making process in each of the policy areas will be surveyed. Students are encouraged to evaluate the extent to which the political process in various policy areas is conducive to rational policy making.

Requirements:

One paper will be required which will analyze a particular program or issue of the student’s choice. Since this is a “writing development” course, students will be required to get an early start on the paper, submit an outline to the instructor for comments, and then submit a draft for further comments. Deadlines: discuss paper with instructor (Oct. 1st), submit outline and list of sources to instructor (Oct. 22nd), submit draft to instructor (Nov. 12th), submit final paper (Dec. 1st). There will be a penalty for skipping or being late on any of these steps. The paper should be 13-17 pages, 12 point Courier type, double spaced, one inch margins all around.

There will be two essay exams during the term and an essay final. The grade will consist of the exams, 20% each, final 30%, paper 30%. There will be a study guide and review sessions for each exam.

Course Outline:

- I. INTRODUCTION -- The Virtues of Markets
 - A. Miller, Benjamin, and North, *The Economics of Public Issues* (15th Edition), Part One, Part Two, Part Seven.
 - B. Jason Furman, “Wal-Mart: A Progressive Success Story,” Center for American Progress, <http://www.americanprogress.org/>
 - C. Thomas Friedman, *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* (selections on reserve).

II. The Ethical Critique of Markets

1. Arthur Okun, *Equality and Efficiency: The Big Tradeoff*, Chapter 1-2.
2. John McAdams, "The Anti-Policy Analysts," *Policy Studies Journal*, September 1984.
3. Steven Kelman, "Ethical Theory and the Case for Concern About Charges," in *What Price Incentives?*
4. John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus* (entire).
5. Steve Chapman, "The Truth About the Pay Gap," *RealClearPolitics*, April 29, 2007.
6. Tammy O. Tengs, et al., "Five-Hundred Life-Saving Interventions and Their Cost-Effectiveness," *Risk Analysis*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1995.

III. ECONOMIC REGULATION

A. Policy

1. Reuven Brenner, "Land of Opportunity," *Forbes*, October 12, 1998.
2. Joseph Nocera, "Two Cheers for Red Tape," *Fortune*, May 26, 1997.
3. Miller, Benjamin, and North, *The Economics of Public Issues* (15th Edition), Part Three, Part Four, Part Five, Part Six.
4. Michael Freeman, "The Tort Mess," *Forbes*, May 13, 2002.
5. Andrew Ferguson, "A Nation of Dim Bulbs," *The Weekly Standard*, 12/31/2007, Volume 013, Issue 16
6. Charles Schultze, *The Public Use of Private Interest*, entire

B. Politics

1. James Q. Wilson, *American Government* (10th Edition), Chap. 17.
2. James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy*, Chapter 7 "Constraints"
3. Steven Malanga, "America's Worst Urban Program," *City Journal*, Spring 2005.

IV. SEEKING EQUALITY: WELFARE AND POVERTY

A. A. Policy

1. Okun, pp. 88-100
2. Sheldon Danziger & Daniel H. Weinberg, (eds.) *Fighting Poverty: What Works and What Doesn't*, Chap. 4,6,7
3. Sheldon H. Danziger, Gary Sandefur & Daniel Weinberg, *Confronting Poverty*, Chapter 3
4. George Gilder, *Men and Marriage*, Chaps. 1-6, 8, 9.
5. Amy L. Sherman, "The Changing Face of Welfare," *Family*, Nov.-Dec. 1999
6. Melissa G. Pardue, "Sharp Reduction in Black Child Poverty Due to Welfare Reform," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, June 12, 2003.

7. Jay Hein, "Welfare Reform's Next Five Years," *American Outlook*, Spring 2003
8. Christopher Jencks, "Liberal Lessons From Welfare Reform," *The American Prospect*, Summer 2002.
9. Robert Rector and Kirk A. Johnson, "The Effects of Marriage and Maternal Education in Reducing Child Poverty" Washington: The Heritage Foundation, 2002.

B. Politics

1. Danziger & Weinberg, Chap. 13
2. James Q. Wilson, *American Government* (10th Edition), Ch. 19.

V. SCHOOL CHOICE

A. Policy

1. John E. Chubb and Terry M. Moe, "Politics, Markets, and the Organization of Schools, in the *American Political Science Review*, December 1988.
2. Judith Pearson, *Myths of Educational Choice*, Ch. 4-9.
3. Paul T. Hill, "Doing School Choice Right," *American Journal of Education*, Feb. 2005.
4. Mark Schneider; Paul Teske; Melissa Marshall; Christine Roch, "Shopping for Schools: In the Land of the Blind, The One-Eyed Parent May be Enough" *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 42, No. 3. (Jul., 1998), pp. 769-793.

VI. CRIME AND JUSTICE

1. James Q. Wilson, *Thinking About Crime* (Revised Edition), Chaps. 1, 3.
2. James Q. Wilson & George L. Kelling, "Broken Windows," *The Atlantic*, March 1982.
3. Christina Nifong, "One Man's Theory is Cutting Crime in Urban Streets," *Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 18, 1997.
4. Karin Fischer, "Is Locking 'em Up the Answer?," *Washington Monthly*, January/February 1998.
5. Steven D. Levitt, "The Effect of Prison Population Size on Crime Rates: Evidence from Prison Overcrowding Litigation," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 1996.
6. Eli Lehrer, "Crime Without Punishment," *The Weekly Standard*, May 27, 2002
7. James Q. Wilson, "What to Do about Crime," *Commentary*, September 1994
8. John McAdams, "Does Wisconsin Lock Up Too Many Blacks?" *The Wisconsin Interest*, Volume 16 (2007).