

**Boston University**  
**The Future of Public Policy**

Fall – 2015  
PO 520  
Thursday: 3-6pm  
Location: EPC 203

Version: 8/30

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**Course Description:**

This seminar explores the future of several major public policy topics (e.g., food, privacy, property, higher education, genetic technology, human migration, crime and punishment, arts, democratic nation building, environment and climate change, urban planning, employment) by discussing, analyzing, and constructing conceptually contrasting policy possibilities using the methodology developed by the Interactivity Foundation. All reports can be accessed from Interactivity Foundation's website: <  
<http://www.interactivityfoundation.org/resources-downloads/discussion-reports/>>

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

*Attendance and participation (30%):*

Required, unless you are sick or have an official BU conflict. You must notify me of your absence in advance. (Repeatedly being late might also accumulate to an absence.) Participation is crucial, and this requires that you keep up with the course readings.

- News presentation: you will be assigned to present news or current events *once* during the semester. You will need to send out the web link of the news article to the entire class by noon before the day you present. Your presentation should be about 10 minutes and should be related to the topic of the week. Describe what happened and why this is important. (5%)
- Attend two public policy related events during the semester and email me three things you've learned from each event. Such events can vary from a talk or conference on a particular topic to a public event on a particular issue. Check government websites for public hearings, university talks and seminars. (5%)
- You are expected to attend all classes and actively contribute to the discussions. Absences may be excused for medical, religious, official and personal reasons. Absences for illness for more than two days require a medical certificate. Absences for religious observances and for family or personal reasons require documentation. Absence for purposes of representing the University in authorized athletic events or officially sponsored activities are excused by notification from your sponsoring department or activity. The stated University policy reads: "Any student who has been excessively absent from a course may be required to withdraw from that course without credit." I define "excessively absent" for this course to be three absences, excused or not. (20%)

*Postings to Blackboard (30%):*

Students are required to post at least *five* short “thought papers” on the Blackboard bulletin board over the course of the semester, and to *comment* on at least *five* thought papers posted by other students (a minimum of 10 postings). The postings can reflect the readings of the week or introduce debates, news articles, sources, websites and opinions related to that week’s topic. The length of the posting can be as short as a few sentences but has to provide a coherent thought.

*Research paper and group project (40%):*

- Individual country research paper (15%): due on **Thursday, Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>**. Each student will be assigned to a small group and the group members will decide together a public policy topic. Individually, students will need to each pick a different country and present:
  - Background (government institutions, major stake holders and power balance on the issue, policy making process, etc.)
  - Important relevant statistics
  - Issue history and evolution
  - Important upcoming events (if there is any)
  - Anything interesting or worth-noting (scholarly work recently written about the issue, typical case of a debate, etc.)
  - A list of major concerns (try to brainstorm as many as possible, creativity is encouraged here)
  - Analysis and thoughts on the topic
  - **Make an argument**
    - ➔ Citation with actual electronic files, URLs (if it has to be a book, attach an amazon link)
    - ➔ Subtitles, graphs and illustrations are encouraged
    - ➔ Min 5 pages, Max 10 pages for the individual portion (12 font, double space, not including graphs and charts)
- Group project (25%)
  - Use the IF method to ask questions and raise concerns, generate policy possibilities, explore potential implementations and consequences, revise the policy possibilities. (10%)
  - Group presentation on the possibilities (5%)
  - Scribe notes (5%)
    - What was discussed
    - Why you made certain decisions
    - Did the rules work or not
  - Creativity, effectiveness, and management of the project (5%)
    - Decision making process
    - Necessary functions and institutions
    - Awareness and adjustments
    - Effective resource mobilization
    - Meeting attendance
    - Meeting schedule (discussions on individual countries, theme selection, comparison and material gathering, etc.)
    - Communication with the instructor (apply for time needed)

at the end of the class, default 30 min; representative; written document, etc.)

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to do their own work and to accurately and honestly give credit for information, ideas, and words obtained elsewhere. Plagiarism will be dealt with strictly according to the Academic Conduct Code (<http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergrad-resources/code/>); please review the website for examples of what counts as plagiarism so you know how to avoid it. If you have questions or concerns about how to properly cite outside sources, feel free to contact me and I will be happy to assist you.

### **Course Outline**

(Articles with \* are optional and are for reference only)

9/3 **No Class** (Professor at APSA conference)

Some foundational articles from other entry level public policy classes:

Adolf Gundersen, "A Brief Description of Interactivity Foundation's Sanctuary and Public Discussions", Interactivity Foundation (December, 2007)

Eugene Bardach, "Introduction", *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*. New York: Chatham House Publishers (2009)

Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons", *Science*, Vol.162, (December 13 1968)

9/10 Introduction

Alan Jacobs and Scott Matthews. "Why Do Citizens Discount the Future? Public Opinion and the Timing of Policy Consequences." *British Journal of Political Science* 42 (4 October 2012): 903-935.

Jane Mansbridge, "Beyond the tragedy of the Commons" *Perspectives on politics*, Vol.8/No.2 June 2010 pp.590-593

Elinor, Ostrom. *Governing the Commons*. NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990. Selection

9/17 Privacy

Susan Landau, "Making Sense from Snowden: What's Significant in the NSA Surveillance Revelations", *IEEE Computer and Reliability Societies* (July/August 2013)

*Engaging Privacy and Information Technology in a Digital Age*, James Waldo, Herbert S. Lin, and Lynette I. Millett, Editors, (Washington D.C.: National Research Council of the National Academies, 2007) pp. 19-53, 155-176

Report: *Privacy and privacy rights* (Interactivity Foundation, 2010)

9/24 Food

Marion Nestle, *Food Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) pp. 1-28.

Jeffrey Sachs, *The End of Poverty* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005) pp. 226-243.

"Food, Inc." < <http://documentaryaddict.com/Food+Inc-2174-documentary.html> >

Visit a local supermarket

Report: *Food, what might be for dinner?* (Interactivity Foundation, 2011)

10/1 Environment

Nicholas Stern, *The Economics of Climate Change: The Stern Review*. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007)  
William D. Nordhaus, “A Review of the ‘Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change’”, *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol.45, No.3 (sep., 2007), pp.686-702  
Adil Najam, “Developing Countries and Global Environmental Governance: From Contestation to Participation to Engagement”, *International Environmental Agreements* (2005) 5: 303-321  
Report: The Human Impact on Climate Change: Opportunities and Challenges (Interactivity Foundation 2013)

#### 10/8 Property

Edward J. Mccaffery, “Must we have the right to waste?” *New Essays in the Legal and Political Theory of Property*, Stephen R. Munzer Ed. (Los Angeles, Cambridge University Press, 2001) pp. 76-105  
Philip Keefer and Stephen Knack, “Polarization, politics and property rights: Links between inequality and growth”, (Washington D.C.: Public Choice 111: 127-154, 2002)  
Report: Property (Interactivity Foundation, 2009)

#### 10/15 Politics and International Consequences

Marie Ann Eisenstein, “The politics of tolerance”, *Religion and the Politics of Tolerance*, (Baylor University Press, 2008) pp.1-12  
Hamid Karimianpour, *Nation Building or Democracy By Other Means*, (New York: Agora Publishing 2011) pp.27-46  
Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime”, in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169–187.  
Report: Democratic Nation Building (Interactivity Foundation, 2011)

#### 10/22 Human Migration

Nana K. Poku and David T. Graham, “Introduction”, *Migration, Globalisation and Human Security*, David T. Graham and Nana K. Poku ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2000)  
Nana K. Poku, Neil Renwick and John Glenn, “Human security in a globalizing world”, *Migration, Globalisation and Human Security*, David T. Graham and Nana K. Poku ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2000)  
\*Migrant Workers’ Rights”, *Migration and human rights: The United Nations convention on Migrant Workers’ rights*, Pyszard Cholewinski, Paul De Guchteneire, and Antoine Pécoud, ed. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp.1-46  
Report: Human Migration (Interactivity Foundation 2013)

#### 10/29 Work and Employment

Margarita Estevez-Abe, Torben Iversen, and David Soskice, “Social Protection and the Formation of Skills”, *Varieties of Capitalism*, Peter Hall and David Soskice ed. 2001  
Julia Lynch, “Benefits for the unemployed: young and old in the fortress labor market”, *Age in the Welfare State*. Cambridge University Press (2006) pp. 108-138  
Report: Rewarding Work (Interactivity Foundation 2009)

#### 11/5 Public Service and Urban Planning

Jason Corburn, *Toward the Healthy City: People, Places, and the Politics of Urban Planning*, (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 2009) pp.1-24

Yasser Elsheshtawy, “Redrawing Boundaries: Dubai, an Emerging Global City”, *Planning Middle Eastern Cities: An urban kaleidoscope in a globalizing world*,

Yasser Elsheshtawy ed. (London: Routledge 2004) pp.169-199

Report: Shaping our towns and cities (Interactivity Foundation 2014)

11/12 Crime and Punishment

Julian V. Roberts & Loretta J. Stalans, “Crime, Criminal Justice, and Public Opinion”, *The Handbook of Crime and Punishment*, Michael Tonry ed. (Oxford University Press, 1998) pp.31-57

Derren Brown, The Heist < <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bh0e-Qv-PJw>>

Report: Crime and punishment (Interactivity Foundation 2013)

11/19 Human Genetic Technology

John H. Evans, *Contested Reproduction: Genetic Technology, Religion, and Public Debate*, (Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 2010) pp. 1-55

Herbert Gottweis, “German Politics of Genetic Engineering and Its Deconstruction”, *Social Studies of Science*, Vol. 25, No.2 (May, 1995), pp. 195-235

NIH Guidelines on Human Genetic Technology, 2009

(<http://stemcells.nih.gov/policy/pages/2009guidelines.aspx>)

Report: Anticipating human genetic technology (Interactivity Foundation 2009)

12/3 Higher Education

Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise (The World Bank 2000) pp.15-36, 91-96

Bruce Johnstone, “The economics and politics of cost sharing in higher education: comparative perspectives”, *Economics of Education Review*, 23 (2004) 403-410

Report: The Future of Higher Education (Interactivity Foundation, 2012)

12/10 last day of class

Presentations and wrap-up