Description:
This course will help you understand the political dimensions of the US policymaking process. Please note that this is not a course about what the "best" public policy for a given subject would be. Rather, it provides students with a framework for understanding why we have the particular public policies that we do in the United States. Specifically, we will examine how interests compete within institutions to transform ideas into public policies. At the end of this course, you should be able to explain why legislatures often enact policies that differ significantly from the recommendations of policy analysts concerned with "good" public policy. Understanding this, in turn, should help you to more effectively analyze and advocate for policies.

While the course does not have any formal prerequisites, I assume you are familiar with the material covered in a standard course on American politics and government (how the institutions and electoral system work). ESM241 fulfills this. If you have any questions about your preparation for the course, feel free to contact me. Note: the italicized sessions will be rescheduled.

Course Requirements:
Each student will choose a case study on which to focus for the entire course. The choice of topics is yours, but please be sure that you will be able to complete the assignments on that topic. If you have questions about suitability of a topic or need suggestions, feel free to speak with me.

You will write short (1-2 page) response papers three different sessions during the quarter. I will post questions you may answer or you can always apply the readings to the case you have chosen for the quarter. These short response papers will be due Monday by noon for Tuesday classes and Wednesday by noon for Thursday classes. Everyone should briefly read these responses before coming to class in order to be better able to contribute to the discussions.

Additionally, there will be three short (2-4 page) writing assignments throughout the quarter that contribute to the writing of a final policy analysis paper. The policy brief will serve as an introduction to the policy you have chosen. The legislator profile will investigate the electoral incentives of a politician to help you understand voting behavior on your chosen topic. Finally, a summary of poll results will provide an overall assessment of public opinion on your topic.
The information from these papers combined with other research will serve as the basis for your final policy analysis paper. This paper will synthesize the information you have learned from research and class to explain why we observe the particular policy outcome in your chosen area.

Three Response Papers: 15%
Policy Brief: 15%
Legislator Profile: 15%
Summary of Poll Results: 10%
Participation: 10%
Final Policy Analysis Paper: 35%

Policies:

Gender and Sex Discrimination Policy and Student Support: Under Title IX, university students are protected from harassment and discrimination based on gender and sex. If a student feels uncomfortable or in need of support at any time related to their gender, sex, and/or sexual orientation, please contact your TA and/or course instructor immediately. If a student would like to disclose information related to pronouns, name changes, or identities, we encourage you to do so. UCSB's Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity on the 3rd floor of the Student Resource Building is also available to advocate and be of support to students.

Course Schedule:

INTRODUCTION

Session 1: Ideas, Institutions and Interests: A Framework for Public Policy Analysis

IDEAS

Session 2: Class cancelled

Session 3: Utilitarianism, Economics, and the Role of the State

Justice and Environmental Ethics

Session 4:
- John Rawls.1971. Justice. [Sections 3-6, 11-12, 17, 24, 26, 40]

Case Selection Due

Session 5: The Role of Science


Section 6: Case Study on Environmental Justice – tentatively 1:45-3 on 4/17


INSTITUTIONS

Session 7: The Institutions


Session 8: Members of Congress as Interested Participants


Policy Brief Due

Session 9: Parties

  http://prq.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/54/2/245

Session 10: Pivotal Politics
  http://mccubbins.ucsd.edu/ARTe5.PDF

Session 11: International Dimensions
  http://books.nap.edu/books/0309070902/html/65.html#pagetop
• Judith A. Layzer. 2006. The Environmental Case: Translating Values into Policy. [chapter 11]
  Legislator Profile due

INTERESTS

Session 12: The Public as Interested Participants
  http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-0554%28199509%2989%3A3%3C543%3ADR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Q
• Mark Dowie. 1995. Losing Ground. [chapter 8]

Session 13: Public Opinion and (Changing) Behavior
• Stokes, Leah C. 2015. “Electoral Backlash against Climate Policy: A Natural Experiment on Retrospective Voting and Local Resistance to Public Policy.” American Journal of Political Science:
• Howe, Peter D., Matto Mildenberger, Jennifer R. Marlon, and Anthony Leiserowitz. 2015. “Geographic Variation in Opinions on Climate Change at State and Local Scales in the USA.” Nature Climate Change 5(6): 596–603.
Session 14: Problem Definition and Agenda Setting


**Summary of Poll Results Due**

Session 15: Interests Broadly

- *Federalist 10* and *Federalist 51*, online at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/fed.asp

Section 16: Interest Groups and the Public


Session 17: Interest Groups and Campaign Contributions


Session 18: Interest Groups and Lobbying


Session 19: Presentation of cases

Session 20: Presentation of cases

**Final Paper Due**