

Public Policy BDP 101

Prof. Eric L. McDaniel

Course Information

Unique	Meeting Days	Time	Classroom
61381	Tuesdays	10-12	FAC 4

Professor McDaniel Information

email:

Office Hours: 2-5 Thursdays Batts 4.122

Teaching Assistant

email:

Office Hours:

1 Forum Seminar: Introduction to Public Policy

This eight-week forum seminar, part of the Bridging Disciplines Program, will introduce students to the institutions and interests that shape public policy at multiple levels, from international governance to state and local government. At the same time, students will be able to acquire an overview of a number of specific policy areas, ranging from immigration reform and international development to entitlement policy and the conduct of foreign affairs by the president. In addition to deepening their knowledge and understanding of U.S. public policy, students will develop valuable personal skills in research, analysis, writing, and public speaking. Students will benefit from the opportunity to converse with guest lecturers who are eminent authorities in their fields of study or practice.

2 Course Objectives and Evaluation

Although this is a brief course, the objectives are ambitious. No matter your initial level of understanding of public policy, you will finish this seminar with a combination of enhanced knowledge and individual skills in writing, and public speaking. Because there are several course objectives, I will evaluate your performance using several measures.

2.1 Final Exam 30% Due March 10

Following the final class on March 3, the final exam will be available on Canvas at 5 p.m. The completed exam must be uploaded to Canvas by the following Monday, March 10, at 9 am. The exam will take the form of an essay, written by your choice of one of two essay topics. The word count for the exam will be 1000-1200 words. This will be an open book exam, meaning that you will have access to all of the course materials. I am interested in how you apply what you have learned in the course to a particular issue of public policy. Your essay should refer to particular readings or speaker presentations only to the extent that they support or pose problems for your argument. The purpose of the final exam essay is to measure your ability to think creatively about a real-world public policy issue, distinguish relevant from irrelevant scholarship, use citations to

support your proposals and interpretations, and express yourself clearly and persuasively.

2.2 Policy Memo 40% Due March 3

Policymakers often rely on brief informative policy memos to provide them with essential information and specific recommendations for action. In this exercise, you will act as a staffer or other policy adviser to a policymaker, on the basis of a scenario that you will choose in discussion with Professor McDaniel. Following the template for policy memos that we will discuss in class and the examples that will be provided, you will summarize the issue you have chosen and propose the course of action that the policymaker should pursue. Like the final exam essay, the policy memo will test your abilities as an analyst and your creativity as a public policy thinker. The policy memo will be 1000-1200 words in length. The first draft of the policy memo will be due by 5 pm on Friday, February 6. The drafts will be returned with comments by Tuesday, February 10. The final draft of the policy memo will be due at 10 AM Tuesday, March 3.

2.3 Policy Memo Presentation 10% Due February 24 and March 3

One personal skill that is essential to success in all professions, not just those related to public policy, is the ability to speak well in public. On the last two class days, you will have approximately five (5) minutes to summarize your policy memo to an audience consisting of your fellow students and Professor McDaniel. In advance of the presentations, we will discuss the do's and don'ts of public speaking and how best to practice a public presentation on your own.

2.4 Individual Questions for Speakers 10%

Each student will submit three questions based on the readings that could be asked of guest speakers or Professor McDaniel (in classes in which there is no guest speaker). The three questions will be uploaded by each student to an Assignment on Canvas created by Professor McDaniel in advance of the class in which the speaker (or Professor McDaniel) discusses the readings. The sets of three questions must be uploaded to the Canvas assignment page for that week by 5 PM on the Monday before. Professor McDaniel will select a few of the questions to ask the speaker (or himself). The questions will be graded on the basis of their appropriateness and thoughtfulness. There will be no penalty if your question is not among those chosen by Professor McDaniel for a particular class. Professor McDaniel will make every attempt to allow everyone in the class to ask at least one question during the course, time permitting. After being assigned by Professor McDaniel to ask a speaker a question, students will not be chosen to do so again, but all students must submit three written questions each week. In order to receive full credit for the question submissions, students must submit the questions on time and attend class.

2.5 Class Participation 10%

The ability to participate in discussions and debates is a valuable skill this class can help you develop. Professor McDaniel is committed to ensuring that all voices are heard and that all viewpoints are engaged and respected. You cannot participate if you do not attend the class.

93-100%	A	83-86%	B	73-76%	C	63-66%	D
90-92%	A-	80-82%	B-	70-72%	C-	60-63%	D-
87-89%	B+	77-79%	C+	67-69%	D+	0-59%	F

3 Course readings

No books are required. All course materials are available online.

1. Most will be on Google Scholar which can be accessed through the UT Library webpage (www.lib.utexas.edu)
2. Others are available on Canvas

4 Expectations

4.1 Preparation

Doing well in this class requires that students are informed and prepared. Therefore, you will be expected to complete the readings before class meets. This course covers a large amount of material in a short amount of time. If you do not keep up with the readings, your grade will reflect your preparation. Below are a set of questions you should be able to answer regarding each class reading. Questions you should be able to answer about each reading

1. What is the central question or statement of the author?
2. What is the author's argument?
 - (a) Are there any specific hypotheses?
 - (b) Is the author refuting the findings of someone else?
3. Is the author's argument valid?
4. What evidence does the author use to support her argument?
5. Is the author's evidence valid?
6. Is the author's argument and data similar or different from other readings?
7. Is the author able to support her argument?
 - (a) Does the author confirm her hypotheses?
8. What questions remain unanswered?

4.2 Professionalism

This is an academic environment. Therefore, I ask that you minimize unnecessary disruptions. This includes (but is not limited to) side conversations and cell phone use. If you come to class late or must leave early, please do so quietly. I also ask you to be proactive if any conflict occurs. This means notifying me ahead of time if you are unable to meet the course's requirements.

4.3 Ground Rules

Because this course will sometimes deal with sensitive material, it is imperative that we set a series of ground rules.

1. Respect others. There will be times when you disagree with an idea that has been presented to the class. Although you have the right to disagree with someone, you must remember to challenge the idea and not the person.
2. Listen carefully. The purpose of this course is to present and discuss different ideas. To reap the benefits of such an exchange, you must be willing to pay attention to what others have to say.
3. Think before speaking. Refrain from making broad, general, and/or unsubstantiated comments. Make sure that you use evidence and provide a rationale for your statements.
4. Maintain the dignity of the academic environment. Your ideas should be presented using Standard English, minus the use of any profanity.
5. Raise your hand. This helps to maintain order in the classroom and helps to ensure that everyone has a chance to talk.
6. Be courteous. Refrain from interrupting or engaging in a private conversation while others are speaking. Also, limit disruptive behavior, such as reading the newspaper, personal grooming, etc.

4.4 Recording of Lectures

In advance, written permission is required to record classroom lectures, discussions, or presentations (“lectures”). When granted, permission to record lectures is subject to the limitations set forth in this policy. Violations of this policy may constitute copyright infringement in violation of federal or state law and may be subject to University disciplinary action.

- Definitions

1. Course Materials mean lecture notes, outlines, slides, PowerPoint presentations, readings, or other content made available to students by the instructor or presenter, or through any University online learning system.
2. Recording means a video or audio replication or photographic image recorded on devices including, but not limited to, audio recorders, video recorders, cell phones, Smartphones, digital cameras, media players, computers, or other devices that record images or sound.

- Requirements and Limitations

1. **Advance Written Permission:** Recording of classroom lectures is prohibited unless advance written permission is obtained from the class instructor and any guest presenter(s). An instructor may provide such permission to an entire class as part of the course syllabus or other written description of a course. Students who require recording or other adaptations of lectures as a reasonable accommodation for a disability should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) in advance of the lecture to obtain permission for recording.

In the event that permission to record classroom lectures is granted, the professor may notify all students, speakers, and other lecture attendees in advance that recording may occur. Every effort should be made to protect the confidentiality of a student with a disability who is being granted an accommodation, i.e. the professor will not name the student who is doing the recording when it is due to a disability accommodation.

2. **Limitations on Use of Recordings and Materials:** Permission to allow lecture recording is not a transfer of any copyrights in the recording or related course materials. Such recordings and materials may be used only for individual or group study with other students enrolled in the same class and may not be reproduced, transferred, distributed, or displayed in any public or commercial manner. Students must destroy recordings at the end of the semester in which they are enrolled in the class.

4.5 Procedures for Dealing with Grade/Evaluation Concerns

Grade/evaluation concerns will only be considered if the following procedure is followed:

- All grade complaints must be TYPED and must clearly express the student's specific concerns. These written statements must be accompanied by citations of support from course materials, i.e. readings, textbook, and/or lecture notes, to ensure accuracy.
- Written statements may be submitted for consideration AFTER one week has passed since the assignment was returned to students. This allows the student time to re-read his/her answers and think carefully about what improvements could have been made.
- Grade complaints will not be considered once two weeks have passed. For example, if I return a graded assignment on Thursday February 14, students must submit a complaint BEFORE Thursday February 28. Once class ends on that Thursday, no complaints will be considered for that assignment.
- Since class time is limited, we will only answer questions or concerns during scheduled office hours. You will need to file the grievance with the person who graded your exam or assignment and in addition, you will need to meet with them to discuss the grievance.
- Finally, submitting a grade grievance will result in a complete re-grade of the assignment.

4.6 Student Rights & Responsibilities

You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.

- You have a right to respect.
- You have a right to be assessed and rated fairly.
- You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- You have a right to meaningful and equal participation and to self-organize groups to improve your learning environment.
- You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people. No student shall be isolated, excluded, or diminished in any way.

With these rights come responsibilities:

- You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, communicating with the teaching team, and others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
- You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others.
- Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of the experiences of your peers’.
- You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and speaking up when someone is excluded.
- You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team responsible as well.

4.7 Personal Pronoun Preference

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics that deal with differences in race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name different from what appears on the roster and by the gender pronouns that you use. Please inform me of this preference early in the semester so that I can make appropriate changes to my records.

4.8 E-mail communication

Prof. McDaniel and the teaching assistant respond only to emails if there is an extremely extenuating circumstance. If you have an issue that you need to discuss with them, please attend office hours. If you cannot attend office hours, you can make an appointment. Please be aware that if you make an appointment to meet with Prof. McDaniel or the teaching assistant outside of office hours and do not show up, there will be a grade penalty. Any grievances involving the class must be handled during office hours. Make sure to check the syllabus or Canvas first before sending an e-mail. In many cases, they will answer your question. Finally, you are required to use proper etiquette when sending e-mail messages. For tips on proper etiquette in e-mail, visit <http://www.101email etiquettetips.com/>.

4.9 Canceled Classes

Periodically, the class may be canceled. The class will be informed of these dates and will continue to be responsible for the readings on that day.

4.10 Canvas

The syllabus, course assignments, and class announcements are posted on Canvas for reference. In addition, a portion of the course reading will also be available on Canvas. In special cases, the portions of the lecture notes will be available on Canvas. Make sure to regularly check Canvas for announcements and assignments. Before you contact us with a question about the class, make sure to check Canvas first.

4.11 Excused Absences

An absence from class will only be excused if proper documentation is presented from a university representative. If you have an emergency that prevents you from attending class, please contact the Dean of Students to obtain documentation. In the case of planned activities, the documentation must be presented at least two weeks prior to your scheduled absence. I will not accept a planned activity as a valid excuse for an absence after the fact. In the event of unexpected circumstances, the documentation must be turned in within a week of your return.

4.12 Make-up Exams

Students will only be allowed to take the make-up exam if they have an excused absence.

4.13 Pass/Fail Policy

If a student wishes to take the class pass/fail, the student must have a final grade greater than 73% to receive a pass.

4.14 Changes to the Course

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus to better facilitate the needs of the course.

5 University Policies

5.1 Academic Integrity

Each student in the course is expected to adhere to the University of Texas Honor Code: “As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.” Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT. Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous classes), you must cite your sources. Otherwise, you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT’s Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address: <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/standardsconduct.php>

The University defines scholastic dishonesty in the following way:

- “According to the Institutional Rules, scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and falsifying academic records.” For a detailed explanation of the University’s honor code and the definition of plagiarism, please refer to the following website <https://provost.utexas.edu/2023/09/06/introducing-our-new-ut-honor-code/>.
- In the event a student violates the University policy on scholastic dishonesty, he or she will be subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

5.2 Religious Holy Day Observance

By UT Austin policy, you must notify your instructor of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project to observe a religious holy day, you will have the opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after absence.

5.3 University Resources for Students

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, let me know as soon as possible. Together, we will develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There are also a range of resources on campus:

5.4 Services for Students with Disabilities

This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329- 3986 (video phone). <https://disability.utexas.edu/sample-page/>

5.5 Counseling and Mental Health Center

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or someone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings of anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support <http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html>.

5.6 The Sanger Learning Center

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of the Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, academic peer coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <https://undergradcollege.utexas.edu/student-success/sanger-learning-center> or call 512-471-3614. The Sanger Learning Center is located at JES A332.

1. Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

2. Libraries: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

3. ITS: <https://it.utexas.edu/students>
4. Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

5.7 Important Safety Information

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

5.8 Title IX Reporting

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex- and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of university relevant policies.

Faculty and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <https://titleix.utexas.edu/> or contact the Title IX Office at titleix@austin.utexas.edu.

5.9 Emergency Evacuation

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <https://emergencymanagement.utexas.edu/> Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. The nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students who require assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: www.utexas.edu/emergency

Date	Topic	Reading & Speaker
Jan-13	Introduction to Public Policy	• Smith, Kevin B. and Christopher W. Larimer. 2017. <i>The Public Policy Theory Primer</i>. (3rd ed.). Routledge. Chapter 1 Available through UT Library
Jan-20	Policy Analysis	• "The Policy Memo: A How-To Guide" • "Guide to writing an effective policy memo," Leadership for Educational Equity • David Morse and Elena Delbanco, "Examples of policy writing."
Jan-27	How policies make citizens	• Mettler, Suzanne and Joe Soss. 2004. "The Consequences of Public Policy for Democratic Citizenship: Bridging Policy Studies and Mass Politics." <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 2(1): 55-73. • <i>Guest speaker:</i> Prof. Hannah Walker (UT GOV)
Feb-3	Policy Implementation	• Shapiro, Stuart. 2023. <i>Trump and the Bureaucrats: The Fate of Neutral Competence</i>. Springer, Cham Switzerland. Chapters 1 & 8 Available through UT Library • <i>Guest speaker:</i> Prof. Gordon Abner (UT LBJ)

Feb-10	TBD	• <i>Guest speaker:</i>
Feb-17	Foreign Policy	• Guest speaker: Prof. Patrick McDonald (UT GOV)
Feb-24	Presentations	•
Mar-3	Wrap-up & Presentations	•