Syllabus

Spring, 2011

APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY (PSYC 736)

Faculty: Dr. Kenneth Maton  Office Hours: By appointment
Class time: Friday 12-2:30 pm  Rm. 414 Sondheim
Contact Information: maton@umbc.edu  X 52209  Rm. 313 Math/Psych

PURPOSE
This course examines major public policy issues relevant to applied developmental and human services psychology. Federal, and to a lesser degree, state and local policies, policy making constituencies, and policy making processes will be reviewed. Multiple roles that psychologists can play in affecting policy, including analysis, research, and advocacy, are examined. The expectation is that upon completion of this course you will be able to critically analyze existing policy and to help formulate new policy directions and perform policy relevant research.

COURSE OUTLINE

Date  Course
1/28  Course Overview; Policy, Policy Actors, Government
2/4  Policy Theories, Analysis, and Process
2/11  Policy Evaluation
Psychology and Health Reform (Guest Presenter)
2/18  Values, World Views, & the Public Interest
Professional Psychology and Policy (Guest Presenter)
2/25  Psychologists in the Policy Arena (Guest Presenters)
3/4 -3/18; 4/8  Topic area sessions

Topics relevant to both ADP and HSP will be included; topics will be selected in part based on the interests of the students in the class. There will also be guest speakers.

3/25  Spring Vacation
4/1  No Class (SRCD); Policy outlines due
4/15-5/6  Policy presentations
5/13  Policy papers due
COURSE STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS

Class sessions will emphasize discussion and active student participation.

There are four major course requirements:

1) **Class Participation.** Throughout the course you will be expected to have done the assigned readings and to contribute through your regular, thoughtful, and substantive class participation. Class participation will count for 15% of your course grade.

2) **Thought Papers.** Students will pick three of the weeks’ assigned readings between Feb. 4 and April 8, and write a 2 page thought paper. Thought papers should reflect questioning, critical and/or creative responses to the week’s topic and readings. Ideally, they will serve as a basis for class discussion. The paper should be e-mailed to me by 5:00 pm Thursday prior to that class. You should also be prepared to talk about your thought paper in class (15% of your course grade).

3) **Policy Proposal Presentation.** You are expected to propose a new or revised policy you believe needs to be implemented at the federal, state or local level, and to make a 25-30 minute oral presentation advocating the new policy. The class will serve as the (House or Senate) subcommittee under whose jurisdiction your new policy falls. The subcommittee will ask probing and penetrating questions following your presentation. The subcommittee will vote, in closed session, on your policy proposal, and provide you with a written critique and suggestions. You must provide a brief to the subcommittee that outlines and justifies your proposal (2 page limit). (30% of your course grade).

Your presentation to the subcommittee must include:

1. Statement of the specific problem of concern.
2. Description of the broad social, political, and historical context of the problem.
3. Description, review, and critique of current policy(ies) governing the problem.
4. Discussion of the major policy options which have been proposed to deal with the problem.
5. Detailed summary of the policy option you are proposing.
6. Review of relevant social science theory and research which support your proposal.
7. Estimate of the financial cost, and your arguments concerning cost/benefit analysis.
8. Discussion of the potential pitfalls of enacting and/or implementing your policy of choice.
9. Discussion of how the effectiveness of the new policy will be determined.

4) **Policy Proposal Paper.** This paper should be an expanded version of your presentation. It should include revisions that result from the subcommittee hearing. In particular, you should expand the material included in #9 above to include a research design and set of data collection methods to be used in evaluating your proposed policy. Be certain to discuss the rationale, assets, and liabilities of your design. (40% of grade).
Grading Summary

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<td>Thought Papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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POTENTIAL POLICY PAPER TOPIC AREAS


Human Services Psychology Issues: Adolescent suicide, school failure, prescription privileges, health promotion, disease prevention, managed care, minority youth, community support system, substance abuse, prevention, empowerment, mental health and the work place, gender, mental health and ethnicity, discrimination, community development, self-help groups, religion and public policy, youth violence.

DETAILED READING LIST

NOTE: ALL MATERIALS ARE IN THE FILING CABINET IN XEROX ROOM

February 4


Chapter 3-Understanding public policymaking (pp. 64-95).
Chapter 4-Policy analysis: An introduction (pp. 96-123).

February 11

I. Guest Presenter, Mohini Venkatesh, MPH
(The National `Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare)


II. Policy Evaluation


February 18

Values, World Views, & the Public Interest


**February 25**

**I. Guest Presenters, Diane Elmore, Ph.D. & Heather Kelly, Ph.D.**
(American Psychological Association Government Affairs Office)

**II. Sarah Oberlander, Ph.D.**
(SRCD Policy Fellow)

American Psychological Association (undated). *Advancing psychology in the public interest: A psychologist’s guide to participation in federal policymaking.*


**March 4**

**Strengths-Based Research and Policy**


Cook, S.L., Woolard, J.L., & McCollum, H.C. (2004). The strengths, competence, and


March 11

**I. Low Income Children, Youth, Families and Neighborhoods**


http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/412150-next-steps-ARRA.pdf


http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/411974_place_matters.pdf


**II. Guest Presenter: Dave Marcotte, Ph.D.**

(Departments of Economics & Public Policy, UMBC)

scores also drop. *Education Next*, 53-59


**March 18**

**I. Guest Presenter: Clinton Anderson, Ph.D.**

(Director, Office on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Concerns, American Psychological Association)


American Psychological Association (). *Just the facts about sexual orientation and youth: A primer for principals, educations and school personnel.*


American Psychological Association (2010, February 1). *APA statement to the Institute of Medicine, Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT), health issues and research gaps and opportunities (IOIM-BSP.09-10).*


**II. Guest Presenter, Jenn Prichard, Ph.D.**

(UMBC CASP Graduate, Dissertation on Racial Profiling)


www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/highlights/18_02Highlights.pdf

*The W. Haywood Burns Institute for Juvenile Justice Fairness & Equity* (2008) Adoration of the question: Reflections on the failure to reduce racial & ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system
http://www.burnsinstitute.org/article.php?id=83


http://www.justicepolicy.org/content-hmID=1811&smlID=1581&ssmID=83.htm
April 8

I. Guest Presenter, Paul Berman, Ph.D.
(Private Practice & Maryland Psychological Association)


NAMI Fact sheet (2009). *Parity FAQs for individuals and families.* nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=Issue_Spotlights&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=94887


II. Guest Presenter: Maureen van Stone, Esq.
(Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service; Project HEAL at KKI)


April 15

I. Guest Presenter: Karina Fortuny, MS
(Urban Institute)

