

Western University  
Department of Political Science  
**The Policy Process in Local Government**  
Public Administration 9902B  
Political Science 9524B  
Winter 2017

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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1-3pm, or by appointment

**Time and Location:** Wednesdays, 4:00–6:00pm, SSC 4255

**Course Description:** Building on PA9901 (Advanced Local Government), this course introduces students to selected aspects of the academic literature on public policy-making, and examines these in the Canadian municipal context, with particular (but not exclusive) emphasis on Ontario applications and examples. We begin by discussing how the particular features and constraints of local government shape the scope and character of municipal policy-making. We then examine how policy problems are framed and how they emerge on municipal agendas; we explore the range of municipal policy instruments; and we focus on policy leadership and the role of public engagement in local policy processes. We then synthesize what we have learned by looking at the specific dynamics of policy-making in the fields of urban development and social and environmental policy. We conclude by discussing issues and challenges related to municipal policy implementation.

**Format:** Lectures, class discussion, group exercises and student presentations.

**Course Website:** The syllabus, assignments, and some readings (see below) will be posted on OWL. Announcements will be made using the OWL system, which links to students' UWO e-mail addresses, so please make sure to check your UWO e-mail regularly.

**Reading Materials:** The course uses three chapters from the following textbook:

Sancton, Andrew. 2015. *Canadian Local Government: An Urban Perspective*, 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Students who took PA9901 in fall 2015 or 2016 should already have this textbook. For those who do not have it, it is available through Amazon.

Most other readings are available electronically through the UWO libraries system, or through web links included in the syllabus below. Remaining readings will be posted at least one week in advance of the relevant class in the "Resources" section of the OWL website.

## Evaluation:

### Participation – 20%

This course demands active, thoughtful participation by students in class discussion and in-class group work. This in turn demands that you complete all required readings *in advance* of the class for which they are assigned.

### Case Analysis of Problem Definition / Framing – 15% *Due in class Week 6 (Feb 15)*

You will select a case of a contested municipal policy problem / issue, and develop a brief (about 1,500 words maximum) analysis of alternative definitions / framings of the problem advanced by various actors in the case. Detailed guidelines will be distributed in Week 3 of the course.

### Research Project

You will design and complete your own research project, in which you will analyze a specific municipal or intergovernmental policy process using theories and concepts discussed in the class. Working professionals are encouraged to examine a policy process that relates to their professional experience and/or interests. This assignment has three components:

#### a. Research Proposal – 15% *Due in class Week 7 (Mar 1)*

You will develop a 1,500 word (approx.) proposal outlining your intended research project, including a research question, brief background, intended research methods, and sources. Detailed guidelines for the proposal will be distributed in Week 5 of the course.

#### b. “Three Minute Thesis” (3MT) Presentation – 5% *In class Week 11 (Apr 5)*

You will prepare a very brief presentation highlighting your research question and main findings, following the “three minute thesis” format. Details will be discussed in Week 9.

#### c. Research Paper – 45% *Due in class Week 11 (Apr 5)*

You will write a research paper (max. 5,000 words) on your chosen topic. Detailed guidelines will be distributed in Week 5 of the course.

## Course Policies:

*Late Penalties:* All written assignments must be handed in at the start of the class in which they are due. Late assignments are subject to a penalty of 2% per day off of the assignment mark, weekends included. If you anticipate having trouble meeting a deadline, please speak with the instructor as soon as possible. Extensions will only be granted in the case of documented extenuating circumstances.

*Electronic devices:* In order to ensure a classroom free from distractions, please refrain from using phones during classes, and use laptops and tablets for course-related activities only.

*Academic integrity:* Scholastic offences are taken seriously. Students are directed to read the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)

## Course Schedule and Required Readings

NB: Readings available electronically through UWO libraries are marked with an asterisk (\*).

### Week 1      **Jan 11: Introduction to Studying Public Policy**

Readings: Pal, Leslie. 2014. *Beyond Policy Analysis: Public Issues Management in Turbulent Times*, 5th edition. Toronto: Nelson, pp. 1-25.

\* Howlett, Michael and Ishani Mukherjee. 2014. "Policy Design and Non-Design: Towards a Spectrum of Policy Formulation Types." *Politics and Governance* 2(2), pp. 57–71.

### Week 2      **Jan 18: Municipalities and Policy-Making**

Readings: Wolman, Harold, assisted by Robert McManmon. 2012. Ch. 21, "What Cities Do: How Much Does Urban Policy Matter?" In Karen Mossberger, Susan E. Clarke, and Peter John, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Urban Politics*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 415–441.

Sancton, Andrew. 2015. *Canadian Local Government: An Urban Perspective*, 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 249-267.

### Week 3      **Jan 25: The Context for Local Policy-Making**

Readings: Peterson, Paul E. 2007 [1981]. "The Interests of the Limited City." In Elizabeth A. Strøm and John H. Mollenkopf, eds., *Urban Politics Reader*. New York: Routledge, pp. 120–129.

Taylor, Zack and Neil Bradford. 2015. Ch. 11, "The New Localism: Canadian Urban Governance in the 21st Century." In Pierre Filion et al., eds., *Canadian Cities in Transition*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 194–208.

\* McGregor, Michael and Zachary Spicer. 2016. "The Canadian Homevoter: Property Values and Municipal Politics in Canada". *Journal of Urban Affairs* 38(1), pp. 123-39.

### Week 4      **Feb 1: Problem Definition, Framing and Agenda-Setting**

Readings: Pal, Leslie A. 2014. Excerpts from Chapter 3, "Problem Definition in Policy Analysis". In *Beyond Policy Analysis: Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Toronto: Nelson Education: pp. 97-114.

\* Pralle, Sarah. 2006. "The "Mouse That Roared": Agenda Setting in Canadian Pesticides Politics". *Policy Studies Journal* 34: pp. 171–194.

\* Henstra, Daniel. 2010. "Explaining Local Policy Choices: A Multiple Streams Analysis". *Canadian Public Administration* 53(2), pp. 241 – 258.

**Week 5                    Feb 8: Policy Diffusion and Policy Instruments**

Readings:                \* Shipan, Charles R. and Craig Volden. 2012. "Policy Diffusion: Seven Lessons for Scholars and Practitioners." *Public Administration Review* 72(6), pp. 788–796.

\* Ohemeng, Frank K. & John K Grant. 2008. "When markets fail to deliver: An examination of the privatization and de-privatization of water and wastewater services delivery in Hamilton, Canada." *Canadian Public Administration* 51(3), pp. 475–99.

Pal, Leslie A. 2014. Figure 4.1. In *Beyond Policy Analysis: Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Toronto: Nelson Education, p. 135.

**Week 6                    Feb 15: Policy Leadership and Governing Coalitions**

Readings:                Sancton, Andrew. 2015. *Canadian Local Government: An Urban Perspective*, 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 232-248.

Urbaniak, Tom. 2009. Chapter 11, "Leadership Lessons", in *Her Worship: Hazel McCallion and the Development of Mississauga*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 230 – 249.

For review (most students read this in PA9903):

\* Siegel, David. 2010. "The leadership role of the municipal chief administrative officer", *Canadian Public Administration*, 53(2), 139-161.

**Week 7                    Mar 1: Engaging the Public: Possibilities and Challenges**

Readings:                Heinrichs, Brianna. 2013. "The Consulter's Conceit: How Phony Public Consultations Undermine Democracy and the Market". Calgary: Manning Foundation for Democratic Education.

Available at: <https://manningcentre.ca/report/consulters-conceit-how-phony-public-consultations-undermine-democracy-and-market>

\* Baker, William H., H. Lon Addams, and Brian Davis. 2005. "Critical Factors for Enhancing Municipal Public Hearings." *Public Administration Review* 65(4), pp. 490–99.

For review (most students read this in PA9903):

\* Simrell King, Cheryl, Kathryn Feltey and Bridget Susel, "The Question of Participation: Toward Authentic Public Participation in Public Administration," *Public Administration Review*, 58(4), pp. 317-326.

**Week 8 Mar 8: Policy-Making for Urban Development**

Readings: Sancton, Andrew. 2015. *Canadian Local Government: An Urban Perspective*, 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 210-225.

Polese, Mario. 2011. Urban Development Legends. *City Journal* 21(4).  
Available at: <http://www.city-journal.org/html/urban-development-legends-13426.html>

\* Leo, Christopher and Kathryn Anderson. 2006. "Being Realistic About Urban Growth". *Journal of Urban Affairs* 28(1), pp. 169 – 189.

**Week 9 Mar. 22: Social and Environmental Policy-Making in Municipalities**

Readings: Macleod Irons, Angela. 2013. "Noble Frustrations: The many practical problems with municipal poverty initiatives". Calgary: Manning Foundation for Democratic Education.

Available at: <https://manningcentre.ca/report/noble-frustrations-many-practical-problems-municipal-poverty-initiatives>

Horak, Martin and Aaron A. Moore. 2015. "Policy Shift without Institutional Change: The Precarious Place of Neighborhood Revitalization in Toronto". In: Clarence Stone, Robert Stoker et al. *Urban Neighborhoods in a New Era: Revitalization Politics in the Postindustrial City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 182-208.

\* Quastel, Noah, Markus Moos and Nicholas Lynch. 2012. "Sustainability-As-Density and the Return of the Social: The Case of Vancouver, British Columbia". *Urban Geography* 33:7, pp. 1055-1084.

Supplementary reading:

\* Robinson, Pamela J. and Christopher D. Gore. "Barriers to Canadian Municipal Response to Climate Change." *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 14(1), pp. 102–120.

**Week 10 Mar. 29: Policy Implementation**

Readings: Sabatier, Paul and Daniel Mazmanian. 1981. "The Implementation of Public Policy". In Mazmanian and Sabatier, eds. *Effective Policy Implementation*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, pp. 3-35.

\* Murdoch, Maggie. 2010. "The Road to Zero Waste: A Study of the Seattle Green Fee on Disposable Bags." *Environmental Practice* 12(1). Pp. 66–75.

**Week 11 Apr. 5: Course Conclusion and 3MT Presentations**