

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS DARTMOUTH

PST 537 PUBLIC POLICY IN MASSACHUSETTS

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REQUIRED READINGS

All readings will be kept on reserve at the Center for Policy Analysis, except for readings accessible online.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public Policy in Massachusetts reviews the constitutional and institutional structure of Massachusetts state government, state level political and policymaking processes, state level instruments of public policy, and substantive areas of state level policy, including fiscal and tax policy, economic development, labor and workforce development, housing, higher education, and transportation. It examines the role of official actors in the policy process, such as elected functionaries, the bureaucracy, regulatory agencies, and the courts, as well as unofficial actors, such as political parties, interest groups, and think tanks. The course will analyze the structure of policymaking and policy restraint at the state level, particularly the impact of political structure, political economy, and political culture.

COURSE SCHEDULE

TOPIC 1 POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF MASSACHUSETTS

Jan. 29, Feb. 5
Feb. 12 The constitutional structure of Massachusetts government, the major branches of state government (general court, plural executive, judiciary, and special districts), and the administration of public personnel (collective bargaining and civil service).

Required Readings:

Cornelius Dalton et al., "A Commonwealth is Born," *Leading the Way, A History of the Massachusetts General Court*, pp. 3-32, 45-78.

William J. Reid and Herbert G. Regan, "The Constitutions of Massachusetts," Pp. 103-120 in *Massachusetts: History & Government of the Bay State*.

"Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts," at <http://www.mass.gov/legis/const.htm>

William J. Reid and Herbert G. Regan, "The Legislative Department," Pp. 121-130 in *Massachusetts: History & Government of the Bay State*.

George Goodwin, Jr., "The State Legislatures of New England," Pp. 107-144 in Josephine F. Milburn and Victoria Schuck, *New England Politics*

William J. Reid and Herbert G. Regan, "The Executive Department," Pp. 131-137 in *Massachusetts: History & Government of the Bay State*.

"Lawmaking in Massachusetts," see, <http://www.mass.gov/legis/lawmkng.htm>

See, http://www.mass.gov/legis/#guide_mark

"Types of Law, see, <http://www.mass.gov/lib/guides/masslaw.htm>

Frank M. Bryan, "The New England Governorship," Pp. 75-105 in Josephine F. Milburn and Victoria Schuck, *New England Politics*

-- the executive departments and their functions

See, <http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=mg2subtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=State+Government&L2=Branches+%26+Departments&L3=Governor+%26+Executive+Departments&sid=massgov2>

William J. Reid and Herbert G. Regan, "The Judicial Department," Pp. 139-144 in *Massachusetts: History & Government of the Bay State*.

Samuel B. Hand, William C. Hill, and Lyman J. Gould, "The New England Judiciary," Pp. 145-177 in Josephine F. Milburn and Victoria Schuck, *New England Politics*.

TOPIC 2 POLITICAL CULTURES OF MASSACHUSETTS

Feb. 19

The industrialization and post-industrialization of Massachusetts. The patrician, yeoman, worker, and managerial political cultures of Massachusetts. The theory of ethnic succession and pluralist development. The intersection of class, ethnicity, and personality. The "reform impulse" in Massachusetts.

Required Reading:

Robert Dahl, "From Oligarchy to Pluralism," *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*, Chaps. 1-5.

William J. Reid and Herbert G. Regan, "Industrial Growth of Massachusetts, 1812-1861," Pp. 70-76 in *Massachusetts: History & Government of the Bay State*.

Edgar Litt, *The Political Cultures of Massachusetts*, Chap. 1.

TOPIC 3 POLITICAL PARTIES, ELECTIONS, & INTEREST GROUPS

Feb. 19, Feb. 26

The shifting role of political parties in organizing ethnic, class, and regional identities into a state level political process. Critical elections and the rise of the Democratic Party. The role of interest groups and think tanks in the policy process.

Required Reading:

Howard L. Reiter, *Parties and Elections in Corporate America*, Chaps. 2-6.

Ronald J. Hrebemar, "The Role of Interest Groups in Northeastern Politics," Pp. 1-21 in Ronald J. Hrebemar and Clive S. Thomas, eds., *Interest Group Politics in the Northeast*.

Richard D. Brown, *Massachusetts: A History*, Chaps. 8-9.

Edgar Litt, *The Political Cultures of Massachusetts*, Chap. 3

Jerome M. Mileur, "Party Politics in the Bay State: The Dominion of Democracy," Pp. 77-94 in *Parties and Politics in the New England States*, edited by Jerome M. Mileur (Polity Publications, 1997).

John C. Berg, "Beyond the Party-Group Continuum," *New England Journal of Public Policy* (Fall/Winter 1991): 61-79 or

OR

John C. Berg, "Massachusetts: Citizen Power and Corporate Power," Pp. 167-98 in Ronald J. Hrebennar and Clive S. Thomas, eds., *Interest Group Politics in the Northeast*.

TOPIC 4 FISCAL & TAX POLICY

March 5

A review and comparison of state taxes and state budgets in Massachusetts. The looming crisis in health care, pension, and debt funding.

Required Reading:

Cornelius Dalton et al., "1950-1980: A New Era," *Leading the Way, A History of the Massachusetts General Court*, pp. 273-369.

"FY 2009 Budget Recommendations," see, <http://www.mass.gov/legis/>

"FY 2009 Budget Summary, see,

http://www.masstaxpayers.org/files/BudSumm_update_12_30_08.pdf

Information on state tax receipts, see,

<http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=dorsubtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Individuals+and+Families&L2=Help+%26+Resources&L3=News+and+Reports&sid=Ador>

TOPIC 6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

March 12

The concepts of global competitive advantage, regional economies, and target industries. A review and analysis of state economic strategy from 1982 – present, including the limitations and failures of "the boutique economy."

Required Reading:

Michael S. Dukakis and Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Creating the Future*, Chaps. 1-2, 4-5.

Michael E. Porter, *The Competitive Advantage of Massachusetts*

Michael E. Porter, "The Competitive Advantage of Nations," Pp. 155-196 in *On Competition*

Michael E. Porter, "Clusters and Competition," Pp. 197-288 in *On Competition*

William Weld and Michael Hooker, *Choosing to Compete: A Statewide Strategy for Job Creation and Economic Growth*, pp. 8-27.

Jane M. Swift and William Bulger, *Massachusetts: Toward a New Prosperity; Building Regional Competitiveness Across the Commonwealth* (August 2002)

Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, "A Framework for Action: The State Economic Development Strategy," (January 2009), see,

http://www.mass.gov/Ehed/docs/EOHED/Framework_for_Action_FINAL.pdf

Read the statewide and regional summaries of the state's economic regions at,

<http://www.massbenchmarks.org/regions/regions.htm>

SPRING BREAK – MARCH 19

TOPIC 7 LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

March 19

Review of the state's labor and workforce development strategy. Prevailing wage, minimum wage, unemployment compensation, and income inequality. The Workforce Investment Act and role of the Workforce Investment Boards.

Required Reading:

Federal Writers' Project, "Labor," Pp. 78 in *Massachusetts: A Guide to Its Places and People*.

Alexander Keyssar, "Unemployment and the Labor Movement in Massachusetts, 1870-1916," in Herbert G. Gutman and Donald H. Bell, *The New England Working Class and the New Labor History*, Chap. 9

William J. Reid and Herbert G. Regan, "How Massachusetts Protects Working People," Pp. 204-220 in *Massachusetts: History & Government of the Bay State*.

Clyde W. Barrow, "Unions and Community Mobilization: The 1988 Massachusetts Prevailing Wage Campaign," *Labor Studies Journal* (Winter 1989): 18-39.

TOPIC 8 TRANSPORTATION POLICY

March 26

The theory of special district government and the role of the MBTA, MassPort, MAC, MassHighway, and the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The Massachusetts Transportation Finance Commission and the looming crisis in infrastructure finance.

Required Reading:

"Report of the Massachusetts Transportation Finance Commission, Vol. 1" see, http://www.eot.state.ma.us/downloads/tfc/TFC_Findings.pdf

"Report of the Massachusetts Transportation Finance Commission, Vol. 2" see, http://www.eot.state.ma.us/downloads/tfc/TFC_Recommendations.pdf

"An Act Financing Improvements to the Commonwealth's Transportation System," see <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw08/sl080303.htm>

TOPIC 9 HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY

April 2

Higher education as social policy and workforce development policy. The history of public higher education in Massachusetts, including the role of community colleges, state colleges, and the University of Massachusetts.

Required Reading:

"Report of the Senate Task Force on Public Higher Education," see, http://www.mass.gov/legis/reports/public_higher_ed_taskforce_report.htm

TOPIC 10 HEALTH & WELFARE POLICY

April 9

An overview of the departments and programs that provide health and human services to residents of Massachusetts, with an emphasis on MassHealth and Transitional Assistance.

TOPIC 11 HOUSING POLICY

April 16

An overview of the departments and programs involved in the provision of housing to residents of Massachusetts, with an emphasis on public housing, homelessness, and the controversy over Chapter 40B's affordable housing mandate.

Required Reading:

Robert Nakosteen and James Palma, *The Fiscal Impact of New Housing Development in Massachusetts: A Critical Analysis*, pp. 34-37, 149-51.

TOPIC 12 ETHICS POLICY & POLITICAL CORRUPTION

April 23

The concept of structural corruption. An overview of the anti-corruption policies administered by the State Ethics Commission, State Inspector General, and Secretary of State. Governor Deval Patrick's Task Force on Public Integrity.

Required Reading:

See, <http://www.mass.gov/Agov3/docs/TaskForceFinalReport.pdf>

TOPIC 13 POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS

April 30

Students will present the results of their research project in a 18-20 minute oral presentation. Powerpoint presentations that summarize their research findings and make one or more policy recommendation for solving the identified problem.

FINAL PAPERS DUE ON MAY 14

Papers may be submitted in person or electronically, no later than 3:00pm on due date.

COURSE POLICIES

I. Grades

Students will be evaluated and graded on the results of the following assignments:

1. Research Paper (75%). Students may select any public policy or public management issue as the topic of their research paper. The issue can be national, state, or local in nature and it may be located in any policy area (e.g., economic, social, environmental, education, transportation, etc.). Students are advised to meet with the professor as early as possible to begin identifying a research topic. All students required to meet with the professor, individually or in teams, during the second week of classes to discuss potential paper topics, research design, and research strategy. Prior to such a meeting, students should do some preliminary background research on one or more possible paper topics to assess the topic's viability as a research project. Students should conduct their preliminary research to (1) reaffirm personal interest in the topic, (2) confirm the availability of published sources on the topic, and (3) begin the development of a preliminary bibliography for further research. The preliminary research should not take more than 2 hours.

The research paper should be 25-30 pages in length not including the bibliography (7,500 to 9,000 words). Papers may vary in format, but in general all papers should include the following:

- an executive summary of research findings and policy recommendations,
- either a brief policy history (including pertinent legislation, treaties, administrative orders, judicial decisions) or a review of academic literature to define the problem(s),
- either identify the key actors on the issue and their articulated policy positions or describe alternative theoretical models for understanding the problem,
- technical analysis (data analysis, case study, best practices, comparative cases),
- evaluation and policy recommendations, including the rationale for recommendations,
- identify policy mechanisms or policy instruments available or to be created for implementing the recommendation(s), including the estimated costs and benefits of such recommendations.

All papers must cite or use at least 12 different sources (20 for graduate students), including at least one each from 8 of the 12 following types of sources:

- academic or theoretical literature (books and journal articles),
- legislation, treaty, administrative or judicial decision,
- government (or other) data source,
- government documents,
- documents/study by a non-governmental or parastatal organization,
- document/study by non-profit think-tank, private consulting firm, political party, or interest group, (i.e., 'grey literature' policy research),
- newspaper article,
- magazine or trade journal article,
- key informant interview(s),
- public opinion surveys,
- speech(es) by public figures, office holders, and decision-makers, and
- governmental or non-governmental websites (including interest group websites).

Expectations about quality and length of research papers for graduate students will be significantly higher than for undergraduates. This expectation will be incorporated into the grades for those assignments and this expectation will also apply to senior undergraduates who take the course for graduate credit.

2. Oral Presentation (25%). At the end of the semester, students will present the results of their journal. The oral presentation should be approximately 18-20 minutes long, but no longer. The presentation must utilize Powerpoint or a similar type of electronic presentation format. The presentation should:

- clearly identify an issue or social problem, preferably one that has already been advanced as a policy proposal, pending legislation, or proposed regulation,
- identify the major official and unofficial actors, including their sources of power or authority,
- identify key arguments for and against the proposed policy solution,
- identify key decisionmakers in the policy process,
- identify key legislation, judicial decisions, or regulations that govern the process or that are the object of policy debate,
- identify the policy tools involved in the policy process,
- describe program design or proposed policy design(s)

II. Other Course Policies

1. Late Examinations and Make-Ups. Under *normal* circumstances, assignments that are handed in late will be penalized one grade level for each day they are late. For example, an “A” paper that is one day late will be reduced to an “A-”. Two days late will reduce the grade to a “B+”, etc. It is possible on *exceptional* occasions to make a late submission without penalty *if* there is a legitimate excuse such as illness, death in the family, extracurricular university activities, professional obligations, etc. Where possible, you should discuss these situations in advance with the professor.

2. Drops and Incompletes. You may drop any course within the guidelines established by the University. You will not be penalized simply for dropping a course. However, please note the following:

- a. a student’s financial aid status may be affected by the number of courses taken during a semester,
- b. it is the student’s responsibility to drop a course. Anyone who merely stops attending class or fails to turn in course work, but remains enrolled in the class will receive an “F,” which can only be removed from a transcript by taking the entire course over again at another time. There is no other university provision for removing a failing grade from a transcript.
- c. University policy prohibits professors from awarding an Incomplete to any student who fails to complete their course work, *unless* the student specifically requests an Incomplete before the last week of classes. The instructor is receptive to awarding Incompletes under exceptional circumstances (such as late papers and make-ups above). However, these must be arranged prior to the end of the semester.

3. Class Cancellation. It is not uncommon for one or two classes to be cancelled unexpectedly during the semester due to snow or to due to the instructor’s professional or personal exigencies (short notice meetings, dead battery, flat tire, instructor illness):

- a. Where possible, I will try to notify students of any class cancellation by email at least 24 hours before the class meets.
- b. However, it is not always possible to give advance notice of a class cancellation. In these cases, the rule is simple. If the instructor is not in the classroom within 15 minutes of the beginning of class, the class is cancelled without penalty to students.

4. Academic Dishonesty.

Students can access the UMass Dartmouth Student Academic Integrity Policy at this website:

<http://www.umassd.edu/studenthandbook/academicregs/ethicalstandards.cfm>

In general, the policy prohibits cheating, fabrication, facilitation of academic dishonesty, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and the unauthorized release of proprietary or confidential information.

In addition, please note **Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 271, Section 50. Sale of research papers, etc.; taking of examinations for another at educational institutions:**

“Section 50. Whoever, alone or in concert with others, sells to another, or arranges for or assists in such sale for another, a theme, term paper, thesis or other paper or the written results of research, knowing or having reason to know that such theme, term paper, thesis or other paper or research results or substantial material therefrom will be submitted or used by some other person for academic credit and represented as the original work of such person at an educational institution in the commonwealth or elsewhere without proper attribution as to source, or whoever takes an examination for another at any educational institution in the commonwealth, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars or by imprisonment for not more than six months, or both.”

In other words, in Massachusetts it is a *criminal offense* to commit plagiarism, to assist others in plagiarism, to sell and purchase research papers for use in a higher education institution, or to have another individual take an examination or write a paper for you.