MIT 11.003J/17.303J (3-0-9)
METHODS OF POLICY ANALYSIS

Spring 2022
Instructor: Cherie Miot Abbanat (abbanat@mit.edu)
Class meets every Monday and Wednesday
2:30–4:00 PM
Room 9-255
Office Hours: Check link on Canvas for Google Sheet and Zoom links. Also, just stay
after class and I’m happy to talk or set something up
Call or Text me: 617-320-1136

Description and Objectives

Policy makers and analysts around the world are facing difficult policy questions
everyday: Should informal settlements in city centers be relocated to urban fringes?
Should municipalities charge user fees instead of raising the property tax to finance local
services? Should health care be universal? And, of course, all of our COVID policies
that seem to change daily here at MIT, in our respective cities, states, and the nation.
When to test, what type of test, how many vaccinations, what type of mask, how long to
quarantine, etc.

In a world of complex political and socioeconomic interactions, predicting the
effectiveness of a particular policy and identifying potential unintended consequences is a
difficult task.

1. Prior to policy selection, policy analysis is an exercise that can inform the
   choice, design, and sequencing of alternative policy options.
2. During policy implementation, the monitoring of a reform and its impacts
can lead to refinement of the pace, sequencing, or institutional supports of
the program.
3. Post-implementation policy analysis can assess the actual distributional
   impacts that help analysts understand the likely effects of future policy
changes.

In this class, we will examine critically selected rational approaches of policy analysis.
In theory, these standard procedures help frame policy questions, identify stakeholders
and program goals, design policy options, weigh the costs and benefits of alternative
courses of action, and evaluate actual outcomes. In practice, however, these procedures
are seldom linear and unidirectional, political positions, local history and context, and
other factors sometimes steer policy direction and outcomes. We will discuss how to
strike a balance between theory and practice in policy analysis using actual cases.

The class is designed for students who may be thinking about a career in public or non-
profit sectors, but the many tools we will discuss also apply to the private sector. The
primary goal is to help you understand the implications of public policy for different pursuits, including the unintended consequences of our policy choices. These tools and our discussions can help you understand, contribute to, and facilitate interactions with public officials and agencies. In short, I hope that this class and our work together will make you a better citizen.

This class will integrate lectures, class discussions, assigned readings, case study analysis, oral and written presentation of assignments, library and other research, in-class exercises, teamwork, small group presentations, and other activities. All the activities will aid you in attaining the major learning objectives of this course. This combination will allow each person to draw on his or her own experiences and talents to help themselves and others in the course to become competent in the course concepts and skills.

You are expected to come to class prepared to participate in scheduled activities. This means that you MUST complete the modules for each week, before the week starts. Do the readings, take the quizzes/surveys. Then, complete the assignments for the week by the due dates. You will be encouraged to share experiences, knowledge, talents, and skills that are related to the course. You must also participate fully in all case study activities, including group activities.

Requirements and Grading

Requirements:

Texts
We will be using readings from multiple textbooks. Readings will be posted on the Stellar site.

- Public Policy Preferences and Outcomes by Christopher A. Simon, 3rd edition
- Policy Analysis, by David L. Weimer and Aidan R. Vining, 6th Edition
- Policy Paradox, The art of Political Decision Making by Deborah Stone, 3rd Edition

Class Participation and attendance (15% of final grade)
You will learn some of the basic concepts of policy analysis through in-class exercises. Thus, you are expected to read the assigned materials prior to each class and to participate actively in the class exercises and discussions. In-class participation and exercises will be worth about 15% of your grade

Short Assignments 30% of final grade
Assignment #1 (5%) – Intro policy evaluation – Teams Presenting about a Policy
Assignment #2 (5%) -- Policy memo 1- Sate of the Bees
Assignment #3 (5%) – Policy memo 2 – Poverty in America
Assignment #4 (5%) – Public Meeting – Attend and write a summary of meeting
Assignment #5 (10%) – Policy Memo – TBD

Quizzes 20% of final grade – Short 5-question quizzes will be part of the start of each class and will test your knowledge of the readings provided and/or survey you about events, ideas and thoughts. (20%)

Final Case Study and Oral Presentation (35% of final grade)
You will research a policy, analyze the consequences, stakeholders and present recommendations for improvements. This will involve both written activities and an oral presentation in class. Writing and oral presentations are essential components of the learning process and your professional performance.

You will conduct research on:

1. The background of the policy issue chosen for your case study,
2. Agencies and other stakeholders involved,
3. The pre-implementation impact assessments,
4. Actual consequences including cost, and
5. Recommendations

You will write a final paper and make an oral presentation in class:

1. Oral Presentations (10 percent)
2. Final Paper (25 percent)

I will provide you with further details of the requirements of the assignments, final paper, and presentation.

Grading:

As discussed above, students will be graded according to the following weights:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation:</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Assignments and quizzes:</td>
<td>50 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final presentation for the case study:</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper for the case study:</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
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Final grades are based on a weighted average for the term. Grade cutoff points are: A = 93-100%; A- = 90-92%; B+ = 87-89%; B = 83-86%; B- = 80-82%; C+ = 77-79%; C = 73-76%; C- = 70-72%; D+ = 67-69%; D = 63-66%; D- = 60-62%; F = <60

Prerequisites
This course builds on 11.002, Making Public Policy and 14.01 -- Economics. It assumes that you have already had some familiarity with the basic concepts and terminology of public policy and administration.

**Expectations**

- All written assignments should be typed and follow the conventional rules of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and notation of references. We will practice writing policy briefings that adhere to specific memo-writing techniques.
- All assignments must conform to the style of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association (APA style).
- All assignments must be uploaded to the Canvas site.
- Preparation for class attendance is an essential component of participation, since you must be prepared in order to contribute to the class. We will model behavior expected in a real-life policy think tank, consulting firm, or policy agency.
- Participation consists of:
  - working through the readings and the quizzes/surveys in each module BEFORE class meetings,
  - contributing relevant comments to class discussions,
  - participating in case study analysis and presentation
  - carrying your weight in a group project (this will be assessed through a variety of means),
  - engaging in constructive criticism,
  - assisting other class members, and
  - communicating with the instructors and other class members.
- Participation is about 10% of grade.
- Readings and assignments are listed on the course schedule below, and the canvas site in the various weekly modules that need to be completed.
- All assignments must be uploaded to the canvas site.

**Trust & Respect**

Imperative for our class is an atmosphere of complete trust, mutual respect, and interpersonal support. We value and respect all viewpoints. We welcome individuals of all backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, religious and political affiliations – and other visible and nonvisible differences. We cannot fully be ourselves as creative thinkers and professionals without the assurance of a collectively created safe environment. You are expected to help me generate and sustain an open, inclusive, safe and professional discussion, and workspace where all class members can feel free to express themselves, challenge one another, and engage in a collective learning that seeks and celebrates diverse opinions and solutions. In this classroom, names, pronunciations, and preferred pronouns will be respected.

**Common Courtesy and (Online) Behavior**

- Your concentrated attention -- to the instructor and your fellow students -- is required.
• You are expected to attend class. If class is moved online, you are expected to show up with both your camera and microphone on.
• It is expected that you have no other applications or programs open or running on your computer during class time. That text message, chat, Instagram post or drama can wait until after class, so that we can be together and be focused on learning. We will use technology as tool for learning – our computers and phones – in class when needed. They will not use us!

**Academic Integrity**

In this course, I will hold you to the high standard of academic integrity expected of all students at the Institute. I do this for two reasons:

1. First, it is essential to the learning process that you are the one doing the work. I have structured the assignments in this course to enable you to gain a mastery of the course material. Failing to do the work yourself will result in a lesser understanding of the content, and therefore a less meaningful education for you.
2. Second, it is important that there be a level playing field for all students in this course and at the Institute so that the rigor and integrity of the Institute’s educational program are maintained.

Violating the Academic Integrity policy in any way (e.g., plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, cheating, etc.) will result in official Institute sanction. Possible sanctions include receiving a failing grade on the assignment or exam, being assigned a failing grade in the course, having a formal notation of disciplinary action placed on your MIT record, suspension from the Institute, and expulsion from the Institute for very serious cases.

Plagiarism and cheating are both academic crimes. Never (1) turn in an assignment that you did not write yourself or (2) turn in an assignment for this class that you previously turned in for another class. If you do so, it may result in a failing grade for the class, and possibly even suspension from the Institute. Please see me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism. bAnyone caught cheating will be reported to the Provost in line with recognized university procedures.

Please review MIT’s [Academic Integrity](http://web.mit.edu/academicintegrity/) policy and related resources (e.g., working under pressure; how to paraphrase, summarize, and quote; etc.) and contact me if you have any questions about appropriate citation methods, the degree of collaboration that is permitted, or anything else related to the Academic Integrity of this course.

For more information see: [http://web.mit.edu/academicintegrity/](http://web/mit.edu/academicintegrity/)

**Student Support**

If you are dealing with a personal or medical issue that is impacting your ability to attend class, complete work, or take an exam, you should contact a dean in Student Support Services (S3) and let me know. S3 is here to help you and so am I. The deans will provide you with support options, and help you work to determine next steps. In most
circumstances, you will not be excused from coursework without verification from a dean. Please visit the S3 website for contact information and more ways that they can provide support.

Website: https://studentlife.mit.edu/s3

Decolonizing Development Practice

11.003 supports and practices of racial justice healing, with an emphasis on policies and practices that further equality. Equality, racial just healing, decolonizing development and an anti-racism approach aren’t topics that can be taught just once, or read about in a case study. Rather, these values must be taught, modeled and showcased in all of our work. In this class, we strive to integrate these ideas, knowing that sometimes we will get things wrong and we will try again and again. It is only with the first step towards discussing issues of slavery, marginalization based on immutable characteristics, anti-racism, decolonization, and the recognition of systematically marginalized voices that we can all move forward together to build a new, more inclusive learning environment.

Disabilities

If you have a documented disability, or any other problem you think may affect your ability to perform in class, please see me early in the semester so that arrangements may be made to accommodate you. For more information see: http://studentlife.mit.edu/dso/students

Land Acknowledgement Statement

We acknowledge Indigenous Peoples as the traditional stewards of the land, and the enduring relationship that exists between them and their traditional territories. The lands which MIT occupies are the traditional unceded territories of the Wampanoag Nation and the Massachusetts Peoples. We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced occupation of these territories, as well as the ongoing processes of colonialism and dispossession in which we and our institution are implicated. Beyond the stolen territory which we physically occupy, MIT has long profited from the sale of federal lands granted by the Morrill Act, territories stolen from 82 Tribes including the Greater and Little Osage, Chippewa, and Omaha Peoples.

As we honor and respect the many diverse Indigenous people connected to this land from time immemorial, we seek to Indigenize our institution and the field of planning, offer Space, and leave Indigenous peoples in more empowered positions.