



*The School of Law and Government
Master's Programme in Public Policy*

Public Policy Analysis

LG 5003

Fall 2022



Ambrogio Lorenzetti
Dancers in the *Effects of Good Government*
(on display in Siena, Italy)

Module coordinator: Volkan Yilmaz
Lectures: Asynchronous online
Uploaded to the Loop each Friday until 5pm.
Discussions for PT and FT students: On
Wednesdays as described below.
E-mail: volkan.yilmaz@dcu.ie
Office hours: Tuesdays btw 4-6 pm
Please book a slot as explained below.

Module description

Public policy aims at weaving the future. How do we know whether they work? Public policies are about failure as much as success. But it is often the failures that are of most interest in efforts to improve policymaking, design and implementation. Policy failures may occur because of a wide range of factors from poor problem definition to the lack of coordination. Understanding factors leading to policy failures across requires insights from different disciplines: anthropology, development studies, economics, law, management, politics, psychology and sociology.

This module aims to teach participants how to design and analyse policies from a "positive" standpoint—that is, given a specific problem, what policy might we adopt to address it? Does this policy, or is it likely to, do what is said it will do? In this regard, this module aims to cover the problem formulation, design and implementation of public policy. It will show students how to analyse policies and practice this by examining real-world examples of policy successes and failures from Ireland and abroad. This module will develop skills to analyse policy problems, evaluate different policy alternatives and design a policy solution within a stable normative framework. This will be a module in which participants will draw on their existing knowledge and expertise in different policy sectors to think about how policies can be designed and improved.

Learning outcomes

On completing this course, participants will be able to:

LO1 Define policy problems,

LO2 Select appropriate policy solutions,

LO3 Identify success and failure factors in policy design and implementation,

LO4 Select studies judiciously and report their findings based on relevance,

LO5 Tailor appropriate policy solutions to the context under consideration.

Module organisation

This module is a blended one that brings together asynchronous blended learning with synchronous faculty-guided horizontal learning.

Lectures will be delivered in an asynchronous online format. The lecture for each week will be uploaded to the Loop on the last Friday until 5pm before the relevant week. For instance, class discussions for *Policy comparisons, benchmarking, and learning* will take place on November 2nd. The lecture on this theme will be uploaded on October 28th.

Our class discussions will not be recorded, and thus will not be available to you later. However, a great deal of learning takes place through the interactions of motivated participants. You will have a lot to learn from other participants of this module, therefore, I will invite you to attend all sessions.

For part-time students, class discussions will always be synchronous online and take place on Wednesdays btw 5-6pm. Below you may find the details for our Zoom meetings:

Link: [https://dcu-
ie.zoom.us/j/92431386855?pwd=dEZOdVd3enhaY2g1Zy9BU3dRaERGOT09](https://dcu-
ie.zoom.us/j/92431386855?pwd=dEZOdVd3enhaY2g1Zy9BU3dRaERGOT09)

Meeting ID: 924 3138 6855

Passcode: 875985

For full-time students, class discussions will take place on campus on selected dates as shown in the module outline at the end of this document. On those dates only, we will meet at CG06 Lecture Room (Henry Grattan Building, Glasnevin Campus) at 2pm. Expect for these specified dates, you will also attend the online class with part-time students again on Wednesdays btw 5-6pm. We will meet on campus on the following days: 5 October, 12 October, 9 November and 16 November. This information is also available in the section entitled *The outline of the module and core readings*.

Assessment overview

In this module, I expect you to:

- read the assigned material before the class;
- attend lectures and class discussions regularly;
- participate in the activities in the class discussions.
- help me create a rich and safe learning experience for everyone in our module.

There are three means of assessment in the course. The policy problem (assignment 1), the policy alternatives (assignment 2), and the policy report (assignment 3). This module uses a cumulative assessment model. This means that all your papers will focus on the same policy question. In addition, your assignment 2 will build upon your assignment 1. Your assignment 3 will physically include both your assignment 1 and 2 and build upon both. Therefore, you are expected to revisit the material from previous assessments in preparing for your later assessments. This also means that you will receive two rounds of feedback from me before you submit your final assignment.

All assignments must be submitted via the Loop page of the module and be assessed following the Postgraduate Marking Scheme of the School of Law and Government at the DCU. Late submissions are not permitted unless evidence of exceptional circumstances is provided (e.g., medical certificates) to the Registry.

Before submitting any material, I would ask you to familiarise yourself with the University's regulations on **plagiarism**, which are available here: https://www.dcu.ie/system/files/2020-09/1_-_integrity_and_plagiarism_policy_ovpaa-v4.pdf Please remember to **cite your sources properly**.

Details of the assessments are presented below:

(1) Policy problem (25%) (Deadline: October 9, 5pm)

This assignment sets out a policy problem and “frames” it. It draws on three sources: 1) literature review to examine the causes of the policy problem at hand, 2) context analysis to outline the legal, political, economic and social context and 3) your analysis of both and your ability to frame this problem using a more generic and abstract language based on the module readings, lectures and class discussions. It. The length of the policy problem paper should be around 1000 (+/- 200 words, excluding bibliography)

It addresses the following questions:

- What is the problem exactly, and why is it a problem?
- What are the “costs” of this problem to the various interested parties?
- What is the best way of framing this policy problem? There are probably several ways (e.g., market failures, government failures, human behaviour errors. The best refers here to the best given the stable normative framework you are provided with or choose to work within.

Success criteria for assessing policy problem papers will be the following:

- Is the policy challenge not too broad (e.g. solving poverty in the world) and not too narrow (e.g. preventing traffic congestion on Parnell Street)?
- Is the problem described clearly and understandably?
- Is it framed adequately? – Could you think of other ways in which it could/ should be framed? Why did you choose to frame it in a particular way?
- Have you used the scientific literature, grey literature and administrative data adequately?
- Is the format ok? Is it readable and easily understandable? Does the paper comply with the Harvard referencing style?

(2) Policy alternatives (35%) (Deadline: 30 October, 5pm)

In this assignment, I expect you to conduct a literature review to identify, understand and classify policy alternatives that will tackle your policy problem by reading and evaluating the published academic debate on the policy problem at hand and policy responses to this problem. The length of the policy alternatives paper should be around 1500 (+/- 200 words, excluding the bibliography). At this stage, you are expected to identify policy alternatives based on the evidence that these alternatives successfully addressed a version of your policy problem in other jurisdictions.

Success criteria for grading policy alternatives papers will be the following:

1. Have you included a paragraph presenting your (revised) policy problem formulation?
2. Have you included a section outlining your literature review methodology? Please note that Sources are good if they focus on policy solutions to your problem at hand (or a version of it). Therefore, do less “collecting” and more (targeted) “hunting”. Better half a dozen excellent sources, which you use in-depth, then many more, which you merely mention.
 - Which search engine did you use? (e.g., Web of Science)
 - Which keywords did you use?
 - Did you search for titles, topics or abstracts?
 - Did you sort your search results based on the date of publication or the number of citations?
 - How did you decide which documents to include in your final literature survey? Please explain your rationale. I recommend you include articles that directly deal with the analysis (qualitative or quantitative) of the policy alternative rather than those making a passing reference to it.
3. Have you used the scientific literature adequately? (In terms of scope, at least 6 peer-reviewed journal articles)
4. Have you presented the literature survey in a systematic manner rather than a list of summaries of what you have read? Once you read through the literature you have found, then try to determine the commonalities and differences in their preferred course of action. Group the articles/ books according to different “schools of thought”. Always introduce, explain and discuss concepts, and theories that you are using.
5. Have you managed to present a balanced view of policy alternatives? (In terms of space you allocate for each and the number of articles you use to present each alternative) Please organise your paper around these different policy responses and then evaluate their strength and weaknesses. Make each answer as strong as possible before you criticise it.
6. The ability to identify, cover and summarise the appropriate literature offering at least two policy alternatives to the problem at hand,
7. The ability to bring added value to the literature survey in terms of originality in framing the academic and policy debate, we then add up points accordingly.
8. Is the format ok? Is it readable and easily understandable? Does the paper comply with the Harvard referencing style?

(3) **Policy report (40%)** (Deadline: December 23, 5pm)

The policy report will be a culmination of the revised versions of your policy problem and policy alternatives papers as well as a new analysis section that brings together all. Your report should be between 4,000 words in length (+/- 200 words, excluding bibliography).

The policy report is also designed in a way that requires you to work towards your Policy Analysis Exercise (PAE), which you are expected to submit as part of your degrees (this applies to students enrolled in the Master's Programme in Public Policy). Two successful PAE examples from the previous years are uploaded to the Loop page of our module for your reference.

A basic outline for your policy papers should be as below:

1. **Introduction** [revised policy problem paper]: Briefly and clearly explain your policy problem. Explain the context for this problem and discuss the social importance of the problem at hand.
2. **Setting the background** [revised policy problem paper]: Present the causes of this problem based on evidence (academic and policy literature, official data etc.). Identify which cause or causes you would like to address in this policy report.
3. **Analysis** [revised policy alternatives paper and new additions]: Offer an analytical review of the academic or policy literature on the policy solutions addressing the causes of the problem you have identified in the second section. You have to discuss at least two alternatives based on at least 6 relevant academic resources (journal articles or book chapters). Discuss the pros and cons of these alternatives in detail.
4. **Solution** [completely new]: Make your own case, and come up with a solution. Explain why your solution is the best possible compared to the alternatives you consider in the third section. Present your theory of change. Develop indicators that would help you to assess policy outcomes (What would success be like? What must happen for this policy to be considered successful?). Explain how you will tailor this solution to the context you are focusing on. Elaborate on the implementation stages.

Referencing style

Referencing style for this module is Harvard. I would like you to kindly use this style in all your written assignments for this module. This referencing style is one of the most commonly used one in social sciences. Basically, in Harvard style, we use in-text citations such as this (McMenamin, 2012) and include a reference list at the end of the text (such as McMenamin, I., 2012. 'If money talks, what does it say? Varieties of capitalism and business financing of parties', *World Politics*, 64(1), pp. 1-38.). A quick guide is available to you here: https://www.nmhs.ucd.ie/sites/default/files/harvard_guide_november_2018.pdf

Official means of communication in this module

You are expected to closely follow the Loop page for this module. I will reach out to you on any issues related to this module only via Loop and by email (please check the email address that appears on the DCU system). Please note that it is my policy not to answer student emails at weekends and weekdays after 5.30pm.

If you would like to talk to me outside of the class, please book a slot here from the available slots between 4 and 6pm on Tuesdays (except the reading week): <https://calendly.com/volkan-yilmaz/office-hours-for-volkan-yilmaz> I normally allocate 10 minutes for each student. Please let me know if you think you will need more than 10 minutes. You may choose to meet in person (Henry Grattan Building, GLA CG47) or online. When you book a slot, please let me know in advance with an email whether you would like to meet in person or online, which module you want to talk about and what your question is. If you cannot make it to my office hours because you have a regularly conflicting schedule, please let me know via email and I will do my best to accommodate you.

I am here to help in whatever way I can. However, please note that I am not in a position to provide one-to-one (or one-to-small-group) catch-up lectures. You will have the recording of each week's live lecture available on the Loop page of this module. But if there are still things that are not clear to you, you can always send me an email or make an appointment with me.

Outline of the module and core readings

Week 1 (14 September) *Introduction and overview*

Week 2 (21 September) *Key steps in policy analysis*

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC's Policy Analytical Framework, Atlanta: CDC.

*Class discussion for full-time students will be held online at 5pm with part-time students.

Week 3 (28 September) *Defining policy problems*

Peters, G.B., 2005. The problem of policy problems. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, 7(4), pp.349–370.

*Class discussion for full-time students will be held online at 5pm with part-time students.

Week 4 (5 October) *Policy tools I*

Wheelan, C.J. 2011. Introduction to Public Policy. Chapter 3: Understanding Behaviour: Rational Man and Women, WW Norton & Company, pp. 69–138.

*Class discussion for full-time students will be held on campus at 2pm.

Week 5 (12 October) *Policy tools II*

Birkland, T.A., 2016. An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making. Routledge, pp. 241–271.

*Class discussion for full-time students will be held on campus at 2pm.

Week 6 (19 October) *Policy implementation*

Knoepfel, P., Larrue, C., Varone, F. and Hill, M., 2007. Public Policy Analysis. Chapter 9: Policy Implementation. The Policy Press, pp. 187–219.

*Class discussion for full-time students will be held online at 5pm with part-time students.

Reading week (no class on 26 October)

Week 7 (2 November) *Policy comparisons, benchmarking and learning*

Freeman, R., 2008. Learning in Public Policy, in: Goodin, R.E., Moran, M., Rein, M. (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy. Oxford University Press, pp. 367–388.

*Class discussion for full-time students will be held online at 5pm with part-time students.

Week 8 (9 November) *The policy process and stakeholder analysis*

Clemons, R.S. and McBeth, M.K., 2020. Power, Policymaking, and Democracy (including Stakeholder Analysis) in Public Policy Praxis: A Case Approach for Understanding Policy and Analysis. Routledge, pp. 25–39.

*Class discussion for full-time students will be held on campus at 2pm.

Week 9 (16 November) *Cost-benefit analysis*

Wheelan, C.J. 2011. Introduction to Public Policy. Chapter 12: Cost-Benefit Analysis, WW Norton & Company, pp. 69–138.

*Class discussion for full-time students will be held on campus at 2pm.

Week 10 (23 November) *Student presentations*

Week 11 (30 November) *Student presentations*

All student presentations will be held online with both full-time and part-time students present. These sessions will last two hours. Please make sure that you will be available between 5-7pm on this day.

Class (Postgraduate)	Sources	Summary and Relevance	Analysis	Critical Thinking	Objectivity	Style
80+ First	Exceptionally good use of literature, often going beyond the module reading list and the programme reading lists; frequently supplemented by primary sources. No factual errors.	Insightful summaries of ideas and evidence. Answered the question fully.	Powerfully logical argument. Extremely lucid presentation of causal complexity.	Exceptional level of independent creative thinking. Evidence of originality.	Rigorously objective. Flags important issues where subjectivity is unavoidable.	Written with flair. Faultless referencing. Spellchecked.
70-79 First	Excellent use of literature, including readings from other modules. No factual errors.	Insightful summaries of ideas and evidence. Answered the question fully.	Logical argument. Clear presentation. Awareness of complexity.	Consistently independent creative thinking, but not necessarily original.	Rigorously objective. Flags important issues where subjectivity is unavoidable.	Elegant writing. Faultless referencing. Spellchecked.
60-69 Second	Use of a wide range of relevant sources. Rare and inconsequential factual errors.	Accurate and comprehensive summaries of ideas and evidence. Answered the question fully.	Logical argument and clear presentation. Confronts causal issues but with some oversimplification.	Substantial evidence of independent thinking	Objective. Usually but not always aware of threat of subjectivity.	Fluent writing. Faultless referencing. Spellchecked.
55-59 Pass	Use of several relevant sources. Rare and inconsequential factual errors.	Largely accurate and fairly wide-ranging summaries of ideas and evidence. Some irrelevance.	Clear structure. Some awareness of challenges of causal argument, but tends to be oversimplified.	Some evidence of independent thinking, but mostly derivative.	Largely objective but some subjective judgements presented as objective assessments.	Competent writing. Occasional and inconsequential referencing mistakes. Spellchecked.
40-54 Pass	Reliance on a handful of sources, often irrelevant or unreliable – such as result from naïve Googling. Minor factual errors.	Substantially accurate and wide-ranging summaries of ideas and evidence. Substantial irrelevance.	Evidence of structure but frequently unclear. Arguments presented but not always logically. Often grossly oversimplified.	Virtually no evidence of independent thinking.	Serious problems with polemic or unselfconscious subjectivity.	Sometimes difficult to understand. Some serious referencing problems. Spellchecked.
35-39 Fail, Uncompensatable	Reliance on a handful of sources, often irrelevant or unreliable – such as result from naïve Googling. Fundamental factual errors.	Poor summaries of ideas and evidence. Indications of an attempt to answer the question, but largely irrelevant.	Weak structure. No argument or argument largely illogical.	No evidence of independent thinking.	Mostly subjective.	Frequently incomprehensible. Incompetent or non-existent referencing. Not spellchecked.
0-34 Fail, Uncompensatable	Little evidence of reading; extemporised from student's knowledge. Fundamental factual errors.	Incompetent summaries. Largely or totally irrelevant.	Virtually no structure. No argument or blatantly illogical argument. Arguments cut and pasted from sources	No evidence of independent thinking. Cutting and pasting from sources.	Almost entirely subjective.	Frequently incomprehensible. Incompetent or non-existent referencing. Not spellchecked.

IMPORTANT NOTE:- This scheme is a guide to help students understand how work is graded. If you receive a particular grade, it will not necessarily meet all of the criteria in the six categories above. Moreover, your grade will not be the sum of individual scores awarded in each of the six categories. Rather, an overall assessment of the merit of your work is made.