Course Description
We will examine the American Policy Process from several different perspectives. First, we will analyze the importance of institutions to policy making at the national level, and in particular we will focus on the relationship between the Congress, the President, and the bureaucracy. Next we will consider how citizens form attitudes and opinions about public policy and will discuss what implications this has for the policy process. Finally, we will consider how ideas are developed and spread through the policy process. As we engage with these various topics we will consider closely the importance of different methodological approaches to studying the policy process.

Required Readings
The following are the main texts/books for the course:


In addition to these books, there are numerous articles that are listed on the course syllabus. You will be able to access these articles through Blackboard.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation 20%
This course is a graduate seminar. You are expected to come to class having completed the assigned readings each week. Your grade will be determined by your attendance and the professor’s evaluation of your contributions to the seminar discussions in terms of quantity and quality.

Discussion Leader 10%
Once during the semester, you will be responsible for leading the discussion. You will lead the discussion for the class. You should start with a brief presentation of the main concepts and ideas being conveyed in the readings. You should then proceed to generate discussion about the assigned readings and unpack and evaluate the arguments and evidence provided. You should focus on the similarities and differences with respect to the assumptions, methods and findings.

Prior to the class meeting (Wednesday by 5 p.m.) you should email the professor a proposed summary and outline for the class discussion. Further, you should provide 5 questions for class discussion and an indication of why each question is important to consider.

Critical Reaction Statements 20%
In 4 weeks (in which you are not a discussion leader or doing the book review) you will write a maximum 3-page (double spaced typed, 12-pt font) reaction paper. These papers are not summaries of the readings but are meant to be a reflection on the readings. You are not obligated to address every reading. These papers should introduce the research questions and debates and offer a critical assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the material. You should consider whether the authors are asking the right questions and whether their methods of analysis are appropriate for answering the questions posed. You should also raise at least one question for class discussion. These papers will be made available to the class via Blackboard by 9 a.m. on Thursday the day of the scheduled class.

Book Review and Presentation (15%)
You will choose one book from a list provided by Professor Ensley. The review will be approximately 1200 words in length and will answer the following questions:

1) Describe the central features of the book’s analysis and the logic and structure of its argument
2) Assess the book’s contributions to its field(s) and the relevant theoretical literatures in this domain, and identify its major shortcomings and/or special contributions.

The list of books is provided throughout the syllabus. Your review will be due the day of the scheduled class. You will also do a 5-10 minute synopsis for the class.
Term Paper (35%)
Your major writing assignment will be a term paper that will be approximately 20-30 pages in length (Typed, double-spaced, and in at least 12 point font). The papers will focus on some aspect of the policy process and will be research-oriented. Papers should include a title page and a bibliography. The American Political Science Association citation format is preferred.

You will provide a 2-3 page prospectus of your paper by Thursday, October 27th. Your will paper will be due no later than the time of the scheduled final exam.

Registration Requirement
The official registration deadline for this course is September 11. University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashLine) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline.

The last day to withdraw from the course is November 6.

Student Cheating and Plagiarism
Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated in this class. If you have any questions about plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty, please consult with the professor.

University policy 3342-3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided in this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you have any questions, please read the policy (see web address below) and/or ask.

http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_datapageid_1976529=2037779

Student Accessibility Policy
University policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sas for more information on registration procedures).
**Course Schedule**

**Week 1 (September 1): Introduction to Studying the Policy Process**
- Review of course syllabus and topics

**Institutions**

**Week 2 (September 8): Institutions and Hierarchy**
- Miller, Chapters 1-8

**Week 3 (September 15): Legislative Organization**
- Kiewiet and McCubbins, Chapters 1-6


**Week 4 (September 22): Executive-Legislative Relations**
- Kiewiet and McCubbins, Chapters 7-8


**Week 5 (September 29): Bureaucratic Politics: Delegation**
- Kiewiet and McCubbins, Chapter 9


**Public Opinion**

**Week 6 (October 6): Public Opinion I**
• Alvarez and Brehm, Chapters 1-4, 6


**Week 7 (October 13): Public Opinion II**
• Alvarez and Brehm, Chapters 5, 7, 10

Week 8 (October 20): Bounded Rationality and Public Policy


Week 9 (October 27): Ideas and Entrepreneurs


Week 10 (November 3): Policy Subsystems, Issue Networks, and Advocacy Coalitions


Week 11 (November 10): Interest groups and Lobbying
• Baumgartner et al, Entire


Week 12 (November 17): Executive Leadership and Policy Formulation
• Rudalevige, Entire


Week 13 (November 24): Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 14 (December 1): Implementation
• Miller, Chapters 9-11
• Patashnik, Chapters 1-3

**Week 15 (December 8): Success and Failure in Reform**

- Patashnik, Chapters 4-9