PO2D0-30 Public Policy for 21st Century Challenges

22/23

Department
> Politics & International Studies

Level
> Undergraduate Level 2

Credit value
> 30

Module duration
> 22 weeks

Assessment
> 100% coursework

Study location
> University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

What is a "public policy"? This is a complex concept with many ways of defining it. Overall, public policies are what institutions DO, often in partnership with private actors, in order to face collective problems, such as unemployment, health, poverty, migration and so on. Public policy investigates several questions: Why some problems comes to the fore while others not? How do actors interact in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of public policies? Why it is so hard to change a long-term established policy, even though it is not working? Why do public policies change at a certain point? And what are the key challenges for public policies in the 21st century and the current troubling times? These are just some of the questions which our course explores. The course will provide students with a strong grounding in public policy by examining the relevant literature and the most contemporary debates which will be analysed through concrete real-life examples, as opposed to a purely theoretical engagement.

Module aims

To introduce students to the analytical tools they need to understand continuity, change and cross-national variation in public policy.
To demonstrate the value of the comparative method in the analysis of public policy.
To provide students with a high-level understanding of the politics behind public policy-making.
To lay the foundations for empirically substantiated and critical evaluation of the actions of

governments.

To give students the opportunity to apply theories of public policy and the comparative method to the analysis of contemporary public policy challenges.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Introduction to Public Policy
Week 2: The Policy Cycle and its Critiques
Week 3: Actors in the Policymaking Process
Week 4: Individual and Group Interests
Week 5: Institutions and Public Policy
Week 6: Reading Week
Week 7: Ideas and Public Policy
Week 8: Theories of the Policy Process and Change
Week 9: Policy Implementation and Failure: Crisis and Wicked Problems
Week 10: Policy Learning, Diffusion and Transfer
Week 11: The Challenge of Inequality
Week 12: The Challenge of Globalization
Week 13: The Challenge of Population Ageing
Week 14: The Environmental Challenge
Week 15: Policy Responses to Inequality
Week 16: Reading Week
Week 17: Policy Responses to Globalization
Week 18: Policy Responses to Population Ageing
Week 19: Environmental Policy Responses
Week 20: Module Conclusion: Taking Stock of Public Policymaking

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an appreciation of different theoretical and conceptual approaches to public policymaking
- Understand how interests, institutions and ideas influence and constrain public policymaking
- Comprehend and critically assess different interpretations of the policymaking process
- Show an awareness of the key actors, institutions and organisations involved in public policymaking
- Show an appreciation of comparative approaches to public policymaking
- Critically assess the key political challenges to public policymaking
- Show an awareness of the major policy debates with regard to the four policy challenges covered in this module
- Critically analyse policy response to these challenges and develop solutions

Subject specific skills

Demonstrate an understanding of the key stages of the policymaking process and the various political factors that shape policy development and implementation

Interpret and assess current policy challenges facing developed and developing countries

Develop robust and feasible policy solutions for government and NGOs

Transferable skills

Communication skills, including both written and oral presentation skills

Lateral thinking skills

Skills in the distillation and application of complex information and ideas

Critical thinking

Analytical skills

Independent research skills

Problem solving

Time management

Information Technology

Skills in academic practice

Awareness of, and sensitivity to, diversity

Decision making

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	22 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Private study	260 hours (87%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Students will also be expected to engage in intensive independent study, employing the reading lists provided to deepen their knowledge of the subject. In addition to attendance at lectures and seminars, you should spend 8 hours per week on your own independent study for this module.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Final Essay	50%		Yes (extension)
Assessed essay			
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Policy Brief	50%		Yes (extension)

Drawing on the content of this module, identify one policy challenge. Outline alternative public policy responses to this challenge, and set out your own policy recommendations - drawing attention to the limitations and distributional consequences of your suggestions.

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Feedback form via Tabula; optional verbal consultation

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 2 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 2 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 2 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 2 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 2 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3

year)
- Year 2 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 2 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 2 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 2 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
  - Year 2 of M163 Politics, International Studies and French
  - Year 3 of M163 Politics, International Studies and French
- UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
  - Year 2 of M164 Politics, International Studies and German
  - Year 3 of M164 Politics, International Studies and German
- UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
  - Year 2 of M166 Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
  - Year 3 of M166 Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
  - Year 2 of M165 Politics, International Studies and Italian
  - Year 3 of M165 Politics, International Studies and Italian

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)