

# **35411: Political Feasibility Analysis: Winning Strategies in Public Policy**

**Fall Quarter 2016**

**Wednesday, 3:00-5:50 pm, Room 289-B**

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**(Syllabus subject to revisions)**

## **Course Overview and Syllabus**

**Major course objectives:** Enacting public policy and bringing about social change is a dynamic process because of the changing nature of the political environment. This course will review and analyze various strategies and methodologies for assessing the political feasibility of successfully implementing new public policies at the federal, state, and local levels.

Developing and implementing new public policies requires an array of strategic approaches, analytical tools, and resources while understanding the current political environment, historical precedents and key pressure points in the political system with various policy domains.

This course will introduce students to a new perspective on how to successfully enact public policy through the use of the political feasibility analysis model. The course will examine how to conduct an assessment of the policy initiators power base to determine the best strategic approach for enacting a new public policy. Various public policy strategies will be analyzed to include inclusionary, persuasive and exclusionary. After assessing the policy initiator's power base and the risks, an analysis will be made on the viability of pursuing the public policy issue given the political environment and historical precedents.

The course will analyze retrospectively various successful and unsuccessful public policy campaigns. Through the political feasibility analysis model we will examine key strategies and variables to determine why some policies are successful and others fail. The course will look prospectively at current policies in debate at the federal, state and local levels and analyze the current strategies in play to predict the final outcomes given the strategies utilized and the current political environment.

Aside from analyzing the various policy strategies, the course will examine the various policy domains to include the legislative, executive, judicial and bureaucratic. In addition, the course will explore the impact of indirect policy makers outside of government such as lobbyists, public interest groups, public relations firms, business groups, faith-based organizations and individual activists as well the growing impact of social media.

By the end of the course, students will be adept at assessing the political feasibility of implementing new public policies at all levels of government to win in the endgame.

**Reading Materials and Chalk:** Materials for the course will include Harvard Kennedy School of Government policy case studies, book chapter readings, and articles. Students will be required to read materials that will keep them current on the hot policy issues in play nationally as well as at the state and local government levels. Materials and announcements will be posted regularly on Chalk and only one book will be required to be purchase for the course which is listed under readings.

**Structure:** The structure for the course will center on case study analysis, Policy Group class presentations and class participation in analyzing current hot policy topics. Students will be called upon to integrate the skills and draw upon analytical tools gained from other core curriculum courses.

**Policy Group formation:** Depending on the number of students enrolled in the class, Policy Groups will be formed with three or four students in each group at the beginning of the class. Each Policy Group will agree upon two policy issue areas of interest currently in debate and track the progress on the issues during the course using the feasibility model.

In addition, each Policy Group will make two class presentations on one successful and one unsuccessful policy issue using the feasibility model. Examples will be posted on Chalk of previous class presentations to include the powerpoint and written policy memorandums. Handouts will be provided and posted on Chalk detailing the format and outline of the policy memorandums.

**Guest Speakers:** Guest speakers will be invited to include legislators, lobbyists, nonprofit and public interest leaders, bureaucrats, journalists, business leaders, and union representatives, among others.

**Format for each class:**

- Discussion of “Hot Policy Topics” in debate at various levels of government at start of class.
- Instructor lectures on various case studies and key elements to policy analysis framework.
- Class case study discussion and analysis. Students will be called upon address key questions.
- Policy Group class presentations.

**Text books and Harvard Kennedy School case studies**

Students will be required to purchase *Politics and Public Policy, Strategic Actors and Policy Domains*, Donald C. Baumer and Carl E. Van Horn, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, CQ Press, 2014. Information on the purchase of the book will be posted on Chalk.

In addition, several books will be referenced with particular chapters assigned that will be handed out or posted on Chalk. Some additional references may include:

*Interest Groups Unleashed*, Paul S. Herrnson, Christopher J. Deering, Clyde Wilcox, CQ Press, 2013.

*Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses and Why*, Frank Baugarter, Jeffrey Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David Kimball, Beth Leech, University of Chicago Press, 2009.

*Interest Group Politics*, Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2007.

*Eyewitness To Power: The Essence of Leadership—Nixon to Clinton*, David Gergen, Touchstone edition, 2001.

Harvard Kennedy School case studies will be utilized with instructions posted on Chalk for purchasing. Some of the case studies will include:

- A Prescription for Change: The 2010 Overhaul of the American Health Care System under Obama.
- The Battle Over the Clinton Health Care Proposal and The Sequel.
- Mental Health Parity. Bill signed by President Bush 2008.
- Against All Odds: The Campaign in Congress for Japanese American Redress.
- Supreme Court’s ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act 2013 and overturning Prop. 8 in California banning same-sex marriages in 2008.
- From Research to Policy: The Cigarette Excise Tax.
- “No Prison In East L.A!” Birth of a Grassroots Movement.

- California Global Warming Solutions Act.
- Department of Homeless Services: Overhauling New York City's Approach to Shelter and Homelessness.
- A Tampa “Town Hall” Forum Goes Awry: Anatomy of a Public Meeting Fiasco, 2009.
- Others to be posted.

Other case study materials to be provided:

- Collective Bargaining in Ohio-Senate Bill 5 and Popular Referendum Issue Two in 2010.
- California Proposition 8. A ballot proposition created by opponents of same-sex marriage which passed in California in 2008.
- State of Recidivism-The Revolving Door of America’s Prisons, PEW research study.
- Defeating legislation calling for a “utility rate freeze” in Illinois lead by ComEd.
- Hunger in America. Feeding America, the largest hunger relief organization in the U.S., embarks upon a national advocacy campaign after 9/11 for increase federal support and the increase public awareness.
- Farm Bill reform and reducing farm subsidies. Building a Left-Right Coalition and an alliance of strange bedfellows in 2008.
- FedEx vs. UPS and the battle of the messenger titans over federal legislation that the teamsters to unionize FedEx. The use of social media to target key Senators to opposed the legislation.
- The Children’s Museum in Chicago and the battle to move the museum between the Mayor and City Council.
- Expanding Medicare coverage for diabetes prevention: fighting “no new mandates in Congress” and Speaker Gingrich.
- Establishing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. which is the most visited in our nation’s capitol. Building a national coalition to gain passage of legislation through Congress establishing a memorial to honor the more than 58,000 killed in Vietnam and to impact on public policy.
- Republic Window Company plant closing in Chicago. Employees protest the plant closing and gain local and national support.
- Building a Third Airport in Chicago. Development of a federal strategy and passage of the federal Airport Faculty Charges.
- Developing a National Urban Agenda for America’s cities with the Mayor of Chicago and U.S. Conference of Mayors during the Reagan era.

Other articles and research to be posted or available in the library:

- *Obama, Explained*, James Fallows, The Atlantic, March 2012.
- *The Obama Memos-The making of a post-post-partisan presidency*, Ryan Lizza, New Yorker Magazine, January 30, 2012.
- *Making It—How Chicago Shaped Obama*, Ryan Lizza, New Yorker Magazine, July 21, 2008.
- *Public Affairs at the Digital Frontier: Insights for Winning Public Affairs Campaigns*, research from Google, Inc., November 2008.
- *The Changing Nature of Communications: Impacting on Digital Communications Strategies*. Lessons learned from the Obama campaign and impact on Internet advertising and grassroots mobilization. Research from key architects of the Obama for America Presidential campaign.

### **Current events readings:**

Students will also be expected to remain current on high-profile public policy issues and the current political environment by reading major newspapers, journal, and magazines. Students should be prepared to engage in class discussions and will be called upon for comments. Aside from reading references such as the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, etc., students are encouraged to reference Politico.com, The Daily Beast.com, Congressional Quarterly, Roll Call.com, among others.

### **Assignments and Grading:**

This course will have group and individual assignments as the core for grading.

#### Group Assignments

- Tracking developments in two policy issues to be discussed weekly in class.
  - Each Policy Group will track two policy issues, keep current on the latest developments, and be able to relate them to course material. Students should be prepared to update the class weekly.
- Two policy presentations to the class and written policy memorandums.
  - Each policy presentation will be 30-35 minutes with a Q&A on a successful or unsuccessful policy initiative. Students should be creative with their power point presentations and other visual materials. A copy of the power point file should be turned in on the day of the presentation along with a written 6-8 page paper. The paper will explain the group's analysis in more depth, providing a written narrative that supports the class power point presentation. Examples of previous class presentations will be posted on Chalk.

#### **Individual Assignments**

- Each student is expected to complete assigned readings and come prepared for class discussions on the hot topics of the week.
- Students will be called to discuss the weekly case studies and provide insightful commentary on strategies utilized.
- Final take home exam  
Students will submit a 15-18 page paper on a policy topic of the student's choice in consultation with the instructor. The paper will delve into a real world policy issue currently in play and recommend a strategic approach for winning in the endgame.

#### **Final grades will be based on:**

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|--|----------------|
| • Class participation                                    | 10%            |
| • Two written policy memorandums and class presentations | 50% (25% each) |
| • Final take home exam                                   | 40%            |

The final exam will be handled out three weeks in advance of the end of the quarter. In order to devote maximum time to adequately conduct research and analysis for the final exam, there will be limited reading assignments for the final weeks of class. The exam will provide an opportunity for students to identify a new public policy that should be implemented in the real world and putting theory into practice using the political feasibility analysis model for winning in the endgame.

## **Weekly Course Outline**

(Subject to revisions)

### **Week One: Introduction to Political Feasibility Analysis**

#### *Readings:*

- Politics and Public Policy, Baumer and Van Horn, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2014, Chapter 1.
- Case study: The power of an idea and the battle to build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Posted on Chalk

#### Class structure:

- Instructor background, class introductions and course expectations.
- Course requirements, structure for each class, overview of syllabus, outcomes for the course.
- Policy Group formation and assignments:
  - Track two policy issues throughout the course.
  - Present two class policy analysis memorandums.
- Class introductions and discussion on major policy areas of interest. Each student should be prepared to address one policy area of interest and why they feel it is important.
- Introductory lecture on the political feasibility analysis model and developing winning strategies in the endgame.
- Case study presentation: Establishing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the most visited memorial in our nation's Capitol. The power of an idea, changing public opinion, building a power base and impacting on public policy.

### **Week Two: Public Policy Strategies in the Feasibility Model: Persuasive, Inclusionary and Exclusionary**

#### *Readings posted on Chalk:*

- Politics and Public Policy, Carl E. Van Horn, Donald C. Baumer, William T. Gormley, Jr., 2001 edition, Chapter 10, Political Feasibility Analysis.
- A New Era of Interest Group Participation in Federal Elections, Chapter 1, Interest Groups Unleashed, 2013.
- Case study analysis "Against All Odds: The Campaign in Congress for Japanese American Redress", Harvard Kennedy case.

#### "Hot Topics" class discussion

*Lecture and class discussion:* In-depth discussion of the utilization of the political feasibility model with emphasis on analyzing the key policy strategies:

- Persuasive: policy analysis, rhetoric, protest
- Inclusionary: compromise, coalitions, consultation
- Exclusionary: secrecy, deception and by-pass

*Class discussion:* Growth of interest groups participation in elections and advocacy to impact on public policy change. Various strategies and tactics utilized such as political action committees, grassroots & grass-tops organizing, ad hoc coalition building, use social media vs. traditional media campaigns.

*Class discussion and analysis on case study:* “Against All Odds: The Campaign in Congress for Japanese American Redress.” Use of persuasive strategies and tactics to gain of the Civil Liberties Act to win in the endgame.

### **Week Three: Health Care Reform Case Study Analysis: Clinton Losing and Obama Winning-Why?**

*Readings:*

- “The Battle Over the Clinton Health Care Proposal,” Harvard Kennedy case study for purchase.
- “A Prescription for Change: The 2010 Overhaul of the American Health Care System”, Harvard case study for purchase.
- “Eyewitness to Power: The Essence of Leadership—Nixon to Clinton,” David Gergen, posted on Chalk.
- *Making It—How Chicago Shaped Obama*, Ryan Lizza, *The New Yorker*, July 21, 2008. Posted on Chalk.
- Politics and Public Policy, Van Horn, Baumer, 4th Edition, 2014, Chapter 6, “Chief Executive Politics.”

“Hot Topics” class discussion.

*Lecture and class discussion:* Battle Over the Clinton Health Care Proposal and the Obama Affordable Care Act.

- The Clinton and Obama health care reform initiative will be analyzed and compared focusing key policy strategies utilized, risks and opportunities, shifting political environments, communications strategies and other tactics within the feasibility model. Class discussion and analysis to assess why Clinton lost and Obama won.
- Class discussion of the Clinton and Obama leadership styles referencing the David Gergen’s book “Eyewitness to Power” and Ryan Lizza’s New Yorker Magazine article.
- Chief Executive Politics and the feasibility model.

### **Week Four: Persuasive Strategies-Use of Policy Analysis and Research**

*Readings:*

- “From Research to Policy: The Cigarette Excise Tax”, Harvard Kennedy Case Study, posted on Chalk.
- “Recidivism and Jail Reform”, PEW research study, posted on Chalk.
- Politics and Public Policy, Van Horn, Baumer, 4th Edition, 2014, Chapter 5, “Cloakroom Politics.”

“Hot Topics” class discussion.

*Policy Group class presentations.*

*Lectures and case study class discussion:*

- The Cigarette Excise Tax.
- Recidivism and Jail Reform.
- Cloakroom Politics and the Legislative Domain.

## **Week Five: Persuasive Strategies-Protest and Grassroots Organizing Versus Exclusionary Strategies with Secrecy and Grass-Tops Mobilization**

### *Readings:*

- “No Prison In East L.A.!” Birth of a Grassroots Movement and sequel, Harvard Kennedy Case Study.
- Republic Window Company Shutdown and Plant Closing. Posted on Chalk.
- Building a Third Airport in Chicago through Federal Funding of an Airport Utility Fee. Posted on Chalk.

*“Hot Topics” class discussion.*

*Policy Group presentations.*

### *Lectures and case study analysis:*

- “No Prison In East L.A.!” Birth of a Grassroots Movement.
- Republic Window plant closing in Chicago. Persuasive strategies with protest and media exposure to build public awareness with key domains.
- Building a Third Airport in Chicago-use secrecy and grass-tops exclusionary strategies.

## **Week Six: Inclusionary Strategies-Coalition Building, Alliances and Consultation**

### *Readings:*

- Building A National Urban Agenda for America’s cities.
- Farm Bill Reform: Building a “Left-Right Coalition.”
- Federal gun control legislative initiatives proposed by the Obama administration but failed to be enacted after the tragic shootings at Sandy Hook 2013

*Hot Topics class discussion*

*Policy Group Class Presentations.*

### *Lecture case studies and call discussion:*

- Development of “National Urban Agenda” during the Reagan era-Fighting for America’s cities.
- Building an “Alliance of Strange Bedfellow”-Farm Bill reform and ending subsidies
- Obama efforts to gain passage of gun control legislation after Sand Hook.

## **Week Seven: Use of Direct and Indirect Policy Makers in the Feasibility Model**

### *Readings:*

- Mental Health Parity Act, signed by President Bush 2008, Harvard Kennedy Case Study.
- Winning in an era of “No New Mandates” with Speaker Newt Gingrich. Expanding Medicare coverage for diabetes prevention and education.
- Politics and Public Policy, Van Horn, Baumer, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2014, Chapter 4, “Bureaucratic Politics.”

*“Hot Topics” class discussion*

*Policy Group class presentations*

*Lecture and class discussion:*

- Mental Health Parity Act case study.
- Diabetes Prevention and Education: Expanding Medicare Coverage.
- Bureaucratic Politics and the Political Feasibility model.

*Policy Group Class Presentations.*

**Week Eight: Non-Profit and Business Organizations in the Feasibility Model**

*Readings:*

- Hunger in America-Crisis after the 9/11 attack.
- FedEx vs. UPS—Clash of the Messenger Titans.
- ComEd and the Illinois Utility Rate Freeze.
- Politics and Public Policy, Van Horn, Baumer, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2014, Chapter 8, “Living Room Politics.”

*“Hot Topics” class discussion.*

*Lectures and class discussion:*

- Growth of non-profits and special interest groups engaged in public policy and advocacy.
- Feeding America-non-profit organization building a “National Call to Action” after 9/11 to feed hungry Americans.
- ComEd, FedEx and UPS-business case studies in the feasibility model.

*Policy Group Class Presentations*

**Week Nine: Tools of the Trade: Lobbyists, Communications/PR Firms, Town Hall meetings, Social vs. traditional Media**

*Readings:*

- California Global Warming Solutions Act-AB 32, Harvard Kennedy Case Study
- Proposition 23 state referendum to overturn AB 32
- Chicago Transit Authority- state funding crisis and the battle between the Governor and Mayor
- A Tampa “Town Hall” Forum Goes Awry: Anatomy of a Public Meeting Fiasco, 2009, Harvard Kennedy Case Study.
- Ethics & Feasibility Model: Case study of Jack Abramoff: The Rise & Fall of K-Street Lobbyist in D.C.

*“Hot Topics” class discussion*

*Policy Group presentations*

*Lectures:*

- California Global Warming Solutions Act
- A Tampa “Town Hall” Forum Goes Awry: Anatomy of a Public Meeting Fiasco.
- Impact of lobbyists, PR Firms, Public Affairs Consultants and Celebrities.



## **Week Ten: Mastering the Feasibility Model for Winning in the Endgame**

### *Readings:*

- Supreme Court's ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act 2013 and overturning Prop. 8 in California banning same-sex marriages in 2008.
- The "Three Strikes" Law in California: The Ballot Initiative, Harvard case study.
- Politics and Public Policy, The Policy Domains
- "Institutional Performance", chapter 9, Politics and Public Policy, Baumer and Van Horn, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2014.

*"Hot Topics"*: Forecasting the outcomes from hot policy topics!

### *Class lectures:*

- Policy Domains in the Feasibility Model.
- Assessing American public policy and the power of an idea.
- Mastering the Feasibility Model.

### *Closing class discussion:*

- Comments on final exam topics and discussion.
- Outcomes for the course, expectations and key takeaway.
- Course feedback on content, structure and recommendations.