

## **Fact Sheet**

### **What is the structure of the course?**

The course runs across the summer and fall – with the bulk of the work assigned to the summer course (resulting in a lighter schedule for students in the fall). During the summer, students prepare policy memos and presentations, and in the fall they reconvene to deliver final presentations and engage in discussion and critique.

### **Does the course count for credit?**

This course should be thought of as a single course that meets in the summer and fall quarters. You are required to participate in the summer and fall sessions of this course. The summer component of the course is a non-credit course, but the fall is a for credit course, and carries the standard 100 credit units. The course carries the standard tuition cost for a single course, which will be charged in the autumn quarter **only**.

### **How will the non-credit course appear on my transcript? How will the credit-bearing course appear (course name/number)?**

These will appear as a standard non-credit course in the summer, and credit course in the fall.

### **What final deliverable(s) are required? Will the course be graded with a letter grade?**

The deliverables include a final policy memo (5 pages) and a final presentation (25 minutes). The course will be graded with a letter grade that will appear on your fall quarter transcript.

### **What are the dates for the summer course?**

The course will meet from June 8-June 26<sup>th</sup> and again from September 28<sup>th</sup> to December 5<sup>th</sup>

### **When and where will the class meet in the summer?**

The class will meet three times a week in the summer at the following times:

*Mon: 5-8*

*Wed: 5-8*

*Thursday: 4:30-7:00*

The class will meet at the University of Chicago's Office of Federal Relations  
*1730 Pennsylvania Avenue NW*  
*Suite 275*  
*Washington, DC, 20006*

There are likely to be a few networking events outside of class as well.

### **How much time outside of class meeting times should I expect to commit to this course? Can I take this course while working full-time?**

During the summer, this class will meet three evenings per week. There will be dedicated class time to work on this course assignments. There is an expectation that you find time outside of the classroom to complete the scheduled assignments if you do not finish them in class. While everyone juggles responsibilities differently, we expect students to be able to juggle this course while working full time.

**What are the course meeting times for the autumn course?**

The class will meet twice during the autumn quarter for final presentations and to engage in discussion and critique. These dates are tentatively scheduled for October 6 and November 10.

**Can I participate in the summer course remotely?**

No, this course will not be offered remotely. You are required to attend the course in person both in DC and in Chicago. This is important because the class includes guest speaker panels from the policy arena as well as networking events with policymakers in Washington, DC.

**What if I plan to have an internship in DC but am unable to get one and therefore unable to relocate for the summer? Will I have to forfeit my seat in the course?**

If you are unable to relocate for the summer for any reason, you will be required to forfeit your seat.

**How many seats are available in the summer course?**

There are twenty-five seats available.

**When and how do I register? Is there an application or is first come, first served?**

Applications will be solicited for this class in March, and selection decisions will be announced within the month. The application will include a short task: students will be asked highlights a policy problem they are interested in and provide some supporting motivating evidence for this work. We are seeking applicants who are eager to apply their skills to policy and who demonstrate initiative and responsiveness.

**Are there funds available to support my travel and/or living expenses for the summer?**

There are no funds to support travel for this course.

**Does Harris provide support to find housing in DC?**

We will share a list of housing options in DC, which recommend booking by April 25.

**Will Harris guarantee to place me at an internship if I am enrolled in this course? Will I get preference for internships if I'm in the course?**

This course unrelated to any internship. For students interested in securing an internship alongside this course, the Harris Career Coaching team can help you with your search strategy, application support and interview practice. Feel free to [book a coaching appointment](#) in HarrisLink. Outside of an internship, this course will serve as a strong

professional stepping stone by: (1) connecting you with policymakers who are actively engaged in the policy arena, and (2) equipping you with the skills to stand out in any internship you pursue.

**How much money should I plan to save to afford to live in DC for the summer?**

The housing options we identified cost approximately \$500 per week, or \$1,500 for three weeks. Round-trip flights are estimated at \$250, bringing the total cost of attending the course in DC to approximately \$1,750. If you are extending your stay in DC for longer than 3 weeks you should budget accordingly. No meals will be provided in conjunction with this course.

**Will I be eligible for summer financial aid if I enroll in this course?**

Students must be enrolled in at least 200 units to be eligible for financial aid. This course is not unit bearing during the summer. You will not be eligible for summer financial aid.

**PPHA 34861: From Data to Impact: Policy Action in D.C. – Part I**  
**PPHA 34862: From Data to Impact: Policy Action in D.C. – Part II**  
**SYLLABUS**

**Faculty:** Erin Kelley  
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Office Hours: Monday, 12:00pm – 2:00pm

*Erin is an Assistant Professor at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago, and a consultant with the Development Impact Department at the World Bank. In her research, she studies labor markets (firm growth, job-search), social protection programs, and technology adoption using randomized field experiments. Her ongoing work includes projects in Bangladesh, Kenya, and India.*

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to help students bridge their technical skills with real-world policy applications. It is organized around three main pillars:

Pillar 1: Policy makers and research questions

- How to craft policy relevant research questions
- How to collect/synthesize existing evidence and data

Pillar 2: How to generate evidence

- How to summarize data
- How to create relevant analysis outputs

Pillar 3: How to present evidence to policy makers

- How to present and discuss analysis outputs
- How to create a narrative around multiple analysis points

Students will examine these themes through a case study, in which they will work with a real policy issue and accompanying dataset. They will produce a final policy memo and deliver a presentation.

Two classes a week will start with a 1h lecture on how to effectively write a specific section of a policy memo, including the introduction, literature review, descriptive statistics, main analysis, ancillary analyses, and conclusion. This lecture will provide students with the skills needed to create these types of research outputs. After the lecture, the faculty advisor will meet with each group for to work with them on their outputs. Groups will use any remaining time to work as a team.

By the end of the course students should feel comfortable with 1) the process of developing policy-relevant research questions; 2) the iterative process that is crafting research outputs; 3) the process of presenting and delivering key policy outputs.

For the third class of the week, students will have the opportunity to engage directly with key policymakers. Each week, a panel of experts from across the policy space—NGOs, the Executive Branch, multilateral institutions, think tanks, and others—will convene to discuss a policy issue. Students will first hear from the panel for one hour, followed by a Q&A session. Students will submit questions in advance



for review. This component of the course is designed to expose students to a range of policy issues and career paths, while also helping them develop networking skills and practice professional dialogue.

### **Course content:**

- The course will be structured as follows (subject to adjustments):

<b><u>Week</u></b>	<b><u>Content</u></b>	<b><u>Associated assignment</u></b>
1 – June 8 (5pm -8pm)	Lecture 1: How to craft a research question	
2 – June 10 (5pm -8pm)	Lecture 2: Synthesizing the literature	Assignment 1: Research Question
3 – June 11 (5pm -7:30pm)	Lecture 3: <i>Panel I – Topics in Environmental Economics</i>	Assignment 2: Literature Review
4 – June 15 (5pm -8pm)	Lecture 4: Organizing and Summarizing Data	Assignment 3: Data Summary
5 – June 17 (5pm -8pm)	Lecture 5: Applying research designs	Assignment 4: Descriptive Statistics
6 – June 18 (5pm -7:30pm)	Lecture 6: <i>Panel II – Topics in Development Economics</i>	Assignment 5: Main Research Design
7 – June 22 (5pm -8pm)	Lecture 7: Applying core analysis concepts	Assignment 6: Key Tables/Figures
8 – June 24 (5pm -8pm)	Lecture 8: Drafting Policy memos/presentations	Assignment 7: Ancillary Tables/Figures
9 – June 25 (5pm -7:30pm)	Lecture 9: <i>Panel III – Topics in Legislation and Governance</i>	Assignment 8: Draft Policy memo/presentation
10 – October 6 (3pm -6pm)	Lecture 10: Final policy memos/presentation	Assignment 9: Final Policy memo/presentation
11 – November 10 (3pm-6pm)	Lecture 11: Discussion	Assignment 10: Final Discussion about lessons learned (and summary write-up)

### **Prerequisites:**

- Proficiency in R is mandatory. Students are expected to know how to work with data. The faculty advisor is available to provide assistance, but they are not responsible for teaching basic coding skills.

### **Logistics:**

- Course website: This course uses Canvas for all materials.
- In-person meetings: Student attendance is mandatory (**but if you are feeling unwell, please do not attend**). Please be on time; we will start promptly. I will post any slides I use to Canvas the



night before class. Please notify me if you cannot make the scheduled time. Any sustained absence requests must go through the Dean of Students office.

- Pre-recorded lectures: Students may need to quarantine if they are feeling unwell. All lectures are recorded to provide students with flexibility, and can be watched later. For group meetings, you will have to coordinate with your team to Zoom in.
- Office hours: I will hold in-person office hours, at the time above. I recommend using these sessions to ask further questions about how to generate the outputs relevant to your project. If you are interested in joining for office hours, please sign up for 20 minute slots ([found here](#)). Please be respectful of your classmates when signing up for office hours. Any office hour sign-ups more than 2 weeks in advance without prior permission will be deleted.
- Group work: Students will work in groups of up to 5 students. While managing team dynamics can be challenging, the best results come from a well-functioning team where everyone contributes equally. Students are expected to collaborate and ensure that each member plays an active role. They should use this opportunity to learn from one another, recognizing that not everyone excels at every task. Discussing strengths and identifying skills that need development is encouraged. By doing so, students can find complementary roles and support each other's growth.

### **Assignments and grading:**

- Assignments: Each assignment contributes to a section of your final outputs, such as the research question, literature review, data summary, descriptive statistics, main regression, ancillary analysis, draft presentation, and draft policy memo. These assignments help you maintain a rigorous timeline and not fall behind in crafting your final policy memo and presentation. They also allow the faculty advisor to give regular feedback, helping ensure that your final policy memo and presentation are as strong and polished as possible. Assignments must be typed and submitted electronically. Each week, the group will submit one joint assignment. During the weekly check-in with the faculty advisor, each member must present the portion of the work they personally contributed. All coding in assignments must be done in R. Assignments 1-7 and 10 will receive equal weight. They will be graded on a check minus, check, check plus system. Check minus means the work is not meeting the standard we expect for the class. Check means the work has met the standard. Check plus means the work has exceeded expectations. Due dates are as follows:
  - Assignment 1: Wednesday, **June 10** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 2: Thursday, **June 11** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 3: Monday, **June 15** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 4: Wednesday, **June 17** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 5: Thursday, **June 18** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 6: Monday, **June 22** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 7: Wednesday, **June 24** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 8: Thursday, **June 25** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 9: Thursday, **October 6** at 9 am.
  - Assignment 10: Thursday, **November 10** at 9 am.



- Final Policy Memo: The policy memo represents your final deliverable. **It should not exceed 5 pages.** We want you to present a clear narrative to the hypothetical client about the program's impact you are analyzing.
- Final Presentation: Your final presentation should follow the same structure as the policy memo. **It should not exceed 25 minutes.** It should clearly communicate the results to the hypothetical client, encouraging them to read the memo in detail to gain a deeper understanding of the main findings.
- Late policy: Late assignments will receive no credit and will automatically be marked as a "check minus." However, you are allowed to drop your lowest assignment grade, meaning your lowest score out of the seven assignments can be excluded. Any requests for additional extensions must be approved by the Dean of Students office.
- Grades: Grades will be determined by seven assignments, a final presentation, and a final policy memo. The weekly assignments will make up 56% of the final grade (with the lowest assignment grade automatically dropped, so only the top seven assignments will count for 8% each). Students will be required to evaluate the contributions of their group members. These peer evaluations will account for 4% of the final grade. The final presentation will contribute 15% to the final grade, and the final policy memo will count for 15%.

#### **Additional policies:**

- Email: We will try to respond to emails within 48 hours (Monday to Friday). If you don't hear back within that time, please resend your email. To ensure we see your message, include '[PPHA XXX]' in the subject line. If your question requires a lengthy response, we will ask you to come to office hours or schedule an appointment to discuss it in person. We encourage you to attend office hours rather than rely on email for questions pertaining to the class.
- Statistical software: Data work for this class will be done in R. We recommend that you use RStudio in conjunction with the tidyverse.
- Confidentiality: Students are expected to keep all data and materials shared by the client confidential, as well as to keep the content of conversations with clients in confidence.

#### **Academic honesty:**

- The Harris School has a formal policy on academic honesty that you are expected to adhere to. Examples of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to) turning in someone else's work as your own, and turning in the same written text as someone else. This course has a zero-tolerance policy for academic dishonesty. Any student found in violation of this academic honesty policy will receive an automatic F in the class. We will also refer all cases of cheating to the office of the Dean of Students. They may in turn impose further penalties as per the Harris School Disciplinary Procedures, including probation and expulsion. If you have any questions



regarding what would or would not be considered academic dishonesty in this course, please do not hesitate to ask.

**ADA accommodations:**

- Any student who believes they may need assistance should inform the Office of Student Disability Services by the end of the first week of class. Once you have received an accommodation letter, it should be presented to the course instructor immediately.
  - For more information, visit <https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/>

**Diversity and Inclusion:**

- The Harris School embraces and respects the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff, recognizing that rigorous inquiry and effective public policy problem-solving benefit from a variety of viewpoints, experiences, and traditions. Both the University and the Harris School have established principles and guidelines to ensure we remain a community where challenging topics are discussed with kindness and respect for everyone.
  - For more information on the University's policies, please visit <https://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/university-policies/>
  - For more information on Harris' policies, please visit <https://harris.uchicago.edu/about/diversity-inclusion/our-commitment>