

University of Arkansas  
Graduate School  
Public Policy Ph.D. Program

**PUBP 6134 Capstone Seminar in Public Policy  
Fall 2007 syllabus**

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**Office Hours:** by appt.

**Required Text:**

I ask you to buy this text:

Yanow, Dvora (2000) *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis in Qualitative Research Method Series 47*, CA: Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications.  
ISBN: 09780761908277

Occasionally, I may assign an outside reading, providing either a web link or digital copy (CD).

**Catalogue Description of Course:**

The university describes this course as:

This course is intended to integrate various policy interests in a specific community based project.

We will identify stakeholders and a policy issue of interest to them and to the community (uncover its multiple meanings). Students will research the issue and in consultation with classmates and the community, propose a range of policy options, implementation strategies, and evaluation tool.

An intrinsic component of this course is the appreciation of the interdisciplinary factors affecting policy research and decisions. To this end, the project report will need to include descriptions of all the various administrative, political, economic, and physical

circumstances affecting policy determinations in the specific community setting. Students are expected to summarize both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of all major factors affecting policy.

Students will be expected to integrate relevant theory from their core and specialization coursework into the capstone process and into the outcome of their work.

The capstone course is a service-learning class. The term service-learning is defined as a method:

Under which students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that – (i) is conducted in and meets the needs of a community; (ii) is coordinated with an ... institution of higher education..., and with the community; and (iii) helps foster civic responsibility; and that – (iv) is integrated into and enhances the [core] academic curriculum of the students, ... and (v) provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience.

U.S. Code (annotated). Vol. 10401-12700, Title 42, Section 12511, Chapter 23 (1995).

### **Pre-requisites:**

This is the final (classroom) course of your degree program

### **Class Meetings, Expectations, and Progress Schedule**

This course is four credit hours. The expectation is that students will spend approximately 12 hours per week on class work.

All assignments must be completed on time and to the best of the student's ability in order for the class to be successful: useful to the community. Assignments will be returned with suggestions for rewrites. Because this class is unlike other academic classes, such rewrites are part of the learning process.

Specific class activities (beyond the broad activities listed in the progress schedule below) will be tentative depending upon the nature of our projects and how they progress.

Although the Yanow text material will further refine this structure, the following is a general list of the elements of the capstone coursework and products:

- Problem Statement
- Problem History
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Policy Options and Evaluative Criteria

- Creation of Useable Knowledge, Implementation Strategy and Evaluation Recommendations
- Report Production and Presentation

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

To be discussed in class

### **Schedule (Tentative):**

This is the progress I will expect you to achieve in order to finish the research project within the semester:

Week	Progress
1 Aug. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Introduction, meet and greet, Yanow text, expectations, class meetings, report and presentation basics, and general project description.
2 Sept. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Yanow text; study the <i>interpretive communities</i> and identify policy-relevant artifacts (to aid in defining the problems related to your specialization area), also, review Yanow's example (p. 33—39) tentative sketch of your project interpretive communities and plans to collect data.
3 Sept. 19 <sup>th</sup>	Project design and contacts, Carry out the design (assess local knowledge: gather relevant documents and contact info., interview, observe)
4 Oct. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Carry out the design (cont.)
5 Oct. 17 <sup>th</sup>	Carry out the design; and analyze artifacts (data): language, objects, acts
6 Oct. 31 <sup>st</sup>	Analyze artifacts (cont.)
7 Nov. 14 <sup>th</sup>	Prepare policy report
8 Nov. 28 <sup>th</sup>	Prepare report and presentation
9 Dec. 4 <sup>th</sup>	Presentation

**Suggested structure for the final paper: TBA**

**Suggested structure for the presentation: TBA**

**Grading:**

You will earn an “A” if the report (and its corresponding presentation) is incredibly thorough, includes a concise literature review of the research completed in your area, careful records of all field data and interviews and description of approach used to determine the policy problem statement and your recommended policies, and a summary of expected outcomes, implementation strategies, and recommended instruments for assessing the success of the proposed policies. An “A” report will have very few (if any) grammar or mechanical errors and will follow APA style thoroughly. Finally, students who make an “A” will be at all of the class and community meetings.

A “B” report (and its corresponding presentation) is similar to an “A” report but is less thorough, which may include less research, data, and analytical support. “B” report will be less precise and have multiple grammar and mechanical errors and may miss on APA style. Students who make a “B” may miss a class meeting.

A “C” report (and its corresponding presentation) is very average work and may be missing some of the final report components outlined above. For example, this report will have a developed problem statement and completed data collection, but missing its analytical function(s). This report will have numerous grammar, mechanical, and stylistic errors. “C” students will miss multiple class appointments and one community meeting.

A student making a “D” has done less than “C” or average work.

Students who have done no work at all will earn an “F.”

In some cases an “I” or “Incomplete” can be given to a student when they have begun their capstone project but have not been able to complete it satisfactorily within the span of a semester’s time. This is left to the discretion of the professor.