

Issues: Canadian Public Policy (POLI 321)

Professor:	Tari Ajadi
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Office:	Leacock Building 416
Office hours:	Wednesdays 2pm – 3pm
Communications:	Please feel free to reach out to me via email. When you email, please put the course code in the subject line so that I can catch it. I aim wherever possible to respond within 24 hours, though that timeline will extend on weekends.

Term and year:	Winter 2024
Course pre-requisite(s):	At least one other course in Canadian or Comparative Politics
Course schedule:	Wednesdays and Fridays, 4:05pm-5:25pm
Classroom:	Macdonald Building 276
Number of credits:	3 credits

Land acknowledgement

McGill University is located on unceded Indigenous lands which long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

Learning Objectives

The study of Canadian public policy has become one of the most fascinating and complex fields of political science. To study public policy is to study the authoritative allocation of values, as David Easton pointed out over fifty years ago. In the words of Sherri Torjman, “we literally eat, sleep and drink public policy.” No matter what level of government we may discuss – federal, provincial or municipal – public policy involves the support by the state of a set of values, and a decision to use the instruments available to the state to that end.

Issues: Canadian Public Policy will provide you with an introduction to public policy in Canada that exposes you to the practical and political realities of policymaking in complex decision-making environments. From the very beginning, the course will put students in the role of a policy analyst seeking to provide good policy analysis and advice. During the

course, students will learn public policy by doing public policy. This course has 4 learning objectives:

1. Students will be able to explain the policy process using both traditional and critical approaches.
2. Students will be able to discuss policy issues of local, regional, and national importance with an aim to illuminate the complexities of “good governance” in Canada.
3. Students will be able to use practical policy analysis skills to systematically engage with policy problems.

Instructional methods:

POLI 321 will comprise interactive lectures and small group discussions. Students are expected to prepare for each class by completing the assigned readings and participating in class discussions. The classes may incorporate some additional learning technologies that will contribute to student learning and understanding as well as providing source material for class discussion and debate. Several guests with subject expertise will be invited to engage with the class and contribute to policy discussions. All class content will be delivered synchronously and in person. Course sessions are conducted with the expectation that students attend classes having reading all assigned materials in advance and are prepared to discuss materials. **We will, as a class, set norms during the first class session that will be in place for the rest of the semester.**

Students should strive to be knowledgeable of current affairs as they relate to governance and public policy and be willing to engage in discussions of contemporary relevance.

Learning Materials

Lydia Miljan, Public Policy in Canada. An Introduction (8th Ed.), Don Mills, Oxford University Press, 2022. Other learning materials will be posted to the myCourses page.

Helpful Policy Websites

Atlantic Institute for Market Studies – <http://www.aims.ca/>
Atlantic Provinces Economic Council – <https://www.apec-econ.ca/>
Broadbent Institute – <http://www.broadbentinstitute.ca/>
Business Council of Canada – <http://thebusinesscouncil.ca/>
Canada Global Affairs Institute – <http://www.cgai.ca/>
Canada West Foundation – <http://cwf.ca/>

Canada's Public Policy Forum – <http://www.ppforum.ca/>
 Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/>
 C.D. Howe Institute – <https://www.cdhowe.org/>
 Institute for Research on Public Policy – <http://irpp.org/>
 Institute of Public Administration of Canada – <https://www.ipac.ca/>
 Yellowhead Institute – <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/>

ADD/DROP dates

Winter Term: Last day to add/drop classes – January 16, 2024
 Last day to drop with a refund– January 23, 2024
 Last day to drop without a refund – February 27, 2024

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Provided is the Course Schedule and Reading Assignments that outlines the topics to be addressed and accompanying required readings.

Date	Topic
	Part I: Understanding Public Policy
Week 0 (January 5 th)	Course outline and introduction
Week 1 (January 10, 12)	<p>The Policy Cycle? Miljan, chapter 1</p> <p>Torjman (2005), "What Is Policy?";</p> <p>Cairney, P. (2021). What Has Changed, and Why Do We Need New Policy Analysis? In P. Cairney (Ed.), <i>The Politics of Policy Analysis</i> (pp. 33–48). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66122-9_3</p>
Week 2 (January 17, 19)	<p>The Context of Policy-Making in Canada (w/Nicole Bernhardt) Miljan, chapter 3</p> <p>Tedds, L. M. (2023). Igniting an Intersectional Shift in Public Policy Research (and Training). <i>Canadian Public Policy</i>, 49(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.3138/cpp.2022-064</p> <p>Thompson, D., & Palmeter, P. (2023). Inequality and Settler Colonialism (podcast). <i>In/Equality Podcast</i>. IRPP. https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/may-2023/inequality-and-settler-colonialism/</p>

Date	Topic
Week 3 (January 24, 26)	<p>Theories of Public Policy/Problem Definition Miljan, chapter 2</p> <p>Dewulf, A. (2013). Contrasting frames in policy debates on climate change adaptation. <i>WIREs Climate Change</i>, 4(4), 321–330. https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.227</p> <p>Cairney (2013), “Power and Ideas – podcast and blog”</p>
Week 4 (January 31, Feb 2)	<p>Agenda Setting & Policy Formation Miljan, chapter 4</p> <p>Kenney, S. J. (2003). Where Is Gender in Agenda Setting? <i>Women & Politics</i>, 25(1–2), 179–207. https://doi.org/10.1300/J014v25n01_07</p> <p>Boulden, M., & Béland, D. (2022). Putting Passenger Rail Back on Track: A Multiple Streams Framework Analysis of High-Frequency Rail Policy in Canada. <i>Canadian Public Policy</i>, 48(3), 374–385. https://doi.org/10.3138/cpp.2021-062</p> <p>Practical Policy Assignment Part 1 is due January 30</p>
Week 5 (February 7, 9)	<p>Policy Design, Instruments, and Implementation Miljan, chapter 5</p> <p>Howlett, M. (2019). Systematically studying policy design: The logic of tool use. In <i>The Policy Design Primer</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Mondou, M., & Montpetit, É. (2010). Policy Styles and Degenerative Politics: Poverty Policy Designs in Newfoundland and Quebec. <i>Policy Studies Journal</i>, 38(4), 703–722. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2010.00380.x</p>
Week 6 (February 14, 16)	<p>Policy Evaluation Miljan, chapter 6</p> <p>Koebel, K., Pohler, D., Gomez, R., & Mohan, A. (2021). Public Policy in a Time of Crisis: A Framework for Evaluating Canada’s COVID-19 Income Support Programs. <i>Canadian Public Policy</i>, 47(2), 316–333. https://doi.org/10.3138/cpp.2020-117</p> <p>Guthro (2021), “Measuring Indigenous Well-Being: What is Indigenous Services Missing?”</p>

Date	Topic
Week 7 (February 21, 23)	<p>Part II: Policy Fields</p> <p>Immigration Policy</p> <p>McCartney, D. (2021). “A question of self-interest”: A brief history of 50 years of international student policy in Canada. Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 51(3), Article 3. https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.vi0.189179</p> <p>Xhardez et al. (2022), “Immigration: beyond numbers and controversies”;</p> <p>Triadafilopoulos, T., & Taylor, Z. (2021). The Political Foundations of Canadian Exceptionalism in Immigration Policy. In Y. Samy & H. Duncan (Eds.), International Affairs and Canadian Migration Policy (pp. 13–40). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46754-8_2</p> <p>Practical Policy Assignment Part 2 is due February 22nd</p>
Week 8 (February 28, March 1)	<p>Health Policy (with Julia Rodgers)</p> <p>Miljan, chapter 9</p> <p>Etowa, J., & McGibbon, E. (2021). The Racialization of Oppression. In E. McGibbon, Oppression, 2nd Edition: A Social Determinant of Health (2 edition, pp. 66–84). Fernwood Publishing. (provided on myCourses)</p> <p>Black Health Equity Working Group (2021), “Engagement, Governance, Access, and Protection (EGAP): A Data Governance Framework for Health Data Collected from Black Communities”</p>
	<p>READING WEEK MARCH 6-8 – NO CLASS</p>
Week 9 (March 13, 15)	<p>Fiscal Federalism (w/Prof. Daniel Béland)</p> <p>Miljan, chapter 8;</p> <p>Jacques, O., Béland, D., & Lecours, A. (2022). Fiscal federalism, social identity and place-based resentment. Regional Studies, 56(7), 1210–1223. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2021.1998420</p> <p>Breton & Parkin (2021), “Canadians are still committed to decentralized federalism”</p>

Date	Topic
Week 10 (March 20, 22)	<p>Climate Change and Environmental Policy (w/Prof. Amy Janzwood) Waldron, I. (2021). Pipelines and Protests: Legacies of Struggle and Resistance in the Fight against Environmental Racism in Canada. <i>Brown Journal of World Affairs</i>, 28(2), 7–26. https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/brownjwa28&i=338</p> <p>A SHARED Future Research Team. (2019). “Decolonizing” Clean Energy Policy in Canada? Yellowhead Institute. https://yellowheadinstitute.org/2019/09/26/decolonizing-clean-energy-policy-in-canada/</p> <p>IRPP (podcast), “Rapid changes and transformations: The future of Canada’s energy transition”</p>
Week 11 (March 27) MARCH 29 – GOOD FRIDAY; NO CLASS	<p>Policing and Governance (w/Jon Thompson) Laming, E., & Valentine, G. (2022). Police governance in Canada: Variations and disparities among police services boards. <i>Canadian Public Administration</i>, 65(1), 7–27. https://doi.org/10.1111/capa.12448</p> <p>Jones et al. (2022), Chapter 1 of “Defunding the Police: Defining the Way Forward for HRM”</p> <p>Practical Policy Assignment Part 3 is Due March 27</p>
Week 12 (April 3, 5)	<p>Urban Planning and Housing Policy Affordability Action Council (2023). Affordable Housing Reboot: Bring Back Federal Leadership. https://irpp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Affordable-Housing-Reboot-Bring-Back-Federal-Leadership.pdf</p> <p>Pitter (2021), “We need to heal traumatized urban landscapes – and people – after COVID”</p>
Week 13 (April 12)	Wrap-up class
Mid-April TBD	Take-Home Exam

Method of Evaluation

Assignment	Due Date	% of Final Mark
Practical Policy Assignment: Part I - <i>Problem Identification and Definition</i>	January 31, 2024	15%
Practical Policy Assignment: Part II - <i>Analysis and Identification of Policy Options</i>	February 23, 2024	15%
Practical Policy Assignment: Part III - <i>Development of a Memorandum to Cabinet</i>	March 29, 2024	25%
Reading quizzes	Assessed Throughout Term	20%
Take-Home Exam	Mid-April 2024 - TBD	25%
TOTAL		100%

All assignments to be submitted on myCourses by 12pm on the day that they are due.

Assignment Details

All assignments should be submitted electronically via myCourses. If you have any questions about how to submit your assignment, please consult [this link](#).

Practical Policy Assignment

Practical Policy Assignment: Part I – *Problem Identification and Definition*

January 30, 2023 – 15%

Part I of the Practical Policy Assignment asks you to record a “podcast” where you define a topical public policy problem or opportunity and provide a clear concise summary of the issue, e.g., who, what, when, where, why and how.

The thematic public policy area that your policy problem (or opportunity) falls under is your choice, but if the problem or opportunity does not emerge from one of the thematic *public policy* areas covered in class, you must briefly explain its pertinence as a public policy issue in Canada

The podcast can be no longer than 3 minutes long, and you should express your ideas in a manner that is clearly understood and logically organized. **You must submit a script and a list of references alongside your recording. Please ensure your recording is submitted in .mp3 or .m4a format.**

Practical Policy Assignment: Part II – *Identification of Policy Options*

February 22, 2023 – 15%

Part II of the Practical Policy Assignment consists of an *Analysis and Identification of Policy Options*. You should now have chosen a public policy problem to focus on for the Practical Policy Assignments that will follow. This assignment will allow you to develop an approach to this problem that you can build upon in your next assignment. The Identification of Policy Options assignment should include:

- A statement on the nature of the problem being addressed;
- The ways this problem would be impacted by a new policy that you may propose;
- The strengths and weaknesses of the proposed initiative as well as options for dealing with those weaknesses, and;
- the positive or negative impacts the proposed policy would have on targeted groups and any province or region it directly affects;

The expected length is 750 words and you should express your ideas in a manner that are clearly understood and logically organized. It is recommended that you use the problem/opportunity you defined in Part I, but you can switch to a new topic area.

Practical Policy Assignment: Part III – *Development of a Memorandum to Cabinet which includes a Recommendation*

March 29, 2023 – 25%

Part III of the Practical Policy Assignment builds on parts 1 and 2 and consists of *the Development of a Memorandum to Cabinet which includes a Recommendation*. The Memorandum should focus on a recommended policy option, but should address two *additional* policy options as alternatives. A detailed template for the assignment will be provided on myCourses.

This Memorandum should be no longer than 2000 words (excluding references).

Final Exam

TBD Mid-April 2023

25%

The Final Exam will be a take-home practical assignment designed to test the skills and content you have learned throughout the course. You will be given a policy problem based on one of the lectures you have received in the second half of the class, and your task will be to produce a 1500 word briefing note on the topic (structured in the same way as the Memorandum to Cabinet assignment in Part III). You will have a 48 hour window to complete the assignment. The assignment will be open-book. All sources must be cited in APA format. The exam must be completed individually. Any evidence of collaboration on this exam will be considered as plagiarism.

Reading Quizzes

Assessed Throughout the Term – 20%

Students will complete five reading quizzes designed to assess their comprehension of the readings periodically throughout the semester. These quizzes will be completed on myCourses.

Grading of Written Work

This class will be graded using the McGill numerical grading scale as seen below:

Grades	Grade Points	Numerical Scale of Grades
A	4.0	85 - 100%
A-	3.7	80 - 84%
B+	3.3	75 - 79%
B	3.0	70 - 74%
B-	2.7	65 - 69%
C+	2.3	60 - 64%
C	2.0	55 - 59%
D	1.0	50 - 54%
F (Fail)	0	0 - 49%

The following criteria will also be used in the grading of written assignments. A paper that receives an A grade will contain:

Thesis

- Clearly stated, creative, original and insightful.
- Presents a Point of View (POV) based on a critical analysis of factual evidence and relevant theory.

Background and Course Content

- Contains relevant background information.
- Draws upon course text and lecture material.

Research, Supporting Data and Analysis

- Refers to a full range of relevant current resources (course materials, external sources), and other research.
- Uses relevant data, analyses, and conclusions.
- Refers to legislation or official policy whenever possible
- Includes a critical analysis of the sources used.

Conclusions

- Are clear, creative, and insightful.
- Contain a clear, cogent reiteration of and support for the central points of the thesis.

Writing Style, Essay Structure Grammar and Mechanics

- Essay is very well organized.
- Central ideas are presented very clearly, cogently, and effectively.
- There is critical analysis and integration of ideas throughout the paper.

- Type-written.
- Double spaced.
- In 12-point Times New Roman font.
- A one-inch wide margins on all four sides.
- Inclusive of page numbers.
- Submitted in .docx format.
- Inclusive of a separate title page.
- **All assignments must include citations in correct APA format.**

Course Communications & Policies

Late submissions and extensions: Please endeavour to submit your work on time. If something comes up that impacts your ability to submit on time, ***talk to me as soon as possible before the assignment is due.*** I am generally amenable to providing extensions, provided they are sought ***at minimum*** a day ***before*** an assignment is due. All extensions granted will be for one week, and students who receive an extension will receive less detailed feedback on their assignment as a result.

Assignments submitted without students seeking an extension, and without an additional valid reason, will be considered late. **Ten percent (10%)** will be deducted from the final grade of any assignment received within the first 24 hours of the assignment being due. **An additional 10%** will be deducted for an assignment received between 24-48 hours after the assignment is due. Assignments submitted a week or more after the due date without an extension **will be graded out of 50%**. All assignments must be submitted by December 6, **otherwise the assignment will be given a 0.**

Illnesses and attendance: If students are unwell, I ask that they please stay at home, and email me in advance of class. No sick note is required, but students are responsible for getting themselves back up to speed on class content they have missed.

Submission format: The required format for electronic written submissions is **.docx** and the file name should include the **student's first name, last name, and assignment name**. For example, john_smith_essay#1 is an acceptable format. The format for recorded submissions is either **.mp3** or **.m4a**.

Inclusive learning environment: As the instructor of this course, I endeavour to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and/or [Student Accessibility and Achievement](#).

Preferred pronouns: Please send me an email if you would like me to refer to you by a different name than the [name indicated](#) in your student record or to inform me of your preferred pronouns.

Communications: There are many of you. There is one of me. Below is advice about when and how to email.

- **When to email:** There are times when it is appropriate to email. Check your syllabus, your notes, and the class website. If your question is still not answered, you likely have an important question that should be addressed. If you can explain why you are emailing in one or two sentences, email is probably appropriate. If not, your question will be better served by coming to office hours.
- **How to email:** Send the email from a valid McGill University email address. This makes it less likely that your email will end up in my spam folder. As a general rule, I only respond to student emails from valid McGill email addresses.

- **What to email:** POLI 321 should appear at the start of the subject line. For example, “POLI 321: Office Hours Appointment.” The subject line is important, because I scan my inbox for emails with the course code in them. This allows me to prioritize responding to student emails. I will be less likely to respond to your emails in a timely manner without the course code in the subject line.
- **When to expect a response:** During regular business hours (9 a.m. Monday through 5 p.m. Friday), I will try to respond to emails within 48 hours. If you do not hear back within that timeframe, please feel free to follow up with me. I do not regularly check or answer emails during evenings or weekends. If you email during those times, I might be delayed in responding to you.

Office hours: According to the Cornell University Learning Strategies Centre: Office hours are “times when you can meet with your professors and teaching assistants to discuss the material being presented in class or other related interests you have. Course-related discussions include asking for extra help, seeking clarification of material presented in class and following up on aspects of the class you find compelling. In addition, students also discuss majors and programs of study, and graduation requirements, as well as summer internships, graduate schools, campus events, and much more.” I will be available for office hours on Wednesdays between 12 and 1pm in Leacock 416. Please feel free to stop by!

Language of submission: “In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

« Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue. » (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 21 janvier 2009)

Academic Integrity: “McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures” (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See McGill’s [guide to academic honesty](#) for more information).

Adhering to principles of academic integrity as a student is incredibly important on its own merits, especially considering the advent of artificial intelligence software that produces a crude facsimile of rigorous scholarship. To engage in such acts is unacceptable in this course.

Assessment: The University Student Assessment Policy exists to ensure fair and equitable academic assessment for all students and to protect students from excessive workloads.

Basic needs: If you have difficulty affording food or if you lack a safe and stable place to live, and believe that these circumstances may affect your performance in this course, I encourage you to contact the Dean of Students, who can connect you with support services.

If you feel comfortable doing so, please let me know as well so we can discuss how I can best support your learning.

Charter of Students' Rights: Additional policies governing academic issues that affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students' Rights.

Extraordinary circumstances: In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Recording policy: I will notify you if part of a class is being recorded. By remaining in classes that are recorded, you agree to the recording, and you understand that your image, voice, and name may be disclosed to classmates. You also understand that recordings will be made available in myCourses to students registered in the course. Please consult me if you have concerns about privacy and we can discuss possible measures that can be taken.

Wellness: Many students may face mental health challenges that can impact not only their academic success but also their ability to thrive in our campus community. Please reach out for support when you need it; [wellness resources](#) are available on campus, off campus, and online.

Workload management skills: If you are feeling overwhelmed by your academic work and/or would like to further develop your time and workload management skills, don't hesitate to seek support from [Student Services](#).