

POLS 3250 PUBLIC POLICY: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS (FALL 2025)**Credit Weighting:** 0.5**Pre-/Co-Requisites:****Restrictions:****INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION****Name:** Geoff Cameron**Email:** geoffrey.cameron@uoguelph.ca**Office Location:** MCKN 513**GENERAL DETAILS**

This course introduces students to the study of public policy, with a focus on Canadian government. Public policy is about how governments decide what to do, or not to do. The course will proceed in two parts. In the first part, we will examine prevalent theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of public policy. In this connection, we will proceed to analyze the Canadian policy subsystem, including actors and institutions that influence policy representation in Canada. The second part of the course will focus on the policy cycle and on how to explain policy change and stability. We will examine some of the central concepts and approaches related to agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making, policy implementation, and policy evaluation. Where relevant, we will draw upon examples and cases related to public policy in Canada.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who have completed this course should be able to demonstrate:

- Understanding of the role of ideas, actors, and institutions in the policy process
- Knowledge of theoretical perspectives of the policy process
- Knowledge of features of the public policy cycle
- Understanding of prevalent concepts used in the study of public policy
- Understanding of the Canadian actors and institutions that shape public policy outcomes
- Analytical and oral presentation skills
- Time management skills
- Research skills by using the internet and library databases

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Mid-Term Exams (15% x 2)

Video Presentation (30%)

Final Exam (40%)

REQUIRED READING

Michael Howlett, M. Ramesh, and Anthony Perl. 2020. *Studying Public Policy: Principles and Processes* (4th edition). Oxford University Press.