**POLS\*3250 FALL 2019**

**PUBLIC POLICY: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS**

**H. Gibbs**

**Department of Political Science**

**University of Guelph**

**CLASS INFORMATION:**

Time: T/TH 10-11:20

Place: RICH 2529

Instructor Email: hgibbs@uoguelph.ca

Office Location: MACK 517

Office Hours: Thurs. 11:30 to 1pm

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Public Policy is a central organizing feature of our lives. Our experiences of work, economic security, family, health, belonging, environment, consumption, transportation, travel, and aging are dynamically shaped by public policies. Governments in Canada at all levels make political choices in the form of public policies that influence our lives, responding to, reflecting, and shaping the shifts in the political climate, diverse interests and public demands, and the economy at home and abroad, with various social and sometimes unintended consequences. In this course, students will be introduced to the foundational concepts, theories and approaches to the study of public policy and gain knowledge and evaluative skills in several key policy areas in Canada, including health, social, environmental, and economic policy. Using the framework of the “5 Is” (Ideas, Interests, Institutions, Instruments, International), students will research the contexts and content of public policies in order to understand government choices amongst social, economic, political and international commitments and tensions and learn approaches to evaluating and making policy recommendations on real and pressing issues. With the federal election on the horizon in the Fall, we have a unique opportunity to also discuss contemporary framing in policy debates, the role of the media, and tensions in understanding and evaluating policy and democracy. Student engagement in our class discussions will be a critical component of effective learning.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. **KNOWLEDGE:** Students will gain knowledge of the context, content, challenges, and changes in major public policies, public policy making, and political infrastructure in the Canadian context.
2. **KNOWLEDGE/APPLICATION:** Students will learn and apply concepts, approaches & theories in the study of public policy.
3. **EVALUATION:** Students will learn to analyze and evaluate the outcomes and consequences of major public policies, including thinking about interest and impacts on diverse social groups.
4. **SKILLS:** Students will learn foundational skills in effective policy research and writing.

\*Please note: **A COMPLETE VERSION with full details of this Course Outline will be made available to students on COURSELINK on the first day of class.** The Instructor reserves the right to change/adjust the weekly topics, readings and/or information in this course outline. You will be given sufficient notice of any changes in compliance with any Academic Regulations regarding such changes.

**REQUIRED TEXT/READINGS**

You have one required textbook for this course which is available at the campus bookstore.

1. **Miljan, L. (2018) *Public Policy in Canada: An Introduction.* Don Mills: Oxford University Press. This textbook will also be placed on reserve in the Library.**
2. You also have required readings each week that are available either through the internet, e-journals, or through e-reserves accessed through our course webpage on Courselink. These are marked with an asterisk (\*).

**EVALUATION: Summary View**

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| **A Place to Start:**  **Policy Mapping Exercise (Researching the 5Is)** | **15%** | **Friday October 11th by 11:59pm** |
| **Interest Organization Policy Brief: 2-3 pgs** | **20%** | **Friday Nov. 1st by 11:59 pm** |
| **Academic Essay or Policy Evaluation Report: 8 – 10pgs** | **25%** | **Friday Nov 29th by 11:59pm** |
| **In Class Test** | **15%** | **Tues. Oct 22nd** |
| **Final Exam** | **25%** | **During Dec. Exam Period** |

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| **Weekly Themes/Topics** |  |
| **Theme One: Foundations in Public Policy** |  |
| **1. Building Our Dictionary I** | **Concepts, Main Theories and Approaches to Study Public Policy** |
| **2. Building Our Dictionary II** | **Gender-based/Intersectional, Social Construction and Discourse Analysis Approaches to Public Policy** |
| **3. Policy Research/Context of Policy-Making** | **Mapping the 5Is** |
| **4. Problem Definition and Policy Solutions** | **Discourse, Agenda Setting, and Policy Formulation** |
| **5. Policy Making Stages Continued** | **Policy Implementation, Evaluation** |
| **6. Policy Writing and Evaluation Workshop** |  |
| **Theme two: Major Policy Fields** | **Histories, Contemporary Case Studies** |
| **1. MacroEconomic Policy** |  |
| **2. Social Policy** |  |
| **3. Health Policy** |  |
| **4. Family Policy** |  |
| **5. Indigeneity, Colonialism, Public Policy** |  |
| **6. Environmental Policy** |  |