SYLLABUS: Foundations in Policy Studies  
LPPM 200 -- Spring 2008  
Blackboard: 08 SPRING: FOUNDATIONS IN POLICY STUDIES

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II. Course Scope

Foundations in Policy Studies is a two-credit, team-taught, interdisciplinary course designed exclusively for students who seek to major either in Law & Policy (LP) or Policy Management (PM). The goal of the course is to introduce students to the larger context of policy decisions that are made every day, both in the public and the private sectors. You will be challenged – both inside the classroom and through completion of several substantial research projects -- to incorporate ethical, economic, and political considerations into your thinking. Coming to grips with context of the entire problem – from definition, to response, to short- and long-term impact -- will be central principles of the course. The constraints and demands of social justice, the economics of public and private choice, and the politics and process of policy making will each be dealt with, as well.

As the course unfolds, you should look for opportunities to step outside yourself to see a bigger picture that is partially described by each of the disciplinary concerns, policy perspectives, and issue considerations that are raised. In the process, you should challenge your own presumptions, and expect to get uncomfortable, confused, and even a bit frustrated at times. There will rarely be any easy, clear-cut answers to important questions that are addressed in class and through research projects. The key is to develop the ability to (1) ask good questions, (2) weigh the evidence, and (3) make educated guesses (recommendations) about the best course to take and the likely outcomes.

III. Teamwork

Much of the work done in this course will be done in teams, so you will have to learn to trust your team members, and be sure that you are worthy of their trust. Although we reserve the right to adjust group project grades for individuals, normally, your fate is tied to the fate of the team when it comes to the team projects portion of the course, so keep the following advice in mind:
Be flexible in your scheduling. Everyone knows that this is not your only course. But if you fall behind in other work and cannot meet the obligations of your Foundations team, the whole team will suffer. Anticipate crunch times before they happen. Use your Foundations calendar to log other major assignments due in other classes (e.g., papers, exams, presentations, etc.) and social commitments (e.g., planned trips away from school) so that you can anticipate -- and work around -- the conflicts that present themselves.

- Be flexible in your thinking. Work with and around differences with your team members. Maintain a professional demeanor at all times and don't make (or take) policy- or course-related disagreements too personally with each other when they crop up.

- Be responsible. Read your email, show up for meetings (on time!), keep lines of communication open, and get your work done to the best of your ability (and in a timely manner). Identify potential team problems early and work through them. If you are disappointed with the efforts of a particular team member, bring this to his or her attention early, and as often as necessary, but always in a professional and respectful manner. You may turn to us for help, but only after making a good faith effort to work through these problems on your own, first.

- Be creative. Creative individuals think "outside the box" and find problems and solutions no one has conceived of before.

- Be open. Do not shoot the ideas of others down prematurely, especially during the early "brain-storming" phase of a project.

- Have fun. Happy policy makers and happy policy analysts do better work than grumpy ones. You can expect to spend lots of time (and some long nights) together with members of your team, so it is in your interest to learn to enjoy each other’s company.

IV. Written Project Formats

There are essentially four team projects to complete this semester. You will do "Backgrounders" for each of the four prior to turning in your final "Binder." In all cases, follow the Policy Studies writing formats and guidelines posted on the web at:

http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/law/policy/style.html

**Backgrounders**: Backgrounders are just that: They detail the background of the problem being addressed (without coming to conclusions about what to do). These preliminary work products should include the following sections (16-page limit; double-spaced; 12-point Arial font, 1-inch margins with footer information modeled after this syllabus):

- **Problem definition** -- What is the nature of the problem, who suffers, and how?
- **History of the problem** -- How did the problem arise?
- **Current status** -- What is the up-to-date, current state of affairs?
- **Bibliography** -- Always include a list of sources used in composing work products.

**Binders**: Final projects will be submitted in stiff, three-ring binders with tabbed and labeled section dividers. All materials will be punched with three holes (or mounted on paper punched with three holes) and inserted in the appropriate section of the binder. The same guidelines as with the Backgrounders, except for the page limit, which jumps to 20 pages total (from Executive Summary to the end of the Analysis and Recommendations section). Each project binder will include the following materials (in this order) unless specified otherwise:

- **Cover Sheet**: Include project title, date, authors, and client(s).
- **Cover Letter**: One page, only. The letter is from the team to the clients. Use the project work sheet handed out at the beginning of the project as your "contract" and briefly state the assignment in general terms (topic, time frame, etc.). The cover letter should be dated, and include all the authors names and signatures.
Table of Contents: One page. An outline of the entire binder. Include page numbers for major sections and follow good outlining technique here (e.g., no orphan subsections). See the web styles page for outlines at: http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/law/policy/style.html#Outlines

Executive summary: The executive summary is an abstract of the entire final product. It summarizes in about 2-3 pages what is said in the report. Sections of the executive summary should be perfectly parallel with sections of the report.

Background (see “Backgrounder” description, above):
- Problem definition -- What is the nature of the problem, who suffers, and how?
- History of the problem -- How did the problem arise?
- Current status -- What is the up-to-date, current state of affairs?

Analysis and Recommendations: Discuss and review the probable cause(s) of the problem identified in the Backgrounder, and propose solutions. Your recommendations should be set apart in short, pithy text, then defended. Be sure to annotate each recommendation with information that will make some recommendations more reasonable than others.
- the degree of confidence you have in the recommendation;
- the degree to which you think this particular recommendation will solve the problem;
- the resources required to put this recommendation into effect;
- political feasibility of the recommendation proposed;
- the values that are addressed by the proposed recommendation; and,
- the problem of unintended consequences (what could go wrong?).

Summary: This section will conclude the creative portion of your binder. Never simply make the case for your last recommendation and leave it at that.

Appendices: See the styles page for guidance regarding cover sheet, tabs, and what to put in the appendices:
http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/law/policy/cover.html

V. Oral Reports

Several oral reports will be assigned throughout the semester. When the time comes to make an oral presentation, keep the principles in mind:
- Know thy audience: You know what YOU like and dislike when listening to someone else make a presentation. Your audience is probably not much different. Play to the audience. Take this opportunity to be like you wish other presenters were.

- Be energetic, lively, and innovative. Use index cards, a PowerPoint presentation, a handout, or an overhead to guide you; NEVER read your presentation. Provide visual aids when possible to spice things up. Speak clearly, loudly, and deliberately. (NB: The vast majority of presenters speak too softly and too quickly -- almost no one ever speaks too slowly or too loudly.). Voice inflection and eye contact are great tools to keep the audience’s attention: Use these techniques to your advantage.
o **Be organized.** Organization and even a bit of reiteration is more important in speaking than in writing. Be organized. State your points up front, elaborate on them, and then conclude by summarizing your points.

o **Be timely.** Stay within your time parameters. It will take practice to do this. It is as important not to run too long as it is not to run too short on time.

o **Share.** Every member of the team need not participate in every report. But by the end of the semester, all members of the team should have been “on-stage” about the same number of minutes.

o **Be professional.** Dress the part, avoid slang, and be tasteful with your remarks.

For more information on oral reports, see the styles web page at:

http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/law/policy/style.html

**VI. Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required at every class and will be considered when assessing grades for individual work at the end of the semester. If you cannot make class and have a legitimate excuse, it is your responsibility to inform your team members in a timely fashion. You should also document the reason for your absence (e.g., note from Health Center) and inform Professors Donaldson, Tynan, and Hoefler as soon as reasonably possible (use email or voice mail if you cannot make direct contact). If you miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to stay up to speed with assignments. You will be held accountable for the assignment work and readings in the next class.

**VII. Grading**

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<th>Projects (Completed in teams: 110%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project I</td>
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<td>Project II</td>
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<td>Project III</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Individual Work (Homework, quizzes, other assignments, professionalism: 90%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Donaldson</td>
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<td>Professor Tynan</td>
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<td>Professor Hoefler</td>
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**Total (for two courses worth of credit)** 200%

**Note:** The faculty reserve the right to adjust individual grades for projects up or down significantly, based on individual performance within the team.
VIII. Calendar for *Foundations of Policy Studies*

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<th>SUN</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>TUE</th>
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<td>20</td>
<td>21 Class overview, Egg-drop exercise (JH)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23 Binder topics, Key concepts (MD, NT, JH) 30 minutes each</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26 Team intro. presentations, mission statements, logos, etc.? (teams)</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>28 Dollar coin (NT) Quiz</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30 <em>An Inconvenient Truth</em> (MD) FTN: 7 pm DC &amp; Carlisle</td>
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<td>FTN 1 AIT and FTN discussion Individual FTN write-ups (MD, NT)</td>
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<td>4 Team FTN write-ups Launch Binder 1: Food – health (MD)</td>
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<td>11 Guest: Shalom Staub</td>
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<td>13 Myers-Briggs? (MD, NJ?)</td>
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<td>18 Backgrounder 1 due Myers-Briggs debrief?</td>
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<td>20 Backgrounder 1 return (MD, NT, JH)</td>
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<td>25 Binder 1 recommendations (teams)</td>
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<td>29 (JH out) Binder 1 due Launch Binder 2: Sustain. agriculture (NT)</td>
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<td>12 spring break – no class</td>
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<td>21 Backgrounder 2 due</td>
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<td>24 Backgrounder 2 return (MD, NT, JH)</td>
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<td>16 Backgrounder 3 due</td>
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<td>23 Binder 3 recommendations (teams)</td>
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<td>28 Binder 3 due Launch mini-project: Field of Dreams (or Schemes?)</td>
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<td>2 (last class day) York Mayor John Brenner @ 5:30; York Revolution party + game @ 7pm</td>
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Donaldson, Tynan, Hoefler

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