

R POS 439Z Call 7916
Policy Implementation
TOPICS IN AMERICAN POLITICS
TU TH 1:15 TO 2:35 PM
HU 0039
Prof. Robert Nakamura

Office Hours:

Tu Thurs 10:15 TO 11:15 Contact Office, Mon 4 to 5:30 320 Milne
Or by appointment. 442-5285 or rn382@csc.albany.edu

Introduction

This is a course in the implementation of public policy. Implementation is what is supposed to happen after a policy is made. It is often the most interesting part of the policy process because it is the point at which ideas are supposed to be translated into the actions that improve outcomes. While most attention is paid to the making of decisions, the carrying out of those decisions has proven to be the most problematic feature of the policy process. Implementation research started out with detailing why it is so hard to get things done, then moved to a study of the different instruments used to achieve goals, and to studying the things that make public managers more effective. In this course we will examine the general problems encountered in implementation including the complexity of joint action and the various implementation "games" played by participants. We will look at various solutions including the prescriptions of the "new public management", the use of better or more robust policy tools or implements, and the increased reliance on either quasi-market mechanisms or greater participation opportunities to correct shortcomings in the implementation process. To do this, we will look at the implementation of a variety of policies in the areas of hazardous waste, welfare reform and the siting of power plants.

This class is not intended to be purely a lecture course. While there are going to be a few traditional lectures, the materials assigned are intended to provoke thought and discussion. While a lot of scholarly work has been done in the area, the important questions have not been answered and this research should provide a starting rather than finishing point for discussions.

Course Requirements:

Assignments are due on the dates indicated in class. Late assignments will be penalized 1/2 grade per day.

1. Three short papers of two to three pages each. Graded hi pass, pass, fail. You will have an opportunity to re-write these. (5% each for a total of 15%)

2. Prospectus: Preparation for the term paper which will be an implementation study of a policy of your choice. Two to three pages. Should answer each of the following questions. (20%)

--What is the policy?

--What is the anticipated machinery?

--What kind of policy implements does it rely on?

--What data is available to study the implementation of this policy?

You will have an opportunity to re-write the prospectus.

3. Presentation (20%)

4. Term paper. (40%) I will read and comment on drafts that are turned in by April 21st. This will give you an opportunity to revise before final submission.

5. Class participation (15%). This includes attendance and the quality of participation in discussions.

REQUIRED (Books are available at the University bookstore)

Robert Behn, Leadership Counts: Lessons for Public Managers, Harvard University Press. Paper \$17.95

Thomas Church, and Robert Nakamura, Cleaning Up the Mess, Brookings Institution Press.

Martha Derthick, Up in Smoke 2nd edition (Congressional Quarterly) 2004.

George Packer, Assassins Gate, paperback, Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 1st edition (September 19, 2006) 0374530556

Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, Implementation, University of California Press. paperback

There are also ERESERVE readings with selections from the following:
Nakamura and Smallwood, The Politics of Policy Implementation ERESERVE
Bardach, The Implementation Game ERESERVE

Weekly Assignments

What is Implementation?

1. Introduction, Thursday, Jan. 22

No assignment.

Fill out questionnaire on back.

2. The Problem Discovered, Tuesday, Jan. 27

Pressman and Wildavsky, first half

3. The Complexity of Joint Action, Thursday, Jan. 29

Pressman and Wildavsky, second half

FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE: How do Pressman and Wildavsky define the policy in Oakland for the purposes of studying its implementation?

Implementation Environments: Policy Making

4. Policy Making and Its Problems, Tuesday, Feb. 3

Nakamura and Smallwood, The Politics of Policy Implementation ERESERVE

Chapter 1 Changing Perceptions of Policy Implementation

Chapter 2 Implementation and the Policy Process

5. Varieties of Policy Formulation, Thursday, Feb. 5

Nakamura and Smallwood, The Politics of Policy Implementation

Chapter 3 Policy Formation

Chapter 4 Policy Implementation

Nakamura

The Textbook Policy Process and Implementation Research

Impediments to Policy Implementation: The Complexity of Joint Action and Opportunities for Playing Implementation Games

6. Implementation Games, Tuesday, Feb. 10

Bardach, The Implementation Game ERESERVE

Part I Intro

Diversion of Resources

Deflection of Goals

Dilemmas of Administration

Dissipation of Energies

7. The Complexity of Joint Action, Thursday, Feb. 12

Bardach, The Implementation Game
Part II intro
Program and Assembly Process
The Collective Decision Process

SECOND SHORT PAPER: What are the attributes of fixers that makes them candidates for solving problems presented by the complexity of joint action?

BREAK

8. Solutions, Tuesday, Feb. 25
Bardach, Implementation Game
Part III intro
Scenario Writing
Fixing the Game

9. A Fixer, Thursday, Feb. 26
Behn, Leadership Counts (first half)

10. Fixing continued....Tuesday, Mar. 3
Behn, Leadership Counts (first half)

THIRD SHORT PAPER due: What did Atkins fix and how did he do it?

11. Implementation and Learning, Thursday, Mar. 5
Nakamura and Smallwood, Politics of Policy Implementation
Chapter 5 Policy Evaluation

12. Putting It Together, Tuesday, Mar. 10
Chapter 7 Implementation Linkages
Chapter 8 Evaluation Linkages

13. Taking Stock, Thursday, Mar. 12
No assignment

Implementation Research as Policy Analysis: Testing Three Scenarios for Environmental Clean Up

14. Superfund Strategies, Tuesday, Mar. 17
Church and Nakamura, Cleaning Up the Mess (first half)

15. Deriving Lessons, Thursday, Mar. 19
Three Implementation Scenarios, Church and Nakamura, Cleaning Up the Mess (second half)

Prospectus Due in class.

16. Taking Stock, Tuesday, Mar. 24
No Assignment

Democracy Assistance and Implementation

17. Implementing Legislative Development Programs, Thursday, Mar. 26
Johnson et al., Handbook of Legislative Development

18. Implementing Legislative Development continued...; Tuesday, Mar. 31
Nakamura, Three Strategies

19. Two Cases. Thursday, April 2
Nakamura and Johnson, Kenya and Uganda

The Iraq War as A Case in Policy Formulation and Implementation

20. The Iraq War and Aftermath as Implementation Problem, Tuesday, April 7
Packer, Assassins Gate, start

BREAK

21. Iraq continued....Tuesday, April 14
Packer, finish

Smoking

21. Smoking Policy, Thursday, April 16
Derthick, Up In Smoke

22. Taking Stock, Tuesday, April 21
No assignment

If final paper drafts are submitted by this date, I will return them in time for revision before due date.

Presentations

23. Student presentations, Thursday, April 23

24. Student presentations, Tuesday, April 28

25. Student presentations, Thursday, April 30

26. Student presentations, Tuesday, May 5

Final Papers due in class

Student Information Sheet

Name:

E mail (required, please print clearly):

Phone:

Class (fresh., soph., junior, senior):

Political Science classes taken (by name):

Policy related interests if any?:

Policy implementation involves translating the goals and objectives of a policy into an action. The systematic study of policy implementation is relatively new in the broader domain of social science. This paper, through a content analysis, critically examines the theoretical issues associated with policy implementation, and the factors associated with implementation failure. This research and fieldwork were supported by European Union's ENPI Program, the Finnish Academy of Science during several projects, lately through the Finnish Centre of Excellence in Russian Studies, Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), the Swedish Research Council, and the Swedish Institute. The Finnish data and some analyses were developed in collaboration with Jouko Nikula of the University of Helsinki. The Policy reference implementation obtains its information from static policy configuration files. The rest of this document pertains to the Policy reference implementation and the syntax that must be used in policy files it reads. For information about using the Policy Tool to create a policy file (without needing to know the required syntax), see the Policy Tool documentation (for Solaris) (for Win32). Here is an outline for the rest of this document: Policy Changes in the Java™ 2 SDK, Standard Edition, v 1.4.