

Syllabus
Making Public Policy
11.002j/17.30j
Fall 2020

<https://canvas.mit.edu/courses/3307>

UG(1) HASS-CI
Credit: 4-0-8

Lecture: Tuesday/Thursday 3:00 – 4:30 pm Eastern on Zoom. Please participate synchronously if you can; the lectures will be recorded for students who must take asynchronously.
Recitations: TBA. Will begin the second week of class (week of Sept 7)

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Wed., 3:30 – 5 pm Eastern time on Zoom and by appointment

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Course Objectives and Organization:

This course aims to get students thinking about politics and policy as a part of their everyday life. We treat politics as a struggle among competing advocates trying to persuade others to see the world as they do, working within a context that is structured primarily by institutions and cultural ideas. Over the course of the semester, we raise the following questions: How do conditions become problems for government to solve, while other problems fail to attract government's attention? What sorts of political arguments are persuasive, and why? Why do we choose the policies we do? Do policies ever "work," and how would we know? We spend the first section of the course developing a policymaking framework and understanding ideology—taking a whirlwind tour of the American political system. After that, we examine case studies in a variety of policy areas: gun policy, pandemic relief, foreign policy, financial regulation, immigration reform, water policy, LGBTQ rights, and environmental policy.

The goal of the course is to provide you with the tools to be an informed, engaged, and effective democratic citizen going forward, knowledgeable about how public policy is made in the American context, able to analyze political inputs and outputs, and armed with insights into how to make your voice heard. Regardless of your major or career, public policy will touch your life and work. This course will help you understand why public policy takes the forms it does and what you can do about it. Along the way you will be exercising your essay writing and speaking skills in satisfaction of the CI-H components of the course (CI-H = Communication Intensive course in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, intended to provide a foundation in effective expository and argumentative writing and oral communication. See <https://registrar.mit.edu/registration-academics/academic-requirements/communication-requirement/ci-hhw-subjects>).

Requirements and Evaluation:

The course is organized around two 80-minute lecture sessions and a one-hour recitation section each week. The lectures will be interactive, alternating between lecture and breakout sessions with small-group activities. We very much encourage students to attend live in order to participate in the interactive components; we will take attendance. Please alert the teaching team at any point if you are experiencing connectivity issues.

If you must attend class asynchronously, please alert the teaching team at the beginning of the semester. Lectures will be recorded, and if there are enough asynchronous students in similar time zones, we may arrange for subsets to go through the small group activities from lecture together.

Students write four short (five-page) essays over the course of the semester. Papers are submitted via Canvas and *are due by the time and date noted on the syllabus*. Papers turned in after that time/date will be considered late and will lose one-third grade per day. Students are also required to rewrite the first essay in keeping with the course's Communications Intensive requirements.

We grade student performance according to the following formula:

- Class participation (in both lecture and recitation): 20%
- Essays: 80% [7.5% (essay #1), 7.5% (essay #1 rewrite), 20% (essay #2), 22.5% (essay #3), 22.5% (essay #4)]

This class has two main goals. First, it contributes to your communication-intensive requirement and so aims to provide substantial opportunity for oral and written expression. See the HASS-CI guidelines for a full explanation of the requirements for communication-intensive courses. Second, it strives to pique your interest in public policy and government activity and to make you more informed and engaged citizens. Even if you never take another political science course, you will have a greater understanding of why policy turns out as it does.

Indeed, if you enjoy this class, please consider a HASS concentration in Political Science. We also offer a major and a minor in Political Science, as well as a minor in Public Policy and a minor in Applied International Studies. Internships and research opportunities too. Check out these programs and more at: <https://polisci.mit.edu/undergraduate>

Reading:

We expect students to do the assigned reading *prior* to each class and come prepared to discuss the material. All required readings are posted on the Canvas site for the course:

<https://canvas.mit.edu/courses/3307>

In addition to reading the material listed on the syllabus, we strongly urge students to read a daily newspaper—the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, or the *Boston Globe*. All are available online through the MIT library system and online. Listening to the radio is also a good way to stay up to date on public policy. One way to connect with the Boston area, even if you are located elsewhere, is to stream the news at WBUR, a NPR station run out of Boston University.

Academic Integrity

We encourage students to talk to one another outside of class about issues discussed in class and to brainstorm about essays. You often learn best from your peers. That said, we expect each student to write her or his own essays individually. For more on academic integrity, please see the MIT Web site: <https://integrity.mit.edu/>

Writing Guidelines:

As you compose your essays, please keep the following points in mind:

Format

- *All essays should be double-spaced and in 12-point type. Please write in paragraphs, with the first line of each paragraph indented. Make sure to number pages.
- *Page limits are firm; we will not read beyond the assigned length.
- *Use the author-date and reference-list format for all cited work [that is, in-text citations (Smith 2016, 315-16) with a reference list at the end of your essay, which does not count toward the page limit. You can find a guide to this format in the *Chicago Manual of Style*: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html.)

Style

Write for your reader, and make your writing lively and interesting. That means:

- *Short, simple sentences are always better than long, complicated ones.
- *In nearly every case, the active voice is preferable to the passive voice.
- *Direct, concrete statements are better than vague, indirect statements.
- *Write for an audience that consists of educated generalists who are unfamiliar with the topic, not for your TA or your professor.
- *Along those lines, avoid jargon.
- *Take the time to write a draft in advance, so you have time to revise and edit. You might start with an outline. When you're editing, try reading your essay out loud.
- *Avoid dramatic writing. Instead, provide evidence for your arguments (and cite it).

Other

- *Submit your essay via Canvas.
- *Late essays lose one-third grade per day. We grant extensions only in emergencies and with advance notification.
- *Finally, be vigilant about plagiarism, as it is an extremely serious offense and quite easy to avoid. Whether you are quoting another author, or simply paraphrasing her ideas, you *must* cite the source. There are no exceptions, so when in doubt, cite the source. For guidance see: <https://cmsw.mit.edu/writing-and-communication-center/avoiding-plagiarism/>

The Writing and Communication Center (WCC)

The Writing and Communication Center offers free one-on-one professional advice from communication experts with advanced degrees and publishing experience. The WCC can help you further develop your oral communication skills and learn about all types of academic and professional writing. You can learn more about the WCC consultations at <http://cmsw.mit.edu/writing-and-communication-center> and register with the online scheduler to make appointments through <https://mit.mywconline.com>. Please note that the WCC hours are offered on Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Eastern, and fill up fast.

Electronics policy:

Please note that when I teach this subject in person on campus, I do not allow electronic devices (laptops, tablets, phones) in class because studies show that the use of electronic devices in class degrades the comprehension and performance not only of the student using the device, but also the surrounding students. Because the Fall 2020 iteration of the class will be online, you will by definition be using electronic devices to access the class. I request therefore that you concentrate on the class during lecture and recitation time and abstain from checking your email, browsing the internet, and so on. I know it's hard to concentrate on a Zoom call for 80 minutes, hence I will work hard to break up lecture with in-class activities.

Classroom Guidelines¹

Zoom Classroom Norms:

- If you are able to, **show up to class 5 minutes before** it begins, in case you need to troubleshoot audio and video difficulties. Note that class will start on MIT time, five minutes after the hour.
- Once you enter the Zoom session and your audio and video are working:
 - make sure your **full name** is shown to facilitate taking attendance.
 - make sure you are **muted (if not, mute yourself)** to minimize unnecessary or distracting background noise.
 - have your **video on** if possible (see below in Troubleshooting tips if your connectivity is not great). Seeing your face facilitates connection and engagement. It is helpful to your instructor and peers to see your reaction to questions, content, etc.
- **If you have earbuds or a headphone set, wear them!** Wearing earbuds or headphones will reduce the amount of noise that your computer will pick up.
- **To ask questions:**
 - Click on the **"raise hand"** button to let your instructor know you wish to speak.
 - Unmute yourself to speak. Mute yourself again once you have finished asking the question or interacting with your instructor.
- **To share other information** during the presentation you can use the **chat feature**. The chat allows you to share information with everyone or with just a single person. That said, we're going to try to minimize chat usage during class, as it can be quite distracting to watch it scroll by. If you have a question, need clarification, etc., please raise your blue hand instead. We will use the chat to post the URL for Google Docs or other documents we use during class, for example during breakout sessions.
- **To express agreement or encouragement**, you can use Zoom **reactions** to give your peers a thumbs up after a comment or applause after a microteaching presentation.

In case I lose connectivity:

1. Do not leave the Zoom session just yet. Allow at least 10 minutes for me to be able to troubleshoot what is happening.
2. Check your email for any updates from me.

¹ Sections of this document were modified from [Teaching Effectively During Times of Disruption, for SIS and PWR](#)

Zoom Troubleshooting Tips:

- **If your microphone is not working**, use the phone number listed in the Zoom invitation. You can use your phone as the microphone and audio source for your call rather than your computer's built-in microphone if necessary.
- **If your Internet connection is slow or lagging**, consider temporarily turning off your video stream and only maintaining the audio stream. Sometimes, running the web camera on your computer will use up the Internet's bandwidth in a way that might make communication challenging. Turning off the video should improve communication quality and consistency.

Classroom Discussion Norms

- As mentioned, please turn on your video if bandwidth and circumstances allow.
- Listen with an open mind. Share responsibility for including all voices in the discussion.
- Respect others' rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own. If you disagree with something that was said, challenge or criticize the idea, not the person.
- That said, keep in mind that this class is not about sharing our own political opinions or taking normative stances ("I think this is the way policy should be.") Instead, the purpose of this class is to *analyze* why policymaking turns out the way it does. It may be that you already have strong opinions about topics we discuss in class, or you may develop opinions along the way. But in lecture and recitation our goal is to use the concepts we learn to analyze, not pontificate.

Student Resources

MIT has many resources for students and many individuals dedicated to helping you. If you need assistance with academic matters, please contact Student Support Services (S³) at <https://studentlife.mit.edu/s3>.

You might also take a look at:

<https://studentlife.mit.edu/support/covid19/support-services> (links to S³, Mental Health, etc.)

<https://studentlife.mit.edu/support/covid19/students> (links to financial, technical and other help)

<https://covid19.mit.edu/> (general MIT COVID update page)

Semester Schedule:

Tuesday, September 1

Introduction

I. A (BRIEF) POLICY AND POLITICS FRAMEWORK

We use the first three sessions of class to establish a framework for thinking about policy and politics that we will utilize during the rest of the semester. You'll learn a lot of concepts very quickly, but don't worry: we'll return to them in-depth in future case studies.

Thursday, September 3

An Introduction to Policy and Politics I

In our first substantive class, we will define public policy and then use mini case studies of soda taxes and the Black Lives Matter movement and calls for police reform to illustrate a series of concepts, beginning with "ideology" and how liberals and conservatives think about government

and policy. We will then define and discuss a series of “outside actors” who affect the policymaking process: experts, advocates, interest groups, public opinion, and media. We’ll also introduce concepts such as causal stories and policy tools and mechanisms.

Theory readings: Ideology

- Friedman, Milton. 1982. *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pages 1-36.
- Kuttner, Robert. 1997. “The Limits of Markets,” *American Prospect* 31 (March-April).

Case readings: Soda tax

- Sanger-Katz, Margot. 2015. “Yes, Soda Taxes Seem to Cut Soda Drinking.” *New York Times*. October 13.
- Jacobs, Andrew. 2019. “Tuesday Could Be the Beginning of the End of Philadelphia’s Soda Tax.” *New York Times*, May 20.

Case readings: BLM, Police Brutality, and Police Reform

- Langer, Gary. 2020. “63% Support Black Lives Matter as Recognition of Discrimination Jumps.” ABC News, July 21.
- Illing, Sean. 2020. “How Black Lives Matter Fits into the Long History of American Radicalism.” *Vox*, July 2.
- Buchanan, Larry, et al. 2020. “Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History.” *New York Times*, July 3: See interactive article: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/03/us/george-floyd-protests-crowd-size.html>
- Scheiber, Noam, et al. 2020. “How Police Unions Became Such Powerful Opponents to Reform Efforts.” *New York Times*, June 20.

Tuesday, September 8

An Introduction to Policy and Politics II

We continue our introductory discussion by reviewing Kingdon’s model of the agenda-setting process (the three streams of problems, politics, and policies) and the “windows of opportunity” which open when they coincide. We turn then to the institutional features of American government and their implications for policymaking. We continue to use soda taxes as well as the Black Lives Matter movement and calls for police reform to illustrate these concepts.

Theory readings: Public Policymaking

- Kingdon, John W., *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* 2nd edition (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), Ch. 9 (pages 196-208).

Theory readings: Electoral Connection

- Mayhew, David. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, 13-17.
- Stimson, James, Michael MacKuen, and Robert S. Erikson. 1995. “Dynamic Representation,” in *Principles and Practice of American Politics*, 466-480.

Case readings: Soda tax

- O’Connor, Anahad, and Margot Sanger-Katz. 2018. “California, of All Places, Has Banned Soda Taxes. How a New Industry Strategy is Succeeding.” *New York Times*. June 27.

Case readings: BLM, Police Brutality, and Police Reform

- Greenhouse, Steven. 2020. "The Coronavirus Pandemic Has Intensified Systemic Economic Racism Against Black Americans." *New Yorker*, July 30.
- White, Jeremy B., and Alexander Nieves. 2020. "California Police Reform Push Could Shift the National Conversation." *Politico*, August 19.

Thursday, September 10 **An Introduction to Policy and Politics III**

This is an overflow day for discussing any concepts we did not get to in the previous two sessions. The concept sheets include brief summaries of many of the concepts we have discussed thus far.

- Concept sheet – Outside Actors
- Concept sheet – Institutions

II. SETTING THE AGENDA AND SHAPING POLICY OPTIONS

Tuesday, September 15 **Gun Policy I —Agenda Setting & Issue Framing**

We launch our first official case study – about which you will write your first essay – with a discussion of the ways in which gun control and gun rights advocates have characterized the gun policy issue. We will discuss the elements of what Deborah Stone calls "causal stories," by which advocates create a narrative to portray issues in a way that gains support for their side and links to their preferred solutions.

Theory readings: Advocates (Interest Groups) and Their Stories

- Stone, Deborah. 1989. "Causal Stories and the Formation of Policy Agendas," *Political Science Quarterly* 104,2: 281-300.

Case readings

- Lepore, Jill. 2012. "Battleground America," *The New Yorker*, April 23.
- Toobin, Jeffrey 2012. "So you think you know the second amendment?" *The New Yorker*, December 17.
- Goldberg, Jeffrey. 2012. "The Case for More Guns (And More Gun Control)," *Atlantic Monthly*.
- NRA, explore their website: <https://home.nra.org/>
- Everytown for Gun Safety, explore their website: <https://everytown.org/>
- Giffords: Courage to Fight Gun Violence, explore their website: <https://giffords.org/>

Thursday, September 17 **Gun Policy II—Organized and Unorganized Interests**

We discuss the role of group organization in American politics – why organized groups are more likely to prevail on policy issues than unorganized groups and what sets successful organized groups apart from unsuccessful ones.

Theory readings: Interest Group Organization

- Olson, Mancur. 1982. "The Logic of Collective Action," in *The Enduring Debate*, 425-433.

- Bateson, Regina. 2012. "Crime Victimization and Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 106(3): 570-587 (Read intro/conclusion; skim regression results).

Case readings

- Goss, Kristin A. 2006. *Disarmed: The Missing Movement for Gun Control in America*, Chapter 1 (Princeton University Press).
- Zernike, Kate. 2014. "Christie Veto of Gun Control Bill Angers Relatives of Newtown Victims." *The New York Times*. July 3.
- Weisman, Jonathan. 2013. "Senate Blocks Drive for Gun Control." *The New York Times*. April 17.
- Cobb, Jelani. 2013. "Perceived Threats." *The New Yorker*. July 29.
- North, Michael J. 2013. "Gun Control in Great Britain after the Dunblane Shootings." In *Reducing Gun Violence in America*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Tuesday, September 22

Gun Policy III—Policy Mechanisms and Evaluation

We discuss the policy alternatives promoted by advocates on each side of the gun policy issue and the tools and mechanisms by which they operate. We wrap up this unit by using what we have learned to assess whether gun policy might take a different path after the Parkland shooting or the pandemic.

Case readings

- Gopnik, Adam. 2013. "A Few Simple Ideas about Gun Control" *The New Yorker*.
- Peters, Rebecca. 2013. "Rational Firearm Regulation: Evidence-based Gun Laws in Australia." In *Reducing Gun Violence in America*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Alpers, Philip. 2013. "The Big Melt: How One Democracy Changed after Scrapping a Third of its Firearms." In *Reducing Gun Violence in America*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- "Consensus Recommendations for Reforms to Federal Gun Policies." In *Reducing Gun Violence in America*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Cook, Philip J. and Jens Ludwig. 2013. "The Limited Impact of the Brady Act." In *Reducing Gun Violence in America*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Mayo-Adam, Erin. 2018. "Yes, the Parkland Kids Could Change U.S. Gun Policy. Here's What It Would Take." *Washington Post* Monkey Cage. March 15.
- Vasilogambros, Marr. 2018. "After Parkland, States Pass 50 New Gun-Control Laws." Pew Stateline, August 2.
- Parsons, Chelsea and Rukmani Bhatia. 2020. "Dangerous Gaps in Gun Laws Exposed by the Coronavirus Gun Sale Surge." Center for American Progress, July 8.

Thursday, September 24

Health Care I: Passing Health Care Reform in Congress

While you are writing and rewriting your gun policy papers, we're going to use a case study of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 – the Obama health reform – to examine how Congress works. The Arnold reading provides a theory about how members of Congress decide to vote on a piece of legislation. The Blendon and Benson reading shows the state of public opinion at the time – most people liked their own health insurance – while the Cohn and Oberlander articles explore both how

the legislation was crafted given public preferences (and the preferences of major health interest groups) and how congressional leaders strategized to get the legislation through Congress.

Theory readings: Congressional Action

- Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 3-16.

Case readings:

- Blendon, Robert J., and John M. Benson. 2010. "Public Opinion at the Time of the Vote on Health Care," *New England Journal of Medicine* 362 (April 22): 55(1) – 55(6).
- Cohn, Jonathan. 2010. "How They Did It," *The New Republic*, June 10, 14-25.
- Oberlander, Jonathan. 2010. "Long Time Coming: Why Health Reform Finally Passed," *Health Affairs* 29,6: 1112-6.

*******Bring a draft of ESSAY #1 to section September 24/25*******

*******ESSAY #1 DUE Monday September 28 @ 5 pm on Canvas*******

Tuesday, September 29

Health Care II: State Variation; Repeal Attempts; Court Action

We use the rollout of the ACA to examine three phenomena: state variation in implementation; attempts to repeal the law; and the role of the Court in reshaping the law.

Theory readings: Federalism

- Peterson, Paul. 1995. "Who Should Do What?" in *The Brookings Review* 13 (2): 6-11.

Case readings:

- Sommers et al. 2015. "The Impact of State Policies on ACA Applications and Enrollment among Low-Income Adults in Arkansas, Kentucky, and Texas." *Health Affairs* 34 (6): 1010-18.
- *New York Times*. Upshot column. October 31, 2016. "The Impact of Obamacare, in Four Maps." <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/10/31/upshot/up-uninsured-2016.html>
- Dylan Scott and Sarah Kliff. 2017. "Why Obamacare Repeal Failed." *Vox*. July 31.
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. 2020. "Sabotage Watch: Tracking Efforts to Undermine the ACA." <https://www.cbpp.org/sabotage-watch-tracking-efforts-to-undermine-the-aca>.
- Goldstein, Amy. 2020. "How Ruth Bader Ginsburg's Death Could Jeopardize the Affordable Care Act." *Washington Post*, September 19.

Thursday, October 1

CARES Act Pandemic Relief: Implementation

In March 2020, Congress and President Trump signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, a \$2 trillion relief bill aimed at offsetting the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. We use the rollout of the CARES Act in spring and summer 2020 to examine three phenomena: implementation, federalism, and oversight. We examine the administrative and

bureaucratic challenges in implementing provisions such as the one-time stimulus payments, unemployment benefits and the Paycheck Protection Program for small businesses; note the great variation in unemployment benefit amounts, eligibility, and administrative procedures across the states owing to state latitude in the American form of federalism; and examine issues surrounding oversight of relief bill spending and bureaucratic accountability to Congress and the public. We begin with theory readings on implementation (READ ONLY EXCERPT NOTED BELOW) and federalism.

Theory readings: Implementation

- Cerna, Lucic. 2013. "The Nature of Policy Change and Implementation: A Review of Different Theoretical Approaches." OECD. NOTE: ONLY READ pp. 17-24, especially Section 3.4, pp. 22-24.

Case readings:

- Long, Heather, and Michelle Singletary. 2020. "Glitches Prevent \$1,200 Stimulus Checks from Reaching Millions of Americans." *Washington Post*, April 16.
- Flitter, Emily et al. 2020. "Small Business Aid Program Stretches Agency to Its Limits." *New York Times*, April 7.
- Tankersley et al. 2020. "Small-Business Aid Funds Run Dry as Program Fails to Reach Hardest Hit." *New York Times*, April 15.
- Illing, Sean. 2020. "Why the Government Makes It Hard for Americans to Get Unemployment Benefits." *Vox*, April 26.
- DeSilver, Drew. 2020. "Not All Unemployed People Get Unemployment Benefits; In Some States, Very Few Do." Pew Research Center, April 24.
- Cassidy, John. 2020. "Taxpayers Have a Right to Know Who is Getting Their Stimulus Money." *New Yorker*, June 16.

III. MAKING POLICY DECISIONS

Tuesday, October 6

Iraq War – Agenda Setting, Defining the Problem, and Storytelling

In this unit, we turn to foreign policy and one of the most consequential policy decisions in the post-World War II period, the decision to go to war in Iraq after 9/11. We explore the roles played by various actors (President, Congress, Bureaucracy) in foreign policy, and then turn to some background and history on the War on Terror, Afghanistan and Iraq and discuss how actors presented the goals of the Iraq War.

Case readings:

- Ricks, Thomas E. 2007. Excerpt from *Fiasco, The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin), 29-57.
- Schmidt, Brian C., and Michael C. Williams. 2008. "The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Neoconservatives versus Realists," *Security Studies* 17,2: 191-220 (*read only 191-209*).

Thursday, October 8

Iraq War – Decisionmaking and the Role of Experts

Almost all of the Bush Administration's stated reasons for war turned out to be wrong. We discuss how that happened and also contemplate the role of experts in policymaking.

Theory readings

- Nelkin, Dorothy. 1975. "The Political Impact of Technical Expertise." *Social Studies of Science* 5(1): 35-54.

Case readings:

- Ricks, Thomas E. 2007. Excerpt from *Fiasco*, 58-111.
- Kaufman, Chaim. 2004. "Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War," *International Security* (Summer): 5-48.

*******ESSAY #1 Rewrite DUE Monday October 12 @ 5pm on Canvas*******

Tuesday, October 13

No Class Today—Monday schedule

Thursday, October 15

Financial Crisis I – What Happened and Why?

Prior to the current pandemic recession that we are all living through, the financial crisis that began in 2007 and ensuing Great Recession – at the time, the worst since the Great Depression – rocked the global economy. In this unit we explore the causes of the financial crisis and the subsequent policy response. As in the Iraq War case, a dominant theme will be the role of experts. In this first session we explore the economic and (de)regulatory context in which the financial crisis occurred, the emergence of a housing bubble and its relationship to the collapse of the banking sector, and the initial relief bills.

- Listen to *This American Life* episodes, "The Giant Pool of Money," available at <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/355/the-giant-pool-of-money>; and Acts I-III of "Another Frightening Show About the Economy," available at <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/365/another-frightening-show-about-the-economy>
- Johnson, Simon. 2009. "The Quiet Coup," *Atlantic Monthly*, May.
- Packer, George. 2009. "The Ponzi State; Florida's Foreclosure Disaster," *New Yorker*, February 9.

Tuesday, October 20

Financial Crisis II – Debating the Policy Response

No live class – watch documentary on your own time before Oct 22 class

This session consists of watching portions of a Frontline documentary about the financial crisis. You can watch on your own time, any time before class on October 22.

The entire documentary consists of four parts. Please watch the last 8 minutes of Part Two (starting at 46:58, with a picture of the U.S. Capitol dome) and then watch all of Part Three, which is just under an hour (don't be alarmed that the narrator says something about part two at the beginning of part three – that's just a mistake):

<https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-money-power-and-wall-street-part-two/>

<https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-money-power-and-wall-street-part-three/>

As you watch, think about the competing causal stories of the crisis, the viewpoints of the various experts, and the nature of the policy window that the crisis opened up and implications for policy response.

In case you are interested, the URL for the entire documentary is:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/money-power-wall-street>

Case Readings: Passing Dodd-Frank:

- Cassidy, John. 2010. "After the Blowup; Laissez-Faire Economists Do Some Soul-Searching and Finger-Pointing," *New Yorker*, January 11.
- Cassidy, John. 2010. "The Volcker Rule; Obama's Economic Adviser and His Battles Over the Financial-Reform Bill," *New Yorker*, July 26.
- [SKIM: Carpenter, Daniel. 2011. "The Contest of Lobbies and Disciplines: Finance Politics and Financial Reform in the Obama Administration," in Theda Skocpol and Lawrence Jacobs, eds., *Reaching for a New Deal* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation Project), 139-188.]

Thursday, October 22

Financial Crisis III – Implementing Dodd-Frank and Aftermath

In our final session on the financial crisis we discuss the nature of the regulatory response, chiefly the Dodd-Frank bill: what was included, what was left out, what changes have continued as it has been implemented and why. We conclude with a look to the future: could the rise of CLO's (collateralized loan obligations) trigger a new crisis?

- Collection of articles from the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* on implementing Dodd-Frank, particularly the Volcker Rule, 2011-2012.
- ElBoghdady, Dina. 2012. "Taking Aim at Dodd-Frank," *Washington Post*, October 6.
- Protes, Ben. 2012. "With an Obama Victory, Wall Street Pivots to Plan B," *New York Times*, November 7.
- Protes, Ben. 2012. "Wall Street is Bracing for the Dodd-Frank Rules to Kick In," *New York Times*, December 12.
- Markon, Jerry and Dina ElBoghdady. 2013. "Pay Rule Still Unwritten Amid Corporate Push," *Washington Post*, July 7.
- Rappeport, Alan, and Emily Flitter. 2018. "Congress Approves First Big Dodd-Frank Rollback," *New York Times*, May 22.
- Partnoy, Frank. 2020. "The Looming Bank Collapse." *The Atlantic*, July/August.

*****ESSAY #2 DUE Monday, October 26 @ 5:00 pm on Canvas*****

Tuesday, October 27

Immigration/DACA I: Immigration Policy Issues, the Electoral Connection, and Legislative Reform Efforts

We use a case study of immigration, and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in particular, to examine the powers and constraints on the president and Congress as policymaking entities. This first session briefly reviews the current American immigration system, the electoral connection, reform issues, and Congress's attempts at comprehensive immigration reform in 2007 and 2013.

Theory readings: Executive's relations with Congress

- Kingdon, John W., *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* 2nd edition (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), pp. pp 21-30.
- Davidson, Roger H. 2011. "Presidential Relations with Congress," in *Understanding the Presidency*, 6th Ed., 253-267.

Case readings:

- Gelatt, Julia. 2019. "How the U.S. Legal Immigration System Works." Migration Policy Institute.
- Lizza, Ryan. 2013. "Getting to Maybe," *The New Yorker*, June 24 2013.
- Weiner, Rachel. 2013. "How immigration reform failed, over and over." *The Washington Post*. January 30.
- Weisman, Jonathan. 2014. "On Immigration, G.O.P. Starts to Embrace Tea Party." *The New York Times*. August 2.
- Vavreck, Lynn. 2014. "It's Not Too Late for Republicans to Win Latino Votes." *New York Times*, August 11.
- PewResearch Hispanic Trends Project. 2012. "Latino Voters in the 2012 Election."
- Krogstad, Jens Manuel, and Mark Hugo Lopez. 2016. "Hillary Clinton Won Latino Vote but Fell Below 2012 Support for Obama." Pew Research Center, November 29.

Thursday, October 29

Immigration/DACA II: Executive Action

In this session we examine the president's powers and incentives to engage in unilateral action, examining Obama's decision to create the DACA program after Congress failed to enact immigration reform.

Theory readings: Executive unilateral action and public policy

- Moe, Terry M. and William G. Howell. 1999. "Unilateral Action and Presidential Power: A Theory" *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 29:4, 850-873.

Case readings:

- Lind, Dara. 2014. "How a controversial Obama program is bringing young immigrants out of the shadows." *Vox*: <http://www.vox.com/2014/8/18/5999601/deferred-action-obama-immigration-daca>
- "One Family Faces the Immigration Debate." New York Times video (4 minutes long), August 18 2014. <http://nyti.ms/1uOA37B>
- Davis, Julie H. 2014. "Behind Closed Doors, Obama Crafts Executive Actions." *The New York Times*. Aug 8.
- Washington Post Editorial Board. 2014 "Frustration over stalled immigration action doesn't mean Obama can act unilaterally." *The Washington Post*. Aug 5.
- New York Times Editorial Board. 2014. "Mr. Obama, Your Move." *The New York Times*. Aug 9.

Tuesday, November 3

Immigration/DACA III: More Executive Action and Court Reactions

Election Day!

We complete our unit on immigration and DACA by examining some the limits of unilateral action by presidents, including reactions by other branches and by successors. We discuss the Supreme Court's reaction to Obama's attempt to extend protections to the undocumented parents of citizens (DAPA) and then turn to the Trump Administration's executive branch action on DACA, including attempted rescission, and ensuing Court reaction.

- Liptak, Adam, and Michael D. Shear. 2016. "Supreme Court Tie Blocks Obama Immigration Plan." *New York Times*, June 23.
- Shear, Michael D., and Trip Gabriel. 2016. "For Obama, Supreme Court Defeat Upends a Legacy on Immigration." *New York Times*, June 23.
- Shear, Michael D., and Julie Hirschfeld Davis. 2017. "Trump Moves to End DACA and Calls on Congress to Act." *New York Times*, September 5.
- Dubenko, Anna. 2017. "Right and Left on Trump's DACA Decision." *New York Times*, September 5.
- Kumar, Anita. 2020. "Poll: Trump Voters Want to Protect Dreamers." Politico, June 17.
- Blitzer, Jonathan. 2020. "What the Supreme Court's Surprise Decision on DACA Means for Hundreds of Thousands of Dreamers." *New Yorker*, June 18.

Thursday, November 5

Flint Water Crisis I: Drinking Water in the US – History, Regulation and Contemporary Challenges

This unit on the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan, allows us to examine issues of environmental justice, citizen participation in policymaking, government accountability, and federalism, as well as to revisit our discussion about the role of experts. This first session on drinking water systems in the United States provides some context.

- Cooley, Heather. 2012. "Municipal Water Use." In *A Twenty-First Century U.S. Water Policy*, ed. by Christian-Smith, et al.. Oxford University Press.
- Walton, Brett. 2016a. "Water Systems Need Investment and Affordability." Circleofblue.org,
- Walton, Brett. 2016b. "Congress Weighs Help to Pay Escalating Household Water Bills." Circleofblue.org, May 31.

Tuesday, November 10

Flint Water Crisis II: Government Failure, Public Exclusion, and Environmental Justice

In this session we explore how issues in drinking water played out in Flint and how various government entities responded to public concerns about water contamination. We also define the concept of environmental justice.

- Vanderwarker, Amy. 2012. "Water and Environmental Justice." In *A Twenty-First Century U.S. Water Policy*, ed. by Christian-Smith, et al.. Oxford University Press.

- Flint Water Advisory Task Force. 2016. Final Report. March.
- Davidson, Amy. 2016. "The Contempt that Poisoned Flint's Water." *The New Yorker*. January 22.
- Goodnough, Abby, et al. 2016. "When the Water Turned Brown." *New York Times*. January 23.
- Bosman, Julie. 2016. "EPA Waited Too Long To Warn of Flint Water Danger, Report Says." *New York Times*, October 20.

Thursday, November 12

Flint Water Crisis III: Government Accountability, Public Participation and Civic Empowerment

We examine how the citizens of Flint mobilized for environmental justice and eventually achieved government accountability.

- Review Nelkin 1975 (10/8 readings)
- Coburn. 2005. "Local Knowledge in Environmental Health Policy."
- Fischer, Frank. 2000. "Citizens as Local Experts." In *Citizens, Experts, and the Environment*, Duke University Press. *NOTE*: Read only pp. 147-57.
- Orenstein, Suzanne et al. N.D. "Spectrum of Processes for Collaboration and Consensus-Building in Public Decisions."
- Lief, Louise. 2016. "Flint Offers Lessons on How Citizen Collaboration Can Hold Governments Accountable." *Wilson Center NewSecurityBeat*, April 21.
- Edwards, Marc A., and Amy Pruden. 2016. "The Flint Water Crisis: Overturning the Research Paradigm to Advance Science and Defend Public Welfare." *Environmental Science and Technology* 50: 8935-36.
- Hohn, Donovan. 2016. "Flint's Water Crisis and the 'Troublemaker' Scientist." *New York Times* August 16.

*******ESSAY #3 DUE Monday, November 16 @ 5 pm on Canvas*******

IV. POLICYMAKING ACROSS THE LEVELS AND BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

Tuesday, November 17

LGBTQ Workplace Discrimination I: Making Policy in the States

We utilize a case study of public policy regarding workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity to explore the nature of policymaking across the levels of government (state and federal governments) and across the branches of government (legislative, executive, judicial). In this first session we explore how the structure of American federalism allows for state-level policymaking, how the means of making policy at the state level (legislative action, direct democracy) influence responsiveness to different societal groups, and how policy varies as a result.

Theory readings: Public Opinion and Federalism

- Peterson, "The Price of Federalism," from September 29 session (*review*).
- Jeffrey Lax and Justin Philips. 2009. "Gay Rights in the States: Public Opinion and Policy Responsiveness." *American Political Science Review*. August. (*skim*)

Case readings:

- Wong, Ashley. 2019. "A Patchwork of Anti-Discrimination Laws Don't Protect LGBTQ Workers." Public Integrity, August 25.
- Human Rights Campaign. 2020. Map of Employment Laws. April 15.
- Stone, Amy L. 2016. "Antigay Ballot Initiatives." *Sage Encyclopedia of LGBTQ Studies*.
- Gruberg, Sharita, and Michael Madowitz. 2020. "Same-Sex Couples Experience Higher Unemployment Rates Throughout an Economic Recovery." Center for American Progress, May 5.
- National Council of State Legislatures. 2019. "Sex and Gender Discrimination in the Workplace." Look for your state.

Thursday, November 19

LGBTQ Workplace Discrimination II: Making Policy at the Federal Level

We turn to congressional and presidential policymaking, with Congress failing to act on non-discrimination law based on sexual orientation and gender identity and Presidents Obama and Trump issuing dueling executive orders. Consider the nature of legislation and executive orders as policymaking vehicles: Who is represented? How easy or difficult is each to achieve? How enduring?

Case readings:

- Gates, Trevor. 2016. "Workplace Discrimination." SAGE Encyclopedia of LGBTQ Studies.
- Gates, Trevor. 2016. "Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)." SAGE Encyclopedia of LGBTQ Studies.
- Davis, Julie Hirschfeld. 2014. "Obama to Issue Order Barring Anti-Gay Bias by Contractors." *New York Times*, July 18.
- Fadulu, Lola. 2019. "Trump's Rollback of Transgender Rights Extends Through Entire Government." *New York Times*, December 6.
- Sanger-Katz, Margot, and Noah Weiland. 2020. "Trump Administration Erases Transgender Civil Rights Protections in Health Care." *New York Times*, June 12.

Tuesday, November 24

No Class Today—Thanksgiving break

Thursday, November 26

No Class Today—Thanksgiving break

Tuesday, December 1

LGBTQ Workplace Discrimination III: Making Policy in Court

In this session we turn to the Court as a policymaker. What types of forces impinge on the judicial branch compared to the legislative and presidential branches we have previously discussed?

Theory readings: Judicial Policymaking

- Tarr, Alan. 2003. *Judicial Process and Judicial Policymaking*, 3rd ed., 281-288.
- Friedman, Leon. 2001. "Overruling the Court," in *The Enduring Debate*, 263-267.

Case readings:

- Liptak, Adam. 2019. "Can Someone Be Fired for Being Gay? The Supreme Court Will Decide," *New York Times*, September 23.
- Liptak, Adam, 2020. "Civil Rights Law Protects Gay and Transgender Workers, Supreme Court Rules," *New York Times*, June 15.

- Schulman, Michael. 2020. "The Three People at the Center of the Landmark Supreme Court Decision." *The New Yorker*, June 16.
- Nagourney, Adam, and Jeremy W. Peters. 2020. "A Half-Century On, an Unexpected Milestone for LGBTQ Rights," *New York Times*, June 15.
- Matz Joshua, and Robbie Kaplan. 2020. "The Supreme Court's Ruling on LGBTQ Protections is a Triumph for Textualism – and Dignity." June 15. *Washington Post*.
- Sanger-Katz, Margot, and Erica L. Green. 2020. "Supreme Court Expansion of Transgender Rights Undercuts Trump Restrictions," *New York Times*, June 15.

V. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: THE POLICYMAKING PROCESS

Thursday, December 3

Clean Power Plan and Its Demise

No live class – watch documentary on your own time before Dec 8 class

This session consists of watching a Frontline documentary about the EPA and the Clean Power Plan. You can watch the documentary on your own time: <https://www.pbs.org/video/war-on-the-epa-tz8z7j/>
In preparation for watching the documentary, pull together a list for yourself of the course's themes and concepts. Please bring this to class on Tuesday, December 8.

*******ESSAY #4 DUE Monday, December 7 @ 5:00 pm on Canvas*******

Tuesday, December 8

Clean Power Plan and the Themes of the Course

We wrap-up the class by using the case of the Clean Power Plan to discuss the themes of the course. Please bring the list you pulled together for watching the documentary.

- Loris, Nicolas D. 2015. "The Many Problems of the EPA's Clean Power Plan and Climate Regulations: A Primer." Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 3025. July 7.
- Suh, Rhea. 2017. "Why We Need the Clean Power Plan to Fight Climate Change." National Resources Defense Council. October 9.
- Eilperin, Juliet. 2018. "Trump Administration Proposes Rule to Relax Carbon Limits on Power Plants," *Washington Post*, August 21.