



## **Applied Policy Analysis Interterm 2011**

**<http://appliedpolicyanalysis2011.pbworks.com>**

### **Facilitators**

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### **Meeting times and locations**

Class: Tues/Thurs, 9:30-10:50AM; Class Location Chapin 101

Field Work: Mon/Wed, mornings and as needed; locations and logistics arranged in class.

### **Course description**

For the second year, the Amherst College chapter of the Roosevelt Institute will be offering a January term applied Public Policy course. The class is open to students from all colleges. Applied Policy Analysis is an introductory course that explores policy-making as both a problem-solving and political process. Students will get a first-hand experience with a participatory public policy process. With a theoretical backdrop provided during classroom sessions, students will form project groups. Each project group will focus on a single policy topic, and develop an analytic product to help a client organization in Springfield create systemic change. This year's policy topics are: youth violence, health disparities, and education reform. These topics were chosen because they have local and national relevance right now. In this process, students will deeply understand the social issue in the Springfield context, and using the resources of the academic community research and identify policy solutions developed

elsewhere. The final product will be policy recommendations that apply the policy solutions implemented in other parts of the country to the local circumstances. These recommendations will be disseminated to a broad range of stakeholders and the larger Pioneer Valley community using a variety of formats and media. This class aims to create meaningful, ongoing, and mutually beneficial relationships between college students and community-based organizations.

## **Social contract**

We are going to have fun! We are going to make some amazing connections between “the big ideas” and the people who are making it happen. We are going to work and learn collaboratively and creatively, and come away with some very compelling stuff.

We also have some serious responsibilities. We have made commitments to our client organizations, and they have agreed to take a chance on us. We have tried to anticipate how much work (and time) our projects will require. But fieldwork is demanding and unpredictable. Nonetheless, the priority must be to do a great job for the client. Be prepared to finish what you start, and to be proud of your contribution.

## **Required texts**

1. Anderson, James E. *Public Policymaking: An Introduction* - <http://www.amazon.com/Public-Policymaking-Introduction-James-Anderson/dp/0618506861>

In addition to the required textbook listed above, there are a number of supplemental readings that are specific to the three policy topics selected for the course. Students only need to read the supplementary materials for their topic before class, though we will consider all of the readings--at least briefly--together. Many of the citations are for Springfield Institute blog posts, which in turn, lead to videos, audio files, and other articles and research. Decide how far to go based on your interest and what will contribute to your analytic assignment for your client organization.

## **Media**

We will use emerging media as a way to make our work more useful, compelling, and accessible.

## **Schedule/assignments**

You will be expected to have completed (or nearly completed) the core and supplemental reading for your topic *before each week begins*.

Supplementary readings have been assigned numbers. Go to bibliography section below to find reading associated with each number.

## WEEK 1: INTRO TO POLICY THEORY, TOPIC, AND LOCAL CLIENT ORGANIZATION

Core reading:

Public Policymaking: An Introduction, Ch. 1, 2

Supplemental Readings:

A. Health Disparities: 1-2

B. Youth Violence: 1

C: Education Reform: 1-3

Field work:

Meeting with community organizations.

## WEEK 2: DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Core reading:

Public Policymaking: An Introduction, Ch. 3

Supplemental readings:

A. Health Disparities: 3-5

B. Youth Violence: 2-4

C: Education Reform: 4-7

Workshop:

Cost-benefit analysis

Field work:

Researching potential policy solutions. Meeting with community organizations and stakeholders to discuss feasibility of those policy solutions.

### WEEK 3: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND PLANNING

Core reading:

Public Policymaking: An Introduction, Ch. 4, 7

Supplemental reading:

- A. Health Disparities: 6-8
- B. Youth Violence: TBD
- C. Education Reform: 8-9

Workshop:

Writing a policy brief

Field work:

Developing policy recommendations with community organizations.

FINAL PRESENTATION: Jan 27, Location: Amherst College

Client presentations: TBD

## **Bibliography**

### **A. HEALTH DISPARITIES**

1. "Getting Under the Skin: Using Knowledge about Health Inequities to Spur Action," Harvard Law School Institute for Race & Justice, 5/09
2. "Unnatural causes: Is inequality making us sick?" [Video]  
<http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/>
3. Kaiser Family Foundation, "Health reform and communities of color: implications for racial and ethnic disparities," September 2010,  
<http://www.kff.org/healthreform/upload/8016-02.pdf>
4. Aronson, Richard Allan, MD, MPH, "Elimination of Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Birth Outcomes in Wisconsin," February 8, 2008, White Paper for Wisconsin Partnership Program Special Funding Initiative
5. "The Transformation Project: A collaborative proposal submitted to the Mason Square Health Task Force on October 29, 2010," The Springfield Institute et al.
6. "Fred Brown in Holyoke: Social Justice Meets Transition Town [video]," The Springfield Institute, November 2, 2010.
7. "In memory of Hakeem Duke: A remarkable man, a symbol of disparity," The Springfield Institute, July 12, 2010.
8. "MOCHA Launched to promote leadership for health [video]," The Springfield Institute, June 15, 2010.

### **B. YOUTH VIOLENCE**

1. "When a Heart Turns Rock Solid: The Lives of Three Puerto Rican Brothers On and Off the Streets," Tim Black, 2009. Read at least intro.
2. "Youth violence must not become normal." The Springfield Institute, December 8, 2010
3. "Youth violence, and what's going to make a difference," The Springfield Institute, June 10, 2010.

4. “Youth Risk Behavior Survey,” Springfield Public Schools, 2009.
5. “Violence in Springfield: A Survey,” Western New England College

### C. EDUCATION REFORM

1. "Rhee quits ('Kids are getting a crappy education right now')", The Springfield Institute, October 13, 2010, <http://www.springfieldinstitute.org/?p=4120>
2. "Charter school concepts advance, 'Waiting for Superman' debuts," The Springfield Institute, October 18, 2010, <http://www.springfieldinstitute.org/?p=4097>
3. “Promise Neighborhood Learning Community,” October 2010, Partners for a Healthier Community, (2 links)  
<http://www.springfieldinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Promise-1010-A.pdf>  
<http://www.springfieldinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Promise-1010-B.pdf>
4. "Brookings: HZM charter schools 'about average,' Obama’s Promise Neighborhood funds may be cut," The Springfield Institute, August 4, 2010,  
<http://www.springfieldinstitute.org/?p=3049>
5. "New research: Harlem Children’s Zone replication premature? [audio, video]," The Springfield Institute, February 8, 2010, <http://www.springfieldinstitute.org/?p=2311>
6. “Manuel Pastor on Geoff Canada: It’s about regional equity, not charter schools,” The Springfield Institute, September 24, 2009, <http://www.springfieldinstitute.org/?p=1835>
7. "Could Springfield be a “Promise Neighborhood” in the image of Harlem Children’s Zone?," The Springfield Institute, 8/7/09
8. "Fran Fajana imagines a place-based strategy for Springfield," The Springfield Institute, April 13, 2010, <http://www.springfieldinstitute.org/?p=2505>
9. "Money for Nothing," NYT, 7/2/07  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/02/opinion/02schwartz.html>