

Please submit your completed forms and supporting documents to wqb_cert@sfu.ca

**REQUEST FOR *CERTIFICATION*
AS A DESIGNATED BREADTH-SOCIAL SCIENCE COURSE**

Thank you for your interest in offering a designated breadth-social science (B-SOC) course. B-SOC courses will help to meet Simon Fraser University's commitment to General Education, which enhances undergraduate degrees by informing and complementing students' programs of study, encouraging students to develop understandings and skills that equip them for life-long learning, and preparing them to appreciate, critique and contribute ideas and values of diverse, complex, and interdependent local and global communities in an ethical and comprehensive manner.

Completing this form will provide information for assessment by a faculty committee regarding whether your course meets the criteria for B-SOC. Please contact the Director, University Curriculum and Institutional Liaison, at ucildir@sfu.ca if you have any questions about completing this form.

BREADTH CRITERIA

A **BREADTH** course provides the opportunity for students to enrich the subject matter knowledge in their program(s) of study by exposing them to new theoretical perspectives, forms of thought, and modes of inquiry. Breadth courses encourage students to reflect on their values, beliefs, and commitments and allow them to improve their ability to engage in conversations, debates, and actions that comprise our globally interconnected society.

Additionally, a Breadth course must substantially fulfill AT LEAST ONE of the following conditions:

1. Articulates a framework for organizing and acquiring knowledge in a particular field of study; raises overarching questions and problems within a field of study and investigates how the field generates and validates workable solutions to problems.
2. Develops students' systematic understandings of the historical development and/or the contemporary dynamics of the physical, natural, social, and/or cultural environments that comprise the program of study.

BREADTH SOCIAL SCIENCE PURPOSE

- To build cross-cultural understandings and knowledge of the complexities of social systems and diverse world views; to help students navigate and influence societal challenges in the world.
- To develop an understanding of how social scientists think, analyze issues, interpret evidence, and draw conclusions, enabling students to recognize and critique the issues that define contemporary society.
- To prepare students to make connections between their field of study and the broader contexts of human society. To equip students with transferable skills in social critique, evaluation, and the synthesis of knowledge and understanding.

EXAMPLES

Examples of B-SOC courses can be found on the General Education Curriculum page [here](#).

Please note, you can answer any of the following questions with screenshots, copying and pasting from Canvas, or by attaching documents. The attached documents can be in any format (ie PDF, word document). A short paragraph is normally sufficient to answer the questions on this form.

COURSE TITLE, NUMBER AND DESCRIPTION:

Course #: PLCY 200

Course Title: Introduction to Public Policy

Frequency of offering (# / year) 2

Average enrollment per offering: 28

OTHER INFORMATION:

Please indicate if this course currently has or will have another WQB designation: __NO__

Instructor(s) responsible for teaching the course: _____ Michelle Amri _____

**If multiple instructors are responsible for teaching this course, please list them all and include a course syllabus for each one.

List course pre-requisites: _____ n/a _____

Please give a one-paragraph description of the content and overall format (lecture, seminar, tutorial, etc.) of the course, listing any prerequisites (maximum 200 words).

This course focuses on providing an understanding of how public policy gets made. We begin the course with understanding what public policy is and the three Is framework. We then delve into understanding three theories of the policy process: the policy cycle, the Multiple Streams Framework, and the Punctuated Equilibrium Theory. We then cover how to write a briefing note, what policy tools are, and evidence-based policy. We put our foundational knowledge to the test and write a briefing note individually and present a policy pitch in a group. By the end of this course, students should be able to explain how policy gets made through the policy cycle and other theories and effectively communicate ideas about public policy in oral and written form.

BREADTH RATIONALE:

1. A breadth course exposes students to new theoretical perspectives, forms of thought, and modes of inquiry, and encourages them to reflect on their values, beliefs, and commitments and allow them to improve their ability to engage in conversations, debates, and actions that comprise our globally interconnected society. In approximately one paragraph, please explain how your course does this.

This introduction to public policy course introduces students to what public policy is. We cover various definitions of public policy, the structure of government, theories of policymaking, and tools for policy. The course promotes critical thinking to carefully consider the various factors that interplay to influence public policy. Assignments are focused on identifying important policy issues and tackling them with policy solutions. Public policy is a social science discipline.

2. A breadth course must fulfill one of the two following conditions. Please explain how your course does this.

- a. Articulates a framework for organizing and acquiring knowledge in a particular field of study; raises overarching questions and problems within a field of study and investigates how the field generates and validates workable solutions to problems.
- b. Develops students' systematic understandings of the historical development and/or the contemporary dynamics of the physical, natural, social, and/or cultural environments that comprise the program of study.

This is an introductory course so it covers the basics around definitions and the structure of government, but it also covers four theories/frameworks to understand policymaking. Students are also engaged on evidence-based/-informed policymaking to critique the concept by considering the practicalities of this, normative nature, and so forth.

BREADTH SOCIAL SCIENCE RATIONALE

1. A B-SOC course builds cross-cultural understandings and knowledge of the complexities of social systems and diverse world views; to help students navigate and influence societal challenges in the world. In approximately one paragraph, please explain how your course does this.

This course brings together students from a range of disciplines, including political science, health studies, environmental studies, economics, and international studies, to challenge the status quo and explore policy options. Students are engaged to understand the complexities of social systems through learning about the various components that contribute to policymaking through studying theories of policymaking. For example, understanding the differing interests, ideas, and institutions at play. Or similarly, the problems, politics, and solutions in the sphere of the policy issue at hand. Students are also engaged to understand diverse world views through reading news articles, think tank reports, academic articles, and other sources to position their understandings across differing perspectives and worldviews.

2. A B-SOC course develops an understanding of how social scientists think, analyze issues, interpret evidence, and draw conclusions, enabling students to recognize and critique the issues that define contemporary society. In approximately one paragraph, please explain how your course does this.

First, we explore various definitions of public policy and discuss the inherent nuances. Students are asked to consider the strengths and weaknesses of each. Second, students are introduced to various theories that help them understand the social environment and the factors that influence public policy. For instance, the 3Is framework covers the institutions, ideas, and interests that influence public policy, which allows students to apply real-world examples to further their understanding. Similarly, students are also taught the policy cycle, multiple streams theory, and the punctuated equilibrium theory, and we compare and contrast across all of these theories to highlight strengths and weaknesses. And lastly, in both the briefing note and policy pitch assignments, students are engaged to consider the issue or issues at hand, interpret a range of evidence, and draw conclusions in the form of a recommendation.

3. A B-SOC course prepares students to make connections between their field of study and the broader contexts of human society. To equip students with transferable skills in social critique,

evaluation, and the synthesis of knowledge and understanding.

This course allows students to write a briefing note and develop a policy pitch. Both assignments engage students to think creatively and apply the survey course content in a meaningful way to envision positive and meaningful societal change. For instance, in the briefing note assignment, students are given choice to narrow in on a policy issue within the umbrella of tobacco policy. Some students studying environment may choose a topic about tobacco product litter, students studying economics may choose to narrow in on taxation, and so forth. Ultimately, students are able to make such connections between their field of study and the broader contexts of tobacco policy in human society.

4. Other ways in which this course meets the goals and criteria of a Breadth-Social Science course are:

The breadth courses encourage students to reflect on their values, beliefs, and commitments, this aligns very well with PLCY 200. Students are encouraged to think about the framing of policy issues and how this aligns with different beliefs. For instance, if obesity is framed as an individual-level issue, the policy solutions will be focused on individuals (e.g., information campaigns for diet and exercise, tax breaks for gym memberships). However, if broader structural considerations are afforded to how one's health is shaped (i.e., the social, political, and commercial determinants of health), policies will be reoriented (e.g., regulations for sugar-sweetened beverages, eliminating food deserts).

PLEASE SUBMIT A CURRENT OR RECENT COURSE SYLLABUS,

INCLUDING A CLASS SCHEDULE AND GRADING SCHEME WITH THIS FORM.

Syllabus
PLCY 200: Introduction to Public Policy
Fall 2023

We respectfully acknowledge that SFU's three campuses are on unceded traditional lands of the Tsleil-Waututh (səlilwətaʔ), Kwikwetlem (kʷikwəʔləm), Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw), Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), Katzie (q̓icáy̓), Semiahmoo, Kwantlen, Qatqayt, Tsawwassen, and Stó:lō First Nations.

Professor: Dr. Michelle Amri

Email: michelle_amri@sfu.ca

Course date and time: Mondays, 2:30 to 5:20PM

Location: AQ 2104 (Burnaby)

Office Hours: Thursdays, 11:15 to 12:15PM, HCC 3263 (Vancouver)

Course description

This course focuses on providing an understanding of *how* public policy gets made. We begin the course with understanding what public policy is and the three Is framework. We then delve into understanding three theories of the policy process: the policy cycle, the Multiple Streams Framework, and the Punctuated Equilibrium Theory. We then cover how to write a briefing note, what policy tools are, and evidence-based policy. We put our foundational knowledge to the test and write a briefing note individually and present a policy pitch in a group. By the end of this course, students should be able to explain how policy gets made through the policy cycle and other theories and effectively communicate ideas about public policy in oral and written form.

Evaluation

Item	Due date	Weight
Midterm exam	October 16	30%
Briefing note	November 13 (11:59PM)	25%
Final presentation	November 27 or December 4	25%
Group peer evaluation	December 8 (11:59PM)	5%
Participation	Ongoing	15%

Midterm exam (30%)

The midterm exam will cover the first half of the course (Weeks 1 through 5, inclusive). The format will be multiple choice and short-answer questions. The exam will occur during class-time on **October 16th**. Details on the exam format will be covered in Week 3's class.

Briefing note (25%)

You are tasked with preparing a briefing note on tobacco policy for a minister or other high-level official. The key for this assignment is to be specific. What is the specific public policy area you are recommending action or inaction on? Who is the note directed to and is what you are recommending under their purview? Keep in mind the briefing note is designed to provide a snapshot of information so that a minister or other high-level official can make an executive decision. Your paper should follow the format outlined below (not including the section on writing):

Issue statement: /10

- Issue statement is one or two sentences long (no longer!)
- Problem clearly defined
- Intended audience is clear
- Why this is an issue that needs to be considered now is evident
- Clear purpose of briefing note

Background: /20

- Concisely covers the necessary, relevant history, and context for the intended audience
- Addresses:
 - Who is affected
 - Which institutions are involved (legislations, regulations, programs, decision-makers)
 - Whose interests are at play and what are their views

Key considerations: /15

- Highlights necessary and pertinent information, which may include:
 - cost of action or in-action (such as financial or health),
 - impact on groups, and
 - potential public backlash.
- If the topic is contentious, be sure to explain this.

Options: /30

- Presents three to four options (typically, you should aim for three options). Keep in mind, the “status quo” should be one option.
- Pros and cons concisely presented for every option
- Thorough and balanced, clear, and concise
- Students bring their own insight

Recommendation: /10

- A clear recommendation is made from one of the aforementioned options
- Rationale presents a coherent argument
- Students bring their own insight

Writing: /15

- Conforms to required structure and length: one to two single-spaced pages (not including the reference list)
- Uses plain language writing, designed for readability (well-organized, easy to read and remember key points)
- Considers intended audience
- Correct citation and referencing. Any style is acceptable as long as it is consistent (e.g. APA, Vancouver, Harvard)
- Choices of sources are appropriate – both in quantity and quality
- Proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling employed

Final presentation (25%)

The purpose of this assignment is to build on your understanding of three theories of the policy process to the specific policy domain of climate and energy policy, which be covered in Week 9. In your assigned group, it is your responsibility to provide a comprehensive overview of your specific topic (including key definitions, history, key players and their roles, actions taken to date or not, etc.) and narrow in on one aspect within this area to present a policy pitch. Your pitch should identify a policy action you believe should be taken. Consider the 3Is and your understanding of how policy is made to ensure what you are presenting is well-supported to be convincing as a feasible policy action. In addition, groups are required to assign a reading to the class (no more than 20 pages of text), to be sent to the instructor on November 21. Presentations should be 23 to 26 minutes in length with an *additional* ten minutes dedicated to answering questions from the class. If you receive no questions, please be ready to facilitate discussion for this ten-minute period.

Grading will follow the outlined rubric:

- Overview of topic: /30
 - Comprehensively discussed the topic (including key definitions, history, key players and their roles, actions taken to date or not, etc.)
 - Paid sufficient attention to the different levels of government and their associated roles (specified where these did not exist)
 - Presented factual material in a clear manner and did not use jargon
 - Discussed the assigned reading and highlighted important aspects
 - Covered the content in an interesting and unique way
- Policy pitch: /40
 - Policy pitch provided sufficient analysis (balanced and clear)
 - Consideration afforded to feasibility (e.g., practical, political)
 - Put forward a **convincing** argument and pitch that could be adopted
 - Action identified drew on the group's insights
- Slides: /10
 - Slides were not text-heavy and easy to follow
 - Content flowed in a logical order
 - References for the presentation were included and properly cited
- Presentation: /10
 - Professional composure
 - Sufficient time was given to each slide (not rushing through)
 - Did not simply read off slides
 - Presentation was between 23 and 26 minutes and did not need to be cut-off
 - All group members presented at least one component of the slides
 - Seamless switches between speakers
 - Loud and clear voice projection and speed
- Question and discussion period: /10
 - Answers to questions demonstrated knowledge of content
 - In cases where the answer was not known, this was clearly stated

Group peer evaluation (5%)

To promote accountability and ensure fairness, you are required to fill out an Excel-based evaluation form for all group members, evaluating the quality and quantity of their contributions. The average of the scores you receive will determine your mark in this area. However, the

instructor can apply their discretion to adjust this grade. Further instructions will be posted on Canvas.

Participation (15%)

Your participation will be evaluated based on a combination of class attendance and participation in discussion. Students are expected to attend all classes and to engage in quality discussion. Factors taken into consideration in evaluating the quality of student participation will include: being prepared for class, being attentive to class discussion, raising thoughtful comments and questions, and providing insightful analysis of the readings, other sources, and discussions.

Schedule and readings

Week 1 – September 11, 2023

Course overview, introduction to public policy, and the 3Is framework

Cairney, P. "What is Public Policy?" Blog Post and Podcast:

<https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/2016/03/04/what-is-policy-3/>

National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. (2014). *Understanding Policy Developments and Choices Through the "3-i" Framework: Interests, Ideas and Institutions*.

https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/docs/2014_ProcPP_3iFramework_EN.pdf

Week 2 – September 18, 2023

Who makes public policy and the stages model of policymaking/the policy cycle

National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. (2013). *Public Policy Models and Their Usefulness in Public Health: The Stages Model*.

http://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/ModeleEtapesPolPubliques_EN.pdf

Everett, S. (2003). The Policy Cycle: Democratic Process or Rational Paradigm Revisited? *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 62(2): 65–70.

Turnbull, N. (2006). How Should We Theorise Public Policy? Problem Solving and Problematicity. *Policy and Society*, 25(2), 3-22. doi:10.1016/s1449-4035(06)70072-8

Week 3 – September 25, 2023

The Multiple Streams Framework and overview of the midterm exam

Amri, M., & Logan, D. (2021). Policy responses to COVID-19 present a window of opportunity for a paradigm shift in global health policy: an application of the Multiple Streams Framework as a heuristic. *Global public health*. doi:10.1080/17441692.2021.1925942

Béland, D. (2016). Kingdon Reconsidered: Ideas, Interests and Institutions in Comparative Policy Analysis. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*, 18(3), 228-242. doi:10.1080/13876988.2015.1029770

Week 4 – October 2, 2023**No class in lieu of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (SFU closed)**

No readings.

Week 5 – October 10, 2023 – Class moved to Tuesday for Thanksgiving Day**Punctuated Equilibrium Theory**

Amri, M. M., & Drummond, D. (2021). Punctuating the equilibrium: an application of policy theory to COVID-19. *Policy Design and Practice*, 4(1), 33-43.
doi:10.1080/25741292.2020.1841397

Kuhlmann, J., & van der Heijden, J. (2018). What Is Known about Punctuated Equilibrium Theory? And What Does That Tell Us about the Construction, Validation, and Replication of Knowledge in the Policy Sciences? *Review of Policy Research*, 35(2), 326-347.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/ropr.12283>

Week 6 – October 16, 2023**In-class midterm exam**

No readings.

Week 7 – October 23, 2023**How to write a briefing note**

Miscampbell, G. (2021). *Writing a Briefing Note*. Atlas of Public Management. Retrieved from: <http://www.atlas101.ca/pm/concepts/writing-a-briefing-note/>

Doyle, S. (2013). *Writing Effective Briefing Notes*. Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition. Retrieved from <https://advocacyschool.org/PDF/OHCCslideshowJune17-SusanDoyle.pdf>

Lavis, J. N.; Permanand, G.; Oxman, A. D.; Lewins, S.; and Fretheim, A. (2009). SUPPORT tools for evidence-informed health policymaking (STP) 13: Preparing and using policy briefs to support evidence-informed policymaking. *Health Research Policy and Systems*. 7(Supplement 1), S13. <https://healthpolicy-systems.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1478-4505-7-S1-S13>

Week 8 – October 30, 2023**Tobacco policy and policy instruments/tools**

Vedung, E. (1998). Policy instruments: typologies and theories. In M. L. Bemelmans-Videc, R.C. Rist, and E. Vedung (Eds.), *Carrots, sticks and sermons: policy instruments and their evaluation* (pp. 21-58). New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.

Howlett, M. (1991). Policy instruments, policy styles, and policy implementation: national approaches to theories of instrument choice. *Policy Studies Journal*. 19(2), 1-21.

Amri, M. (2020). Effective policy tools for tobacco control: Canadian public health practitioners' perspectives. *Policy Design and Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25741292.2020.1747749>.

Week 9 – November 6, 2023

Climate and energy policy guest lecture by Dr. Will Scott

Nicholson, P. (2022) The three tragedies that challenge climate policy, *Policy Options*, February 4, 2022. <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/february-2022/tragedies-challenge-climate-policy/>

Goulder, L. H., & Parry, I. W. H. (2008). Instrument Choice in Environmental Policy. *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*, 2(2), 152–174. <https://doi.org/10.1093/reep/ren005>

Week 10 – November 13, 2023

No class in lieu of Remembrance Day (SFU closed)

No readings.

Week 11 – November 20, 2023

Evidence-based/evidence-informed policy

Fafard, P. (2015). “On the Limits of Evidence for Policy.” *Policy Options*. Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy: <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/2015/03/20/on-the-limits-of-evidence-for-policy/>

Landry, R., Lamari, M., & Amara, N. (2003). The extent and determinants of the utilization of university research in government agencies. *Public Administration Review*. 63(2), 192-205.

Week 12 – November 27, 2023

Group presentations for groups 1-4

Readings to be posted.

Week 13 – December 4, 2023

Group presentations for groups 5-8

Readings to be posted.

Course policies

Email communication

Students should use their university email address to communicate with me. I will endeavor to respond to emails within two business days. Please indicate the course code in your emails.

Readings

There are no required textbooks for this course. All readings are posted to the course page on Canvas.

Policy on late work

Any assignments submitted after the due date will be considered late and subject to a five percent per day penalty. This penalty includes weekends: for example, if an assignment is due on a Friday,

and is submitted on the following Monday, it will be subject to a three-day late penalty and entail a deduction of fifteen percent.

If an extension is required, please contact me and we will discuss if there are grounds for such an extension. Supporting documentation will be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

Grade appeals

Students who have concerns regarding their grade on an assignment may submit a grade appeal. No appeal will be considered unless it is accompanied by a detailed 200-300 word written explanation of why you think the work merits a higher grade. This written explanation should be as specific as possible, making reference to the grading criteria and my feedback.

Accessibility

Students with hidden or visible disabilities who may need classroom or exam accommodations are encouraged to register with the SFU Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL-1250 Maggie Benston Centre) as soon as possible to ensure that they are eligible and that approved accommodations and services are implemented in a timely fashion.

Conduct expectations

As members of the Simon Fraser University (“the University”) Community, “you are expected to behave in a manner that assures other members of the University Community can learn, live, and work in a positive and constructive environment.” These expectations are described in SFU’s [Student Conduct Policy](#). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all SFU community members.

Outstanding scholarship, teaching, and learning can thrive only in an environment that embraces the broadest range of people and encourages the free and respectful expression of their diverse perspectives.¹ This is a shared responsibility, which requires us to reflect on free expression with care and harm-free language to foster an inclusive community and promote an equitable and antiracist institutional culture inside and outside of the classroom, in person and online. All members of this course are expected to contribute positively to this environment. Relevant SFU’s policies including the [Human Rights Policy](#) and [Bullying and Harassment Policy](#) will be strictly upheld in this classroom to ensure a safer learning environment.

Confidentiality and privacy

This course is a community built on trust, and as a community, we are collectively responsible for upholding privacy protections. In order to create a community built on trust, our interactions, discussions, and course materials and activities must remain private. Students may not post images, identifiable conversations, or any lecture material to social media or those beyond our learning community without the express permission of those involved. Furthermore, my course materials and those produced by students in the course such as lecture slides and the lecture itself, notes, presentations, and other materials are all protected by copyright. Recording,

¹ Equity, diversity, inclusion (EDI), respect, and civility are among the fundamental values of Simon Fraser University and are [key priorities](#) of President Joy Johnson. The university is also committed to anti-racism and decolonization. These are the foundations on which behavioural expectations for this course have been set.

copying, or sharing these materials without express permission is a violation of Canadian copyright law and SFU policies.

Academic integrity

Academic honesty is essential for maintaining a high standard of academic excellence and integrity. There are many different forms of academic dishonesty. These include plagiarism such as inadequately citing the source of short phrases or ideas of an author in written work submitted for a grade and submitting or presenting another's work as one's own, among others. Students should read SFU's policy S10.01 on Code of Academic Integrity and Good Conduct at: <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-01.html> which outlines all prohibited acts of academic dishonesty.

Grade scale

Grade	% grade	Definition
A+	95-100	Excellent performance
A	90-94.5	
A-	85-89.5	
B+	80-84.5	Good performance
B	75-79.5	
B-	70-74.5	
C+	65-69.5	Satisfactory performance
C	60-64.5	
C-	55-59.5	
D	50-54.5	
F	0-49.5	Unsatisfactory performance (fail)