Course Description
Whether we realize it or not public policies affect us in almost every aspect of our lives. How do these policies come into being in a democratic society? Who is involved in the process? Does the process work well? This course provides an overview of the process involved in public policymaking. We will examine how policy ideas are identified, how they get on the political agenda, as well as how they are formulated and ultimately passed. We will also consider what occurs as policy is implemented and evaluated. We will use this understanding of the public policy process to examine a number of broad policy arenas as well as specific policies that are currently under debate. Students will have the opportunity to think critically about how the policy process influences policy and its outcomes and whether a given policy is delivering what it should.

Producing more effective policy actors is the class goal. Completing this class will improve your abilities to assess policy options, lead, and advocate for change.

This is a Critical Thinking through Writing (CTW) course. Students will develop their ability to think critically about important policy issues, as well as the policy process, and express their views through writing. Students are encouraged to frequently meet with the course’s CTW consultant for one-on-one help with their writing.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes
By the end of this course, students should be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the major steps in the public policy process
- Demonstrate knowledge of the main policy issues currently under debate
- Evaluate current policy issues in the context of the public policy process
- Develop a critical assessment of policy issues through multiple perspectives
- Demonstrate improved writing and oral skills through alternative methods of policy communications – policy advocacy, policy briefings, and policy analysis.

Required Textbook:

Supplemental Texts:
Policies

Class Attendance and Participation
Class attendance will count for **10 percent of your final grade**. One class can be missed without penalty, but additionally missed sessions will be documented and deducted. Continual tardiness to class and/or early departures from class will also result in deductions from the final grade. As a general rule, there are no exceptions to the attendance requirement; however, exceptions may be granted for a catastrophic event or illness with documentation as determined by the instructor.

Active participation is a necessary component of the course; simply being present in class does not constitute participation. The success of the course depends largely on students’ preparation and active participation, so students are expected to complete the assigned readings and assignments before class meetings. Students are also expected to engage in group discussions, small group activities and assignments, question and answer sessions, and so on for full participation credit.

Late Assignments
Assignments submitted to the professor after they have been collected in class or after stated deadlines will be counted as late. **Late assignments must be hand delivered to the professor.** **Emailed assignments will not be accepted.** Turning in assignments late will result in a full letter grade deduction and a 3-point deduction for each additional day. No assignment will be accepted one week beyond the indicated deadline.

Make-Up Exams
In general, make-up exams will only be allowed under emergency circumstances with proper documentation. The professor reserves the right to decide the conditions of make-up exams or assessments.

Class Etiquette
To make this course enjoyable for everyone, cell phone ringers and other devices should be turned off. Text messaging, emailing, and surfing the web are prohibited in class. If it appears that members of the class are using computers or tablets for purposes outside of note taking, the instructor reserves the right to ask students to take notes by hand. Students are expected to be respectable to the professor and peers. Students may have strong opinions on topics and classroom discussion can be lively; the professor encourages students to voice their opinions and views in a courteous manner.

In this course, we will be discussing a host of social issues that are sensitive and often controversial. Our individual experiences and backgrounds provide us all with a valuable point of reference from which to being our exploration of the concepts and topics. No one has a monopoly on social issues or concepts; therefore, no one’s point of reference is more or less legitimate than anyone else’s reference point. Every substantive contribution to class discussion is considered invaluable and will not be censored. However, contributions that are not deemed substantive or are distractive in nature will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be respectable to the professor and peers. Students may have strong opinions on
topics and classroom discussion can be lively; the professor encourages students to voice their opinions and views in a courteous manner.

Tips for Maintaining Proper Discussion Etiquette

1. **Listen attentively.** The purpose of this course is to present and discuss different ideas. In order to reap the benefits of such an exchange, you must be willing to pay attention to what others have to say.
2. **Think before you speak.** Refrain from making broad, general, and/or unsubstantiated comments. Make sure that you use evidence and provide a rationale for your statements.
3. **Maintain the dignity of the academic environment.** Your ideas should be presented using Standard English.
4. **Raise your hand.** This helps to maintain order in the classroom and helps to ensure that everyone has a chance to talk.
5. **Be courteous.** Refrain from interrupting or engaging in private conversation while others are speaking. Also, limit disruptive behavior, such as texting, social media checking, newspaper reading, personal grooming, etc.

**Email**
The instructor will periodically communicate with students through the campus email system; therefore, students are responsible for checking their campus assigned email account regularly. Additionally, students may communicate with the instructor through this system. Emails sent through iCollege may experience a delayed response. *Please include basic greetings in emails and avoid “text talk,” as it is not the most effective method of professional communication.*

**Plagiarism, Academic Honesty or Cheating**
The Georgia State University Handbook defines plagiarism as follows:

- Plagiarism is presenting another person’s work as one’s own. Plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgement, including the summarizing of another student’s work as one’s own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of the paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else. The submission of research or completed papers or projects by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the faculty member. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one’s reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. **It is also plagiarism to reuse material you prepared for different courses in the same program.** The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility.

In this course, plagiarism and academic dishonesty will include the following:

- Reusing material developed for this or other courses to meet writing assignments in the current course
- Collaborating with other students or outside consultants (i.e. professional editor) for writing assignments
- Copying information or ideas from a book, article, or website without proper credit to the author.

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty in any form will face disciplinary action that could result in receiving a “F” in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.
More information about the GSU Academic Honesty Policy (Section 409) can be found here: http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfhb/fhb.html. Students may also find information on the policy in the undergraduate catalog.

**Course Materials/Copyright Statement**
The handouts and materials used in this course—including but not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, posted examples and guides, and in class materials generated for the course are copyrighted. You do not have permission or the right to copy the handouts or record lectures unless I expressly grant you permission.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement**
Students with disabilities, requiring special accommodation must self identify and need to be registered with the Office of Disability Services (404-651-1487) for the instructor to modify instruction or expectation. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of the plan to the professor and all other courses in which an accommodation is sought.

**Grading Policy:** The following point system will be used to calculate final grade. Incomplete grades will only be given for nonacademic reasons when advance arrangements have been made. Please let the professor know as soon as you see a problem developing. The professor reserves the right to require documentation and proof of the need for an incomplete before agreeing to apply the “I” grade; the right to assign different and/or additional course requirements; the right to impose a grade penalty for an incomplete in the course. Students should familiarize themselves with the GSU Withdrawal Policies, Section 401.05.

**Last day to withdraw from full semester classes:** October 10, 2017.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>94-100 A</td>
<td>77-79 C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93 A-</td>
<td>73-76 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89 B+</td>
<td>70-72 C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-86 B</td>
<td>60-69 D</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-82 B-</td>
<td>&lt;60 F</td>
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**Assignments**

PMAP 3311, Critical Policy Issues, is designated as a critical thinking and writing course at Georgia State University. There are a host of definitions for “critical thinking.” We will adopt the Scriven and Paul (1987) definition:

“critical thinking [is] the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.”

Writing is the vehicle through which we will learn and hopefully master the critical thinking process. As such, the assignments for this course will reflect our efforts to move through the critical thinking process while exploring various policy issues.

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**Writing Assignments:** (50% of total grade) Students will write two, 2-3 page papers on a pre-determined policy issue. In each paper, students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the issue through a thorough explanation of the problem and the concerns associated with the policy issue; to demonstrate an ability to analyze the issue from a range of perspectives; to evaluate the proposed solutions to the policy issue, and finally, to develop an original recommendation to resolve the issue. All assignments are to be submitted on iCollege by 11:59pm on the noted due date.

- **Outline (10% of total grade)** — Students will complete an outline template (provided on iCollege) that provides the basis of each written assignment.

- **Original Submissions (20% of total grade)** — Papers should be formatted in 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with one inch margins. Students are also required to submit a Grammarly report with a score of 83 or above with all writing assignments. Not following the formatting requirements will result in points being deducted from the assignment.

- **Revisions (15% of total grade)** — Students will have the opportunity to revise writing assignments after receiving the instructor’s feedback. Revisions should be submitted in MS Word with track changes.

- **Consultations (5% of total grade)** — Students are expected to attend at least two office hour sessions with the CTW consultant. To earn points for the first assignment, a meeting with the consultant must occur by Monday, September 18, 2017. To earn points for the second assignment, a meeting must occur by Monday, November 27, 2017. Failure to attend two meetings will result in points being deducted from the assignment.

**Midterm (20% of total grade)** — The midterm will cover all material discussed during the first six weeks of the course. Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the lectured material and assigned readings. The exam will include a number of essay questions.

**Final Assessment (20% of total grade)** — The final course requirement is a comprehensive final assessment. Students will write a 1-2 page, single spaced policy memo on a self-selected policy issue covered in the course (i.e. education, health, inequality, housing). The goal of the policy memo is to present a compelling argument on a policy problem using all of the tools developed throughout the semester. The memo should take the form of a recommendation for action. As such, the memo will be addressed to a government official or decision maker who can reasonably take action toward resolving your policy issue and adopt your policy recommendation. It should clearly identify and explain the problem; it should discuss the concerns of the issue for the target population of the issue, the citizenry, political elites, and other relevant stakeholders; and the memo should establish a justification for a single, specific action or a range of suitable options. Your finish product must include a brief executive summary, a minimum of three quality references as footnotes, and a defined conclusion.

**Resources**

**GSU Writing Studio**
The GSU Writing Studio located in room 2420 at 25 Park Place Building (across from Woodruff Park). It is a great place to talk about writing, learn about writing, and improve your writing. The
central mission of the Studio is to “enhance undergraduate and graduate student writing by encouraging all writers to participate in regular conversation about the writing process and their academic work.” As a GSU student, the Writing Studio is a free resource to you. The Studio provides one-on-one assistance to students on rhetoric, composition, and academic genre conventions. Extensive assistance on non-content related writing issues should be directed to the Writing Studio. For more information on the Writing Studio, visit GSU Writing Studio.

CTW Consultant
As a student of this writing intensive course, you also have access to a CTW consultant. You are required to meet with the consultant at least two times throughout the semester; however, you are encouraged to work with the consultant as frequently as necessary. Students who work with the CTW consultant are more likely to improve their paper grades and the overall quality of their writing.

PMP Career Services and Community Network
The Department of Public Management and Policy (PMP) provides career support services to all current PMP students and alumni. To examine what PMP offers to its students regarding career development, visit: PMAP Career Services. Students are encouraged to arrange an individualized appointment with Colleen Perry, Andrew Young School Director of Career Services, by emailing her at: cperry25@gsu.edu. Her office is located in room 49B on the Ground Floor of the Andrew Young School.

Title IX
Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find appropriate resources at the Office of Opportunity Development and Diversity Education Planning.

Sexual misconduct may be disclosed confidentially by students at the following locations:
- Georgia State University Counseling and Testing Center, Suite 200, 75 Piedmont Ave., NE, 404-413-1640.
- Georgia State University Student Health Clinic, Suite D, 141 Piedmont Ave., NE, 404-413-1950.
- Georgia State University Student Victim Assistance Services, Suite 239, 75 Piedmont Ave., NE, 404-413-1965.

Embark Network
The Embark Network at Georgia State University provides assistance to students experiencing homelessness or the foster care system. This network, run through the Dean of Students Office, connects these students to on and off campus resources for assistance with food insecurity, housing, and other services. More information can be found by calling the Dean of Students office at 404-413-1515 or going to the website: http://deanofstudents.gsu.edu/student-assistance/embark/.

Course Evaluation
Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at GSU. Upon completing the course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation.

2 http://writingstudio.gsu.edu/writingstudioservices/.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introduction to Policy Writing</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 2</td>
<td>Plagiarism Quiz Due</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Labor Day, NO CLASS</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 3</td>
<td>Outline I Due Wed, September 6, 2017</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The Public Policy Making Process</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Policy Constraints &amp; Solutions to Policy Process Errors</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 5</td>
<td>Writing Assignment I Due Wed, September 20, 2017</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Policy Framing &amp; Target Populations</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Writing Workshop/ Midterm Review</td>
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<td>MIDTERM October 4, 2017</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Education Policy</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 10</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Education Policy—Higher Education</td>
<td>Supplemental reading</td>
<td>Assignment I Revision Due Wed, October 11, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Environmental [Health] Policy</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Health Policy</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 8</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Inequality &amp; Poverty</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 9</td>
<td>Outline II Due Wed, November 1, 2017</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Welfare and Social Security</td>
<td>Kraft &amp; Furlong Chapter 9</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Housing Policy</td>
<td>Supplemental reading</td>
<td>Assignment II Due- Monday, November 27, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Review, Catch Up and Course Wrap Up</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>FINAL EXAM Monday, Dec. 11, 2017, 1:30pm-4:00pm</td>
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3 The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Students will be alerted of any changes.