

Course Syllabus

URBAN 588/IPM 500 - Strategic Planning and Policy Analysis

Course Introduction

Defining and analyzing a problem is the first step toward developing strategies to solve it. Policy analysis provides a framework for examining vexing societal issues, developing alternative policies to address them and analyzing their effects and costs. Strategic planning provides a suite of analytic and group process tools for harnessing the energy and potential of an organization to implement selected policies. These include understanding an organization's mission, its competitive advantages, internal and external environments, economic model, and its decision-making processes. Managers in both the public and the private sector, by skillfully applying the tools and principles of strategic planning, can make future-oriented decisions that genuinely improve an organization's performance and achieve larger policy objectives.

Overview

This course addresses two fundamental and related aspects of planning and policy making.

- how to identify problems in the public realm and analyze a range of policy options to address them, and
- how to organize and orient peoples' efforts to implement desired policies.

The first portion of the course will focus on policy analysis and will include readings from the texts and selected cases. The cases relate to transportation infrastructure and to the rebuild of a seawall post-hurricane. By the completion of this segment you will know how to:

- identify problems
- identify possible policy choices
- support the choices with appropriate information
- select preferred choices through the use of criteria
- understand and anticipate the consequences of policy decisions

The second portion of the course will focus on strategic planning for organizations and will include readings from the texts as well as practice with various elements of strategic planning applied to a real organization.

By the completion of this segment you will know how to

- assess an organization's mission statement;
- undertake a SWOT analysis;
- conduct a stakeholder analysis;
- scan and assess the internal and external environment;

- explain what a strategy is;
- develop strategies and associate them with performance measures;
- and employ elements of the real-time strategic planning approach.

Required Materials

Textbooks

1. John Bryson, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement*, 4th edition*, Josey-Bass, 2018. ISBN: 978-1119071600 **also available as an eBook through the UW Library.**

https://orbiscascadewashington.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01ALLIANCE_UW/1juclfo/alma9916216020580_1452

*Note: there is a 6th edition now, but it has not been released as a eBook available through the UW Library (it is available on Kindle).

2. Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to Problem Solving*, 7th Edition, CQ Press, 2023. ISBN: 978-1071884133

3. David La Piana, *The Non Profit Strategy Revolution: Real-Time Strategic Planning in a Rapid-Response World*, 2nd Edition, Fieldstone Alliance, 2018. ISBN 978-1684421794

Case Studies

Seattle Public Utilities, a teaching case from the Evans School Electronic Hallway

Selected Articles and Chapters

- David Weimer and Aidan Vining, *Policy Analysis*, 2011, chapter 5: "Rationales for Public Policy: Market Failures"; chapter 7: "Rationales for Public Policy: Distributional and Other Goals"; chapter 9: "Policy Problems as Market and Government Failure"; and chapter 16, "Cost-Benefit Analysis: Assessing Efficiency"
- Mark Moore, *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*, Harvard University Press, pp. 70–76: "The Strategic Triangle."

Other

There are links to other supplemental readings, readings for assignments, examples, etc. throughout the course.

Technology Requirements and Skills

In addition to the technology requirements and skills noted in the Online Student Handbook, you will need some sort of professional presentation software; for example, Power Point or Smart Draw (free download) to develop diagrams.

Organization of the Course

This course consists of 10 lessons, each of which includes an online commentary. The online commentaries are substantive. Take time to read them thoroughly.

About the Lessons

Lesson 1: Rationales for Public Policy

- What is public value and how is it achieved?
- The concept of market failure; the need for public intervention

Reading: Bardach Appendix B; Weimer & Vining Chap 5 Market Failures, Chap 9 Policy Problems

Lesson 2: Primer on Policy Analysis

- What is policy analysis?
- What is a problem and how do we know when one exists in the public realm?
- Introduction to the Eightfold Path
- What government can do
- Review of a real-world policy analysis

Reading: A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis, Bardach, Parts I-III and Appendix A; Longo and McNutt, From Policy Problems to Policy Analytics

Lesson 3: Generating and Analyzing Alternatives

- What are feasible interventions?
- Efficiency and cost benefit analysis
- Generating options
- Developing and applying criteria

Reading: Weimer & Vining Chap 7 Distributional and Other Goals

Lesson 4: Project the Outcomes

- Weighing options
- Projecting results
- Predicting impacts and anticipating unintended consequences
- About implementation

Reading: pp. 70–76, Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government, Mark Moore; Weimer and Vining Chap 16 Cost Benefit Analysis

Lesson 5: Introduction to Strategic Planning

- The relationship of Policy Analysis to Strategic Planning
- The nature of planning, strategy, and strategic planning
- Strategic planning process
- Strategic planning for public systems
- The role of mission statements and examples and characteristics of successful ones

Reading: Bryson, Chaps 1 and 3

Lesson 6: Stakeholder Analysis

- Stakeholder analysis and mission statements
- Issues and techniques in stakeholder analysis

Reading: Bryson, Chap 4; Case Study: Seattle Public Utilities and SPU case study

Lesson 7: Environmental Scanning

- Issues and techniques in environmental scanning and assessment
- SWOT analysis
- Scenario planning

Reading: Bryson, Chap 5 and La Piana Chaps 1-3

Lesson 8: Strategic Issues

- Characteristics or criteria for identifying strategic issues
- The oval mapping method

Reading: Bryson Chap 6 and La Piana Chaps 4-6

Lesson 9: Strategy Development

- Types of strategies
- Process guidelines for developing strategies and criteria for evaluating strategies
- Vision statements

Reading: Bryson Chaps 7 and La Piana Chaps 7–9

Lesson 10: Implementation, Evaluation, and Leadership

- Using the Bryson and La Piana methods
- Desired outcomes, benefits of implementation
- Programs and projects
- Budgets
- Process guidelines for implementation
- Reassessing and revising strategies and plans
- Leadership roles in strategic planning

Assignments

There are two types of assignments in this course: projects and discussion forums. There are five projects and three required discussion forums for Lessons 1, 3, and 6. You must complete all projects and participate in the three required forums to pass the course. There are no exams; there is, however, an extra credit discussion forum during exam week.

Projects

The five projects are based on the readings. Several of the projects build upon previous ones, so failure to complete any project makes it even harder to complete successive ones. Be sure to complete and submit all projects on time. Consult the course calendar on your online syllabus for assignment due dates.

- Project 1 asks you to identify the key aspects of a policy analysis and the methods and measures typically used in one.
- In Project 2, you will undertake a public policy analysis of an infrastructure related topic. It is introduced in two parts, 2A is focused on the topic, policy alternatives and evaluation criteria, and 2B adds stakeholders and the policy analysis outcomes matrix. You will analyze options and make recommendations based on need, public value, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, impact on quality of life and other factors, using guidelines from the class readings.
- Project 3 has two parts. In the first part, you will develop a stakeholder analysis of a public or non profit organization. In the second part, you will either identify the mission statement for the organization you are studying and evaluate it and the process used to generate it, or devise a mission statement for the system you are studying, justify it, and describe how you would have organized the process to attain a mission statement
- Project 4 calls for a SWOT analysis and identification of strategic issues.
- In Project 5, you will develop an identity statement for the organization, a strategy screen, and appropriate strategies along with an implementation plan for the three major strategies.

Discussion Forums

A general discussion forum will be available for you to post questions about the material, to engage in ongoing conversation, report class news, and so on. Participation in the general forum is optional.

You are required, however, to participate in three topic-specific discussion forums, where you will respond to questions or situations as part of a small group. You will find the discussion topics for these forums in the assignments for Lessons 1, 3, and 6. You are expected to participate by providing thoughtful, substantive answers and also by responding to other students. In other words, engage in meaningful conversation! Your participation in these discussion forums is considered in evaluating your overall course performance.

There is also an extra credit discussion during exam week.

Course Schedule

The [schedule](#) lists the readings for each week and the due dates for projects and discussion forums.

Submitting Assignments

Each assignment contains instructions for submission.

Late Assignments

To earn credit, you must complete all parts of each assignment, including all required reading and exercises, on time.

If unforeseen circumstances prevent you from completing an assignment on time, please contact your instructor before the assignment is due to obtain permission for a late submission. Without such permission, your assignment will not be accepted.

Grading

This is a graduate-level course offered on a graded basis, using a 1.0-4.0 numerical scoring system. The UW Graduate School requires that you earn at least a 2.7 in this and every numerically graded course in the program, and maintain a 3.0 Grade Point Average. A grade of 2.7 represents minimally acceptable graduate-level work, while 4.0 represents excellent graduate-level work (see Table i.1).

Grades for the discussion component will be based 60% on quality of contribution and 40% on level of participation. I will provide you feedback in the form of comments and a grade within a week of assignment or discussion completion.

Assignments will be graded based on the following criteria. To what extent does the work:

- address all parts of each assignment;
- provide adequate treatment of each part of the assignment—for example, if an item calls for an explanation of factors, an answer that lists factors without explaining them will be inadequate;
- relate to course readings, lessons, or supplementary readings as appropriate;
- document the sources—through citations and references to published material, government documents, personal interviews, etc.

This applies to work submitted on time; late work may be assigned a penalty.

Table i.1—Grading Scale for Course

Grade	Interpretive Statement
4.0	Excellent work—unusually thorough, well reasoned, and well written/presented.

3.5	Strong work—shows signs of creativity, few mistakes, demonstrates understanding of the topic.
3.0	Competent work—demonstrates proficiency with material.
2.0	Incomplete—reworking is required to bring the assignment to acceptable levels.

Your grade will be calculated based on the percentages shown in table i.2, below.

Table i.2—Course Components as a Percentage of the Course Grade

Project/Discussion	% of Course Grade
Discussion 1 Markets, Goods, and Public Policy	5%
Project 1 2-page Memo	10%
Project 2 Policy analysis paper	20%
Discussion 2 Humpty Dumpty Policy Dilemma	10%
Project 3 Stakeholder analysis	15%
Discussion 3 Relating Policy Analysis to Strategic Planning	10%
Project 4 SWOT analysis	15%

Project 5 Real-Time Planning Cycle	15%
Discussion 4 Strategic Planning & You - extra credit	2%

You will achieve the course objectives if you do the assigned reading, complete the projects, review the comments on your work, and meet the criteria for participating in discussion forums.

Study Tips

- Pace yourself.
- Set aside time each week that is dedicated exclusively to the course.
- Do the readings first; then, while information is fresh, respond to the prompts in the "Think about It" sidebars.
- Begin assigned projects as soon as possible after completing the readings. Use all available resources, including your classmates.
- For projects 3-5, select a non-profit or public organization in which you have a real interest and, if possible, a contact or entre so you can gain access in a short amount of time.

Academic Integrity

Students enrolled in this course are required to follow the University of Washington guidelines for academic honesty. Please review the "Academic Honesty Policy" section of the Online Learning Handbook.

Religious Accommodations

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at

[Religious Accommodations Policy](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/)

(<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/>).

Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religiousaccommodations-request/)

(<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religiousaccommodations-request/>).

About the Course Instructor

Mary Roderick is an affiliate professor in the Department of Urban Design & Planning and the Planning Director at the Land of Sky Regional Council in western North Carolina. Her areas of specialization are resilience assessment and planning, watershed restoration and stormwater

management. She contributed to planning and design for the Duwamish River Superfund site cleanup as well as the waterfront redevelopment and seawall redesign projects in Seattle. While broadly interested in social-ecological systems, Roderick's work is specifically concerned with climate change and its effects on water resources. She has a master's degree in community planning with an environmental specialization from the University of Cincinnati and earned a Ph.D. in urban design and planning from the University of Washington.