POLI 359
PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

STUDY GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING
AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

POLI 359
PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

STUDY GUIDE
For Undergraduates Level 300

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CONTENTS

Hello and a warm welcome to Session 12 where I shall discuss Policy Advice. In Session 11, we examined Policy Consultation and its effect in bringing about good policy making. We learned that such an outcome – good policy making, comes from contestation of ideas about policy problems and their solutions from a wide variety of stakeholders both inside and outside government. These stakeholders, we learned, include bureaucrats, politicians, civil society organizations, think tanks, faith-based organizations, and the media, just to mention a few. We shall build on that knowledge in this session by discussing Policy Advice that can come from the variety of stakeholders mentioned above.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

1. COURSE WEBSITE

http://sakai.ug.edu.gh

2. INSTRUCTOR

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4. OVERVIEW

I wish to warmly welcome you to a course known as **Public Policy Making** one of the popular courses the Department of Political Science offers. It is a multi-disciplinary course that meshes theoretical knowledge with the practical experience you bring from your background. Because the subject is multi-disciplinary and draws partly from your experience, it is not difficult to understand. I will therefore shift from being an authority to being a facilitator, welcoming suggestions from you as a student, and using multiple delivery modes to enhance your learning process. Whether you are a young person freshly graduated from high school or a matured working parent intending to further your education, this course is suitable for you.

The course examines the initiation, development and implementation as well as the evaluation of public policy. The course is designed to enable you understand the basic concepts, models and approaches as well as theories of public policy making. It also draws out the connections and disjunctions between the theory and practice of public policy making. This is necessary because academic interpretations (theoretical explanations) of what policy makers do and even what they say they do and what policy makers actually do, may differ. Selected examples of public policies and programs (such as the Decentralization Policy, National Health Insurance Policy, STX Korea Housing Deal, School Feeding Program, and School Uniform and Sandals Programs) in Ghana will be used to provide a better understanding of the link (or lack thereof) between the theory and practice of public policy making.

The general objective of the course is to help you develop a critical perspective to public policy making by encouraging you to challenge the received wisdom and prescribed solutions presented by policy science scholars and commentators. In this way novel ways of approaching the study and practice of the discipline might be unearthed. You will acquire knowledge and insights through the careful reading of the topics of the module and the prescribed textbooks as well as in-depth discussion of the themes, concepts and theories on the Sakai Platform. You will then be able to apply the knowledge gained from those venues to specific real world public policy problem solving situations.

In terms of specific objectives, you should upon completion of the course be able to:
1. Develop analytical and problem solving skills;
2. Explain the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of public policy making;
3. Identify the key actors and explain the issues, problems and activities at each stage of the public policy process;
4. Gain knowledge about the public policy making process in Ghana and other jurisdictions;
5. Establish a link (or lack thereof) between the theory and practice of public policy making in different countries;
6. Identify the challenges to effective public policy making in Ghana and other Sub Saharan African countries.

5. PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING APPROACH

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject through the experience of problem solving. The goals of PBL are to help the students develop flexible knowledge, effective problem solving skills, self-directed learning, effective collaboration skills and intrinsic motivation. This course will use a problem-based learning approach.

Working in groups, students identify what they already know, what they need to know, and how and where to access new information that may lead to resolution of the problem. The role of the instructor/lecturer/tutor is to facilitate learning by supporting, guiding, and monitoring the learning process. The tutor will help build students' confidence to take on the problem, and encourage the students, while also stretching their understanding.

6. COURSE FORMAT

The course content will be delivered online through the SAKAI Learning Management System (Sakai LMS). The Sakai LMS will be used to deliver
1. Video Lecture Sessions
2. Session Slides
3. Session Reading Materials
4. Assessments—Tests, Quizzes and Assignments (including a Problem-based Term Paper)
5. Group activities—Discussions and Presentations

Announcements will be posted to the course website and/email accordingly. It is the responsibility of students to check on announcements made in class, on the Course Website, and through email.

7. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The learning outcomes for the course are outlined along three strands: knowledge, skills and outcomes.

7.1 KNOWLEDGE

Students must have knowledge on
1. The types of policy and the kinds of issues and problems they are tailored at addressing.
2. The policy instruments most appropriate for solving specific policy problems;
3. The disjunction between the theory and practice of public policy making,
4. The prospects and challenges of making domestic policies in the era of globalization,
5. Strategies and techniques of improving the public policy making process and its outcomes.
6. Specific strategies and tactics used to entice civic engagement in public policy making
7. Interaction of actors, ideas, institutions and instruments in shaping the content and outcomes of public policies.

7.2 SKILLS

Students must be able to
1. Develop analytical and problem solving skills;
2. Distinguish between ill-structured and well-structured policy problems
3. Identify and design appropriate strategies and techniques for resolving particularly wicked problems
4. Appreciate the politico-technical milieu in which public policy is made and develop ability to operate in it;
5. Demonstrate ability to develop policy proposals and briefs;
6. Develop skills in policy analysis and policy communication;
7. Compare and contrast policy processes and outcomes across jurisdictions;

8. Learn lessons from policy success and policy failure in order to inform policy reform.

7.3   COMPETENCE

Students should in the future be able to:

1. Identify some of the most pressing problems of Ghana that need urgent solution;
2. Develop expertise in sectoral policy making;
3. Initiate stakeholder dialogues and forums that culminate in civic engagement in public policy making;
4. Design new policy instruments for application to the ever changing public policy problems;
5. Sharpen their policy analysis and problem solving skills;
6. Enhance web-based learning skills through Interacting more intensely with other students on a web-based learning platform;
7. Optimize own participation in a group-based learning arrangement.

8. ASSESSMENT

The assessment for this course has been designed to help all students to maximize their individual and group/team learning opportunities. A summary of the assessment tasks is provided below.

ITEM	FORM OF ASSESSMENT	DELIVERED	MARKS
Individual Assignments	Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) Short Essays Term Paper/Presentation	Alongside Sessions	30%
Written Examination	Semester Examination	End of semester	70%
		Total	100%

7.4   Individual Assignments

Individual assignments will be provided at the end of the sessions. These assignments may comprise Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), and Short Essays. Deadlines will be set for the assignments.

8. RECOMMENDED TEXT

Anderson, J. E. (2006). Public Policy Making. 6th ed. Wadsworth Cenage Learning, Belmont.

Howlett, M. and Ramesh, M. (2003). Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystem. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Maddison, S. and Denniss, R. (2009). An Introduction to Australian Public Policy: Theory and Practice. Cambridge University Press, New York.

DETAILED CLASS SCHEDULE

The course is organized into 15 Sessions along the following lines: (1) Overview; (2) Goals and Objectives; and (3) Activities and Assignments.

9. SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

Week	Session
1	Sessions 1
2	Session 2
3	Sessions 3
4	Sessions 4
5	Session 5
6	Session 6
7	Session 7
8	Session 8
9	Session 9
10	Session 10
11	Session 11
12	Session 12

10. SESSION 1 – INTRODUCTION TO POLI 359: PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

10.1   Overview

Hello and a warm welcome to the Public Policy Making Module and the first session of the course. This first session introduces students to the processes and circumstances that led to the birth of the discipline. This lays the foundation for the rest of the sessions that I shall be treating in this module. This means that if you understand all that I shall teach here your understanding of subsequent sessions would be greatly enhanced. I will begin by tracing the evolution of public policy as a discipline and then discuss the ambitions of a policy science at the time that it was born. I will then explain whether these initial ambitions have changed overtime. Next I shall explain why policy is described as a social science. Further, I will introduce you to the terminologies, concepts and principles that undergird the public policy making subject. Some of these terminologies and concepts may have been borrowed from other disciplines. But when they are applied to define and characterize phenomena in Public Policy Making, they assume different meanings from their original meanings as understood in their mother disciplines. The borrowing and application of concepts, terminologies and theories from other disciplines gives public policy its multi-disciplinary character.

10.2   Goals and Objectives

At the end of this session the student should be able to:
1. Explain how public policy as a discipline originated
2. Explain the three original characteristics public policy was envisaged to possess
3. State whether these characteristics have changed over time
4. Determine whether or not policy sciences have realized their hopes and expectations
5. Analyze policy problems and issues
6. Explain the functions of concepts to the public policy making process
7. Explain what is meant by the congruence problem

8. Establish the relationship between concepts and theories.
9. Become familiar with the tools in the Sakai LMS to be used in the course.
10. Do self-introductions and discuss the expectations for the course in the Chat Room.

10.3   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:

1. Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXXXXXX
2. Watch the Video for Session 1 –Introduction to POLI 359 – Public Policy Making
3. Review Lecture Slides: Session 1 – Introduction to POLI 359 – Public Policy Making
4. Visit the Chat Room and introduce yourself while discussing expectations for the course.
5. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum questions for Session 1
6. Explore the online tools available on Sakai.

11. SESSION 2 – IDEOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY

11.1   Overview

I wish to warmly welcome you to Session 2 of the Public Policy Making Module. I am sure your understanding of the first session was facilitated by the range of delivery modes that were adopted. With this level of understanding, I believe you can now explain the original ambitions of the policy sciences and state why we say public policy is multi-disciplinary. You can also explain why theories, models and concepts are used to guide the study and practice of public policy. We are now going to build on that foundation knowledge in Session 2 by treating Ideology and Public Policy. Different ideological frames prescribe different roles for the state in terms of improving on the living conditions of its citizens. The state is supposed to provide goods and services to the people but the different ideologies prescribe different approaches to do just that. This session examines the many different ideological perspectives ranging from the "invisible hand" of Adam Smith to the central control of Karl Marx. Understanding the way that different ideological perspectives might deliver different assortments of baskets of goods and services in the right quantities and qualities in timely and cost-effective ways will assist you to develop a richer and more sophisticated understanding of policy work. If we probe the issue of which ideological prescription would enable the state to deliver efficiently and effectively on its mandate it would provoke further questions that would need to be addressed. Examples of such questions include: what is the appropriate role of government? To what extent should governments intervene in the market? To what extent should governments intervene in the lives of citizens?

The way in which any individual, group or political party will answer these questions will depend, at least in part, on their ideological perspective. Topics I shall treat in this session will include meaning of ideology, philosophical thinkers and their ideas, market-focused ideologies, state-focused ideologies, and critical perspectives and contemporary debates.

11.2   Goals and Objectives

At the end of the session, the student should be able to:
1. Explain whether any particular ideology can be said to be dominant in Ghana today
2. Identify the areas of public policy that cause the most heated ideological debates

3. Explain the ideology into which policies of the outgoing National Democratic Congress fit
4. Determine the ideology into which the 2016 election campaign messages and manifesto of the incoming National Patriotic Party government fit
5. Account for the evidence in favor of the hollowing-out thesis
6. Identify sectors where the market has moved into an area of public service provision
7. Analyze the issues that have arisen through private provision of public services.

11.3   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
1. Log onto the UG LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.gh/XXXX
2. Read Chapter 2 of the Recommended Text – An Introduction to Australian Public Policy (2009) by Maddison and Denniss Pp. 39-55
3. Watch the Video for Session 2 – Ideology and Public Policy
4. Review Lecture Slides: Session 2 – Ideology and Public Policy
5. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum questions for Session 2
6. Complete the individual assignment for Session 2

12. SESSION 3 – PRESCRIPTIVE MODELS OF PUBLIC POLICY

12.1   Overview

Hello and a warm welcome to Session 3 of the Public Policy Making Module. We learned about models in the introductory session when we discussed public policy as a social science. We are encountering this subject again this time not as a sub-sub heading under a main topic but as a complete session on its own right. All the things we said previously about models will be useful in this session because they will facilitate your understanding of the issues in this session.

Due to the amount of uncertainty involved in public policy making, many scholars, commentators and practitioners have recommended that public policy should be studied to better understand its various aspects, that is, the input to and output of policy, as well as the players and factors involved in policy making. The pursuit of these recommendations have resulted in the development of various analytical models, approaches and concepts which could be used to explain the policy making process or to explain the results or outcomes of the policies.

Models can be classified into two groups: prescriptive models and descriptive models. . Prescriptive models are concerned with normative theory, that is, how the actors in policy making ought to do their work. Descriptive models are based on behavioral theory and are concerned with the way in which the actors in policy making actually carry out their tasks. In other words, the approach they adopt to policy making is descriptive. Policy inputs and policy impacts should therefore be analyzed to determine whether the policies can be improved. Topics we shall be treating in this session include rational comprehensive model, incremental model, mixed scanning model, garbage can model, normative optimum model and public choice model.

12.2   Goals and Objectives

At the end of the session, the student should be able to:
1. State what normative models are;
2. Distinguish between descriptive and prescriptive models;
3. List the models under the prescriptive approach to policy making;
4. Explain the importance of normative models to the policy making process;
5. compare the merits and demerits of descriptive models to those of prescriptive models as analytical devices for the development and implementation of public policy;
6. Explain how reality may impinge on the normative order of public policy making

12.3   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
1. Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXXX
2. Watch the Video for Session 3 – Prescriptive Models of Public Policy Making
3. Review Lecture Slides: Session 3 – Prescriptive Models of Public Policy Making
4. Read Chapter 6 of Recommended Text - Public Policy Making Process by Anderson, J. (2006) pages xxx
5. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum question for Session 3 – Prescriptive Models of Public Policy Making

6. Complete the individual Assignment for Session 3 – Prescriptive Models of Public Policy Making.

13. SESSION 4 – DESCRIPTIVE MODELS OF PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

13.1 Overview

Hello and a warm welcome to Session 4 of the Public Policy Making Module. We have just learned about prescriptive model in the preceding session. In that session we discussed the different types of prescriptive models – rational comprehensive model, incremental model, mixed scanning model, garbage can model and public choice model. All the things we said previously about models will be useful in this session because they will facilitate your understanding of the issues in this session. Models help clarify and direct our inquiry on policy making. They facilitate communication and suggest possible explanations for policy actions. To successfully make policy we need some guidelines, some criteria of relevance to focus our efforts and to prevent aimless search through seemingly infinite volume of data. What we find depends partly upon what we are looking for. Policy concepts and theories give direction to our inquiry. Descriptive models thus, assist us in the comparison of how policies ought to be made and how they are actually made. The gap between expectation and actual efforts become the performance improvement zone. It is the area that points to our shortfalls and that urges us to take steps to correct those deviations so as to put policy back on track towards achieving its predetermined objectives. Topics we shall examine in this session include elite model, group model, systems model, and institutional model.

13.2 Goals and Objectives

At the end of this session the student should be able
1. Distinguish between descriptive and prescriptive models
2. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the descriptive approach to policy making
3. Compare the weights of the strengths and weaknesses of the respective models under the descriptive category
4. Explain the importance of models to the policy making process
5. Evaluate the merits and demerits of the two categories of model as analytical devices for the development and implementation of public policy
6. Explain how reality may impinge on the normative order of public policy making
7. Assess which of the models are more appropriate for guiding public policy making in Ghana

13.3 Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
1. Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXXX
2. Watch the Video for Session 4 – Descriptive Models of Public Policy Making
3. Review Lecture Slides: Session 4 – Descriptive Models of Public Policy Making
4. Read Chapter 4 of the Recommended Text - Public Policy Making Process by Anderson, J. (2006) pp. 122-147
5. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum question for Session 4
6. Complete the individual assignments for session 4 – Descriptive Models of Public Policy Making

14. SESSION 5 – THE ECONOMICS OF PUBIC POLICY

14.1   Overview

Let me take this opportunity to again invite you to the fifth session of this module entitled The Economics of Public Policy. In the preceding session we learned about Ideology and public policy. That session and the current session are related because they both talk about the relationship between public policy and ideologies or theories. The only difference is that while the former focuses on ideologies in general the latter is concerned specifically with economic concepts, theories and models as well as assumptions. These perspectives and assumptions are applied to frame choices available to policy makers usually in terms of preference for free markets or regulation. Governments decide to intervene heavily in some markets and lightly in others. The sale and consumption of cannabis and other hard drugs like heroin and cocaine is prohibited in Ghana, while the establishment and running of tertiary educational institutions by private organizations and individuals is strongly regulated. Advertising adulterated products is illegal in Ghana but advertising junk food to children and invading children's space on TV with indecent and profane images and messages is not checked. While the decisions of policy makers are often couched in economic language with inclination toward free market or regulation, the reality is much more subtle and more interesting.

This chapter examines the role of economics in influencing the choice between state provision of services, market provision based on a belief in Adam Smith's (1776) "invisible hand", and the myriad of regulatory structures that can exist in between. The session begins with an overview of some major economic concepts that are useful for most policy workers, and considers the economic arguments regarding when markets are likely to be more or less effective in solving policy problems. The session ends with a discussion on the role of economic language in framing and influencing policy debates. In this session the topics we shall learn about include the meaning of economics, economics for beginners, reasons for the effective working of markets, understanding market failure, the role of assumptions in economic models, and economic analysis versus economic language.

14.2   Goals and Objectives

At the end of this session the student should be able:
1. Explain the main drivers of a market economy
2. Assess the validity of the view that neoclassical economic theory suggests that government should only intervene in cases of market failure
3. Give an opinion as to whether the black market for cannabis should be treated as a criminal activity or regarded as a logical response of free people to government regulation
4. Explain how the global credit crisis had influenced your view about markets and regulation
5. Analyze whether attempts to maximize the rate of economic growth is the most effective way to increase community well-being.

14.3   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
1. Log onto the UG LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.gh/XXXX
2. Read Chapter 3 of the Recommended Text – An Introduction to Australian Public Policy (2009) by Maddison and Denniss pp. 57-81
3. Watch the Video for Session 5 – The Economics of Public Policy

4. Review Lecture Slides: Session 5 – The Economics of Public Policy
5. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum questions for Session 5
6. Complete the individual assignment for Session 5

14. SESSION 6 – NATURE AND SCOPE OF PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

14.1 Overview

You are warmly welcome to the sixth session of this course which is titled The Nature and Scope of Public Policy Making. The session lays the foundation for the topics I shall be treating in this module. This means that if you understand all that I shall teach here your understanding of subsequent sessions would be greatly enhanced. I will begin by defining public policy and public policy making and then outline the characteristics of public policy. Next I distinguish between policy types and then follow that up with an exposition on the importance of studying public policy. Finally, I establish the relationship between public policy, decision, program, politics, and law.

14.2 Goals and Objectives

At the end of the session, the student should be able:
1. Explain concisely what public policy making is about
2. State the characteristics and types of public policy
3. Distinguish between public policy, decision, program, politics and law
4. Explain the importance of studying public policy
5. Identify the types of policy and determine the kinds of problems they are most appropriate at addressing.

14.4 Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
7. Log onto the UG LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.gh/XXXX
8. Read Chapter of the Recommended Text – Public Policy Making by Anderson, J. (2006)
9. Watch the Video for Session 6 – Nature and Scope of Public Policy Making
10. Review Lecture Slides: Session 6 – Nature and Scope of Public Policy Making
11. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum questions for Session 6
12. Complete the individual assignment for Session 6

15. SESSION 7 – POLICY ENVIRONMENT, ACTORS AND INSTITUTIONS

15.1 Overview

I wish to warmly welcome you to Session 7, which deals with the Policy Environment, Actors and Institutions. In Session 6, we learnt about the processes and activities involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of public policy. The successful completion of that session was as a result of your hard work and great enthusiasm. I am sure you are going to demonstrate that same level of dedication and interest in this session. Here, we are going to build upon the knowledge we gained in the preceding session by examining the contextual factors (elements in the setting where a policy is carried out) that influence public policy making. Policy making cannot adequately be studied apart from the environment or context in which it occurs. I shall also treat actors and institutions because the former develop and

implement policy while the latter provides the structures and principles that define the behavior of players in the public policy making process. Actors determine the direction in which policy should develop and why, while institutions provide the structures within which policy is made as well as establish the rules of the game of public policy making. Institutions are worthy of study because what actors seek and do depends on the political, economic, and social structures that surround them – institutions. Thus, actors and institutions exist in a mutually defining relationship. The topics that I shall treat in this unit include the policy environment, official policy makers, unofficial policy makers, institutions, bringing players together, and coordination through routines.

Goals and Objectives

At the end of this session the student should be able to:
1. Identify the political, economic and social factors that influence policy development and implementation;
2. Identify specific interests groups whose activities and programs could influence the policy making process;
3. Distinguish between authoritative and non-authoritative actors in the policy making process;
4. Account for the external influences on domestic public policy making;
5. Analyze the crucial role actors and institutions play in policy development and implementation.
6. Explain why there are differences in the processes and outcomes of similar policies across jurisdictions.

15.2   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
1. Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXXXX
2. Watch the Video for Session 7 – Policy Environment, Actors and Institutions
3. Review the Lecture Slides on Session 7 – Policy Environment, Actors and Institutions
4. Read Chapter 2 of Recommended Text – Public Policy Making Process by Anderson, J. (2006) pp. 35-76
5. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum question for Session 7
6. Complete the individual Assignment for Session 7

16. SESSION 8 – POLICY INSTRUMENTS

16.1   Overview

I wish to warmly welcome you to Session 8 of this module. I am sure you have equally enjoyed Session 7where we learned about policy environment, actors and institutions. I trust that this session will be easy for you to follow because it builds upon the previous session. Here, we shall learn about policy instruments. Policy instruments are the actual means or devices governments employ in putting policies into effect. They are the actual means or devices government have at their disposal for executing policies, and among which they must choose in formulating policy. Accordingly, a government not only decides whether or not to do something about indiscriminate waste disposal, for example, but also whether it should carry out its decision via mass campaigns exhorting citizens to desist from polluting activities, regulation outlawing all activities causing the pollution, the provision of a subsidy to the polluting entities incentivizing them to appropriately dispose their waste or some combination of these or other measures. The selection of which instrument to apply to implement a decision

is commonly not less contentious than the decision itself and is very much the subject of discussion, deliberation, and dispute among policy actors If results are the ends of the policy process, instruments are the means—the programs, staffing, budgets, organizations, campaigns and laws giving effect to policy decisions. The study of policy instruments have evolved over time shifting from its original focus on simple description of each device, to the development of classification schemes for categories of tools, and then to efforts at understanding the rationale behind their use by governments. Topics we shall treat in this session include meaning of policy instruments, distinction between policy instruments and policy instrumentation, classification of policy instruments, importance of policy instruments, and efficiency and effectiveness of policy instruments.

Goals and Objectives

At the end of this session the student should be able to:
1. Explain the rationale for choice of some policy instruments over others
2. Sketch alternative classifications of policy instruments
3. Explain the origins, values and long-term impact of policy instruments
4. Analyze the relationship between choice of policy instruments and policy changes
5. Explain why some policy instruments assume low profile status that are beyond the reach of the usual political processes developed through consultation between different interests
6. Suggest ways to improve on the efficiency and effectiveness of policy instruments.

16.2   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
1. Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: http://sakaiug.edu.gh/XXXX
2. Watch the video for Session 8 – Policy Instruments
3. Review lecture Sides of Session 8 – Policy Instruments
4. Read Chapter 7 of Recommended Text – Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystem by Howlett and Ramesh (2003), pp. 87 -116
5. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the forum questions for Session 8
6. Complete the individual assignment for Session 8

17. SESSION 9 – PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS

17.1   Overview

You are warmly welcome to the ninth session where I shall teach the topic known as the Public Policy Process. In the preceding session we learned about policy instruments by outlining the different types of tools available to government for implementing its policies. We also examined the rationale for the choice of a single instrument or a combination of policy instruments applicable to particular policy contexts. We then assessed the effectiveness of policy instruments in resolving the problems they are designed to tackle. This session (Session 9) is the nerve center (core) of the module because it incorporates all the stages or series of activities that are involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of public policy. I wish to assure you that if you pay ample attention to all that will be taught in this session your knowledge of the subject would be greatly enhanced. I am giving this assurance because the subsequent sessions you will be studying will become easier because they deal with factors that influence all the interrelated activities involved in public policy making which we shall soon discuss here. Topics you will study in this session include agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, and policy evaluation.

17.2   Goals and Objectives

At the end of this session the student should be able to:
1. Draw the policy cycle and explain the activities that are involved in it
2. Explain the set of factors that drive issues onto policy agenda
3. List and categorize the actors in the public policy making process
4. Explain the activities that are involved at each stage of the public policy making process
5. Identify the types of decision and explain why each of them is made
6. Give reasons why implementation is particularly a problematic stage of the public policy making process
7. Explain why evaluation is receiving lesser attention than the other stages of the public policy making process

17.3   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
1. Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: htpp://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXX
2. Read Chapter 2 of Recommended Text – The Public Policy Process by Anderson, J. (2006)
3. Watch the Video for Session 9 – Public Policy Process
4. Review Lecture Slides Session 9 – Public Policy Process
5. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum questions for Session 9
6. Complete the individual Assignment for Session 9

18. SESSION 10 – UNDERSTANDING POLICY CHANGE

18.1   Overview

Once more I wish to warmly welcome you to Session 10 of the Public Policy Making Module. In the preceding session we learned about the policy process. We understood that the complex public policy making process can be simplified, at least in theory, by breaking the process into five sequential steps. In this way each step can be studied in detail to capture the issues and problems pertaining to that stage. The step by step approach to making public policy is known as the public cycle. The cycle begins with agenda setting then to policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, and policy evaluation. The end point of one cycle becomes the beginning of another cycle – making the process an iterative one. Learning about a disaggregated model of the public policy process – the policy cycle – helps to underline the dynamic nature of public policy making. It also assists us in organizing the otherwise difficult-to-understand relations melding together actors, ideas, institutions and instruments of each stage. However, while disaggregation permits the detailed examination of each stage of the policy process, it begs the question of what that process looks like when all its constitutive pieces are reassembled. Are there typical or normal overall patterns of policy development and change? And if so, how do these patterns arise and affect different levels of policy making. These are the issues we will discuss in this session. In this session we will build on the knowledge of the policy process by attempting to understand what makes policy to be stable after it has been development. In addition, we will explain the factors that are responsible for policy change. We will also identify the types of policy change and what types of change will most appropriately deliver desired outcomes for society.

18.2   Goals and Objectives

At the end of the session, the student should be able to:
1. Explain the factors and processes that enhance policy stability
2. Identify the factors and processes that are responsible for policy turbulence
3. Analyze the policy process in terms of policy cycles and policy sub-systems
4. Establish a baseline against which to measure policy change
5. Observe and investigate sub-system behavior in order to clarify tendencies towards atypical policy change
6. Engage in a process of policy learning by feeding back the outcomes of previous policy cycles and policy stages into new iterations of the cycle
7. Understand public problems and their solutions, and the policy instruments used to put decisions into effect.

18.3   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
7. Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: htpp://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXX
8. Read Chapter 10 of Recommended Text – Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Sub-systems by Howlett, M. and Ramesh, R., (2003)
9. Watch the Video for Session 10 – Understanding Policy Change
10. Review Lecture Slides Session 10 – Understanding Policy Change
11. Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum questions for Session 10
12. Complete the individual Assignment for Session 10

19. SESSION 11 – POLICY CONSULTATION

19.1   Overview

Hello and a warm welcome to Session 11 which focuses on Policy Consultation. In the preceding session we discussed Understanding policy Change. Policies and their associated instruments for putting them into effect are meaningless if there is no acceptance by the people who are the target of the interventions. For this reason it is important to win consensus on policy initiatives before carrying them out. One way of gaining policy acceptance is through consultation and that is the reason why this session is devoted to Policy Consultation. Whereas secrecy was once the hallmark of the political and policy realms alike, community expectations have changed. The legitimacy of much public policy now rests on exchange between citizens and their government. Public servants and politicians need to identify ways to discuss with relevant communities of interest and draw them into the policy process, while avoiding unreasonable delays, simple vetoing by representative groups and abrogation of responsibility to vested interests.

In a democratic policy process, the determination of public policy outcomes should be seen as an ongoing process in which debate, deliberation and even dissent are constitutive elements. Ensuring that the voices of unpopular or disadvantaged minorities are a part of processes to develop the public policies that most affect them is necessary for political equality. And this should be seen as a serious matter affecting all sectors of society, not just marginalized or disadvantaged groups. In an uncertain global political environment democratic participation and consultation are becoming more important than ever, as there is an increased need for governments to develop greater capacity to frame and develop public and interest group opinion.

Participatory deliberations can build new political cultures capable of preserving and extending decision-making capabilities. Innovations in consultation processes are occurring all the time, from the use of the Internet to poll public opinion on particular issues to the development of more formal deliberative mechanisms such as citizens' assemblies. The trend in these innovations is towards more meaningful and deliberative policy consultation, one outcome of which – we hope – will be better public policy.

Topics we shall discuss in this session include the role of consultation in the public policy process, different types of consultation, consultation instruments, strategies for meaningful consultation, strategies for meaningful consultation, and the risk of consultation.

19.2   Goals and Objectives

At the end of the session, the student should be able to:
1. Assess the relative strength of the persuasiveness of the different types of arguments to support the creation of opportunities for public participation in the policy process
2. Determine whether consultation will be effective either involving individual citizens or representative organizations
3. Analyze the utility of government funding and support of non-governmental organizations to participate in consultation processes
4. Assess the benefits and risks of public consultation
5. State the different types of consultation tools
6. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of the identified consultation instruments.

19.3   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXXX
Watch the Videos for Session 11 – Policy Consultation
Review Lecture Slides: Session 11 – Policy Consultation
Read Chapter X of the Recommended Text – An Introduction to Australian Public Policy (2009) by Maddison and Denniss pp. 198-216
Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum question for Session 11
Complete the Individual Assignment for Session 11

20. SESSION 12 – POLICY ADVICE

20.1   Overview

Hello and a warm welcome to Session 12 where I shall discuss Policy Advice. In Session 11, we examined Policy Consultation and its effect in bringing about good policy making. We learned that such an outcome – good policy making, comes from contestation of ideas about policy problems and their solutions from a wide variety of stakeholders both inside and outside government. These stakeholders, we learned, include bureaucrats, politicians, civil society organizations, think tanks, faith-based organizations, and the media, just to mention a few. We shall build on that knowledge in this session by discussing Policy Advice that can come from the variety of stakeholders mentioned above.

What should ministers do? Should ministers concentrate attention in dealing with pressing problems or focus on the resolution of future ones? Should they listen to the experts or should they listen to the voters? Should they deliver a budget surplus or invest in infrastructure? The

answers to all these questions will depend on the advice they receive and the way they weight different forms of evidence. How effectively this advice can be put into practice will depend, at least in part, on what consideration has been given to implementation issues during the formulation of the policy. And what improvements are made to future iterations of the policy will depend on the quality of evaluation of the policy.

The role of those who give advice to ministers, be it an adviser, a concerned interest group or constituent writing to a member of parliament, is complex and multi-faceted. But one aspect of the relationship between policy advice and policy making is relatively straightforward: only members of parliament can vote on legislation. In relation to the authoritative choice model of policy making the distinction is clear – advisers advise and members of parliament decide. That said, however, there are few, if any members of parliament who would not seek a wide range of expert advice before making complex policy decisions.

This session commences with an exposition on what constitutes good advice. It then provides an overview of the tensions between different types of advice including the tension between timely advice and comprehensive advice, between political advice and policy advice, and between policy that delivers benefits in the short-term and policy that delivers benefits in the long-term. The session then considers issues associated with providing advice after a policy has been implemented.

20.2   Goals and Objectives

At the end of the session, the student will
1. Distinguish between political advice and policy advice
2. State the different types of policy advice
3. Assess whether adherence to the criteria of good policy advice actually delivers good policies
4. Determine whether policy advice that delivers long-term benefits is more useful than that that delivers short-term benefits
5. Explain how good policy advice affects the public interest
6. Analyze the relative weights of ex-ante and ex-post policy advice in exacting good policy outcomes

20.3   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXX
Watch the Videos for Session 12 – Policy Advice
Review Lecture Slides: Session 12 – Policy Advice
Read Chapter 8 of the Recommended Text – An Introduction to Australian Public Policy (2009) by Maddison and Denniss pp. 160-180
Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum question for Session 12
Complete the Individual Assignment for Session 12

21. SESSION 13 – POLICY RESEARCH

21.1   Overview

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you warmly to another interesting session in the Public Policy Making Module. The title of this thirteenth session is Policy Research which shall also be delivered in a variety of delivery modes as we experienced with the preceding sessions. More often than not, the issues that policy makers deal with on a daily basis are highly complex. While much in the theoretical literature (such as the idea of rational decision or theories concerning policy analysis and policy instruments as discussion in Session 8), suggests that clarity and certainty should characterize the policy development process, in reality determining the right policy response from the vast array of available choices, with access to imperfect information and disparate community views, can be a daunting task. In recent years, the demand has been for "evidence-based policy" which raises questions about what kinds of evidence exist and how it is best uncovered for the purposes of informing public policy. One possible implication of the term "evidence-based policy" is that the contested and uncertain policy process discussed earlier can be rendered objective and certain. However, as will be discussed below, while there is no doubt that the collection and analysis of information has the potential to improve the advice provided to policy makers, there is no obligation on policy makers to heed such advice.

This session begins with understanding the rationale for policy research and then explains what evidence-based policy it. Next, it explores the different research methods that policy researchers rely upon most heavily and the different weights that are often attached to research conducted by different groups. It then examines the strategies used in policy research before looking at policy research on a comparative basis. The session concludes by explaining how politics influence whether and extent to which evidence is used in the public policy making process.

21.2.   Goals and Objectives

At the end of the session, the student should be able to:
1. Explain the importance of research to the public policy making process
2. Assess the effectiveness of the different strategies used in policy research
3. Analyze the usefulness of quantitative and qualitative research to understanding and proposing solutions to policy problems in Ghana today
4. State why politicians would want to implement policies despite evidence being put forward by others
5. Explain policies fail despite being backed up by solid research
6. Explicate how context affect the application of policy research
7. Explain why different response outcomes attend the application of the same evidence in different contexts

21.2   Activities and Assignments

This week, complete the following tasks:
Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site: http://sakai.ug.edu.gh/XXXXX
Watch the Videos for Session 13 – Policy Research
Review Lecture Slides: Session 13 – Policy Research
Read Chapter 11 of the Recommended Text – An Introduction to Australian Public Policy (2009) by Maddison and Denniss pp. 160-180
Visit the Chat Room and discuss the Forum question for Session 13
Complete the Individual Assignment for Session 13