Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs
University of Minnesota

PA 5002 Introduction to Policy Analysis
Section 26684, Fall 2015

This syllabus includes administrative information, course learning objectives, answers to a series of questions you might have about the course, and an explanation of the ways in which you will be assessed. Contact me immediately if you have questions about the course or the contents of the syllabus.

Class Location and Meeting Time
Room: Bruininks Hall 512B (East Bank)
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.
Dates: Mondays & Wednesdays, October 26 – December 16, 2015

Instructor
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Teaching Assistant
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Course Prerequisites
Undergraduate degree, permission of instructor

Policy on Accommodation of Students with Disabilities
Consistent with law and with University of Minnesota commitments, policies, and procedures, the Humphrey School provides reasonable accommodations to persons with documented disabilities to ensure equal opportunity to achieve success in their graduate education. Accommodation is your right, and we affirm it, but it is your responsibility to claim it. Students seeking accommodations must work with the University of Minnesota's Office of Disability Services to determine appropriate accommodation. If you seek accommodation for a disability, please contact me immediately to ensure that appropriate accommodation is provided as soon as possible in the semester. We will work with you and the Office of Disability Service to ensure you have every opportunity to succeed.

Course History and Background
The Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs created a Master of Arts degree in Public Affairs in 1969. Thirty years later, in 1999, this program was renamed as the Master of Public Policy (MPP) program. The MPP program first was accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) in 2007. Because policy analysis has been the *raison d'etre* of program, the School has offered a course in policy analysis since its inception. As the MPP curriculum has evolved, the orientation, scope,

content, and learning objectives for the course have changed, though the course has retained its focus on policy and policy analysis.

A policy is a guideline or principle for decision-making intended to achieve particular outcomes, often through sets of standardized procedures. Policy analysis is a problem-solving process aimed at identified desirable policies. William Dunn (2012, p. xvii) defines policy analysis as "... an applied social science discipline that employs multiple methods of inquiry to solve practical problems." Policy analysis uses scientific methods, but, for many reasons we will learn about, it is a craft and, when practiced well, an art.

The original version of this course focused principally on a microeconomic approach to policy analysis. When the faculty changed the curriculum to include a separate course on microeconomics, the focus of the policy analysis course broadened to include greater emphases on the policy process and other dimensions of policy analysis, especially the challenge of problem structuring. This version of the course was created in 1999 when the University of Minnesota changed its academic calendar from a quarter system to a semester system and the MPP program was created. The current course description in the catalogue is concise:

> *PA 5002 Introduction to Policy Analysis (1.5 credit hours) Process of public policy analysis from problem structuring to communication of findings. Commonly used analytical methods. Alternative models of analytical problem resolution.*

The emphases in this description are on process and doing: structuring, analyzing, recommending, and communicating. We will learn about the process of policy analysis, first by reading about it, and, consistent with the description, by doing it. In the course of learning, we will acquire competencies and build skills that will help you be successful in your other courses and your professional career.

Course Overview
This course is designed to introduce you to the discipline of policy analysis and help you understand where policy analysis fits within the policy process. Members of the Humphrey School faculty have designed a set of exercises to help you acquire specific competencies: developing a problem statement, problem structuring, developing alternative policy options, evaluation, forecasting, policy simulation, monitoring, and recommendation. We place special emphases on the challenges of problem definition or structuring and communication because these are among the most challenging skills to learn.

Policy analysts use many approaches to structuring and analyzing policy problems: stakeholder analysis, microeconomic policy analysis, risk analysis, decision analysis, and others. Regardless of the approach, participation in the policy process requires appreciation of the institutional and cultural environment within which public problems arise; familiarity with the politics surrounding competing goals and objectives; understanding of the limits of science and technical analysis; and the importance of deeply held values in resolving policy debates. For example, policy choices often involve consideration of efficiency and equity and the many tradeoffs among economic, social, and ethical dimensions of alternative policies. Throughout the class you will have opportunities to practice identifying these types of tradeoffs.

Acquisition of skills in structuring problems is particularly valuable because all subsequent steps in the process of policy analysis are conditioned upon definition of the problem. Policy analysts and the decision-makers they serve sometimes inadvertently arrive at the right answer to the wrong question because they have defined the problem inappropriately. This problem – often called a problem of the third type – may be a symptom of the inability to see the bigger picture, or of not being able to break large complex problems into smaller solvable problems while retaining focus on the larger problem. The emphasis on problem structuring will help to inform technical analyses of resource allocation, and the relationships between equity and efficiency, risk and uncertainty, and benefits and costs.

We also emphasize study of approaches to formulating policy recommendations and the importance of context where policy analytic methods are used. Good policy recommendations flow from sound policy analysis and research. Often, however, policy analysts do not have enough time or sufficient resources to answer all of the questions or to produce all of the research needed to identify all potential solutions to the policy problem. Instead, the analyst must be guided by decision criteria upon which policy options (or policy alternatives) are identified, evaluated and ranked. The choice of which policy or policies to recommend depends in part on which model of recommendation is adopted. These choices ultimately are subjective and value-laden. As such, they reflect the ethical norms a policy analyst brings to the task.

Course Learning Objectives
Members of the Humphrey School faculty have collaborated to establish learning objectives for this course. Although wording of learning objectives varies somewhat across sections taught by different faculty members, each instructor focuses on similar objectives, uses the same basic text (i.e., *A Practical Guide to Policy Analysis* by Eugene Bardach), and requires students to practice doing policy analysis. In sum, to complete this course successfully, you must be able to explain the process of policy analysis, and you must demonstrate that you can do it.

PA 5002 has seven specific learning objectives, each of which is derived from competencies expected for graduates of graduate programs in public affairs, policy, and management accredited by the Commission on Program Review and Accreditation (COPRA), an accrediting institution affiliated with the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). Table 1 lists five universal competencies specified by NASPAA, the Humphrey School's interpretation or expression of them, and the course learning objectives that are matched to them. As is clear from the matching, the learning objectives and competencies are closely aligned. The link between a learning objective and a competency, however, is subjective and requires professional judgment. Because this course emphasizes analysis and communication more than leadership and management, I've not matched any of the course learning objectives with the competency of leadership and management, though I believe that all those who lead and manage must demonstrate competency in policy analysis. My main point is that the learning objectives for this course are central to the MPP degree program, provide you the opportunity to acquire the competencies expected of all graduates, and establish a foundation for your future professional career in public service.

Course Structure
This course will include a few lectures, discussion, individual and group practice, collaborative learning, and teamwork. PA 5002 historically has been taught as a lecture-discussion class. This year, we are moving more to a problem-based learning approach that involves "flipping" some elements of the class. For example, you will observe several videos and mini-lectures that introduce topics, and we will explore their complexity in workgroups in class. Because research indicates students learn best when actively engaged in trying to solve problems, we will emphasize in-class exercises and professional practice, sometimes individually, but most often with classmates on assignments and your group project. We meet only seven times, so each week will be filled with activity.

Table 1. NASPAA Universal Competencies, Humphrey School MPP Competencies, and PA 5002 Learning Objectives

NASPAA Universal Competencies	Humphrey School Competencies	PA 5002 Introduction to Policy Analysis Learning Objectives
Students who graduate from a degree program accredited by NASPAA will be able to:	*Students who graduate with the MPP degree from the Humphrey School will be able to:*	*Students who complete Introduction to Policy Analysis successfully will be able to:*
1. Participate in and contribute to the public policy process	1. To participate in problem-solving, policy-making, and institutional and societal change in dynamic, uncertain environments.	1. Explain the basic terminology, theories, concepts, models, and tools used by policy analysts in policy-making processes
2. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions	2. To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve complex problems, and make decisions informed by quantitative, qualitative, economic, and other methods.	2. Use diverse sources of quantitative and qualitative evidence to define and structure policy problems, develop and assess alternative policies, and make concise policy recommendations that convey tradeoffs among alternatives 3. Explain the limitations of evidence and analyses and the implications of uncertainty for policy-making and implementation
3. Articulate and apply a public service perspective	3. To articulate the essential role of public institutions in democratic societies and the importance of democratic values in delivery of public services. 4. To understand conceptions of the common good, acknowledge normative and ethical viewpoints, and promote social justice.	4. Explain the complementary roles of scientific inquiry, technical analysis, ethics, and normative value judgments in policy analysis
4. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry	5. To communicate and interact productively with individuals in diverse and changing cultures and communities.	5. Write clear, short, and persuasive evidence-based policy briefs for diverse audiences 6. Make clear, short, and persuasive oral presentations for diverse audiences 7. Work more effectively with others
5. Lead and manage in public governance	6. To lead and manage in governance across sectors, institutions, and diverse populations and cultures. 7. To understand global interdependencies and the implications for governance, policy-making, and implementation.	

Required Readings

Textbook
Bardach, Eugene (2009). *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*, 3rd ed., Congressional Quarterly Press, Washington, D.C.

Papers, Chapters, Statements, and other Documents (all are posted)

American Society of Public Administration. 2013. "Code of Ethics". http://www.aspanet.org/public/ASPA/Resources/Code_of_Ethics/ASPA/Resources/Code%20of%20Ethics1.aspx?hkey=acd40318-a945-4ffc-ba7b-18e037b1a858 (accessed 10/22/2013).

American Society of Public Administration. 2013. "Practices to Promote the ASPA Code Of Ethics" http://www.aspanet.org/PUBLIC/ASPADocs/ASPA%20Code%20of%20Ethics-2013%20with%20Practices.pdf (accessed 8/31/2015).

Anderson, L. Brownson, R., Fullilove, M., Teutsch, S., Novick, L., Fielding, J., and Land. G. (2005). "Evidence-Based Public Health Policy and Practice: Promises and Limits." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine:* 28(5S), p. 226-230.

Bohrer, J. 2003. "Writing Effective Memos." The Electronic Hallway. University of Washington, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs. Seattle Washington.

Brock, D. No date. "Ethical Issues in the Use of Cost Effectiveness Analysis for the Prioritization of Health Care." Unpublished paper. http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/philo/courses/bioethics/Papers/EthicalIssues.PDF (accessed 8/31/2015).

Bromell, David. 2012. "Doing the Right Thing: Ethical Dilemmas in Public Policy-Making." Centre for Theology and Public Issues. Working Paper. Department of Theology and Religion, University of Otago, Dunnedin 9054, Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Drake,E., Aos, S. and Miller, M. (2009). "Evidence-Based Public Policy Options to Reduce Crime and Criminal Justice Costs: Implications in Washington State." *Victims and Offenders, 4:170–196.. DOI: 10.1080/15564880802612615*

Dunn, William (2012). *Public Policy Analysis*, 5th edition. Pearson Education, Inc.: New Jersey.
- Ch. 1 The Process of Policy Analysis, p. 2-30
- Case 1.1 Goeller Scorecard: Monitoring and Forecasting Technological Impacts, p. 22-26.

Doebel, J.P. et al. 2003. "Memo Writing." The Electronic Hallway. University of Washington, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs. Seattle Washington.

Mahoney, J., and Goertz, Gary. 2006. *A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research.* Oxford University Press.

Maier, Mark H., and Imazeki, Jennifer. 2013. *The Data Game. Controversies in Social Science Statistics.* Fourth Edition. M.E. Sharpe. Armonk, New York, U.S.
- Ch. 2 Demography, *The Data Game*

Nye. J. 2003. "Brief Guidelines for Writing Action Memos." The Electronic Hallway. University of Washington, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs. Seattle Washington.

Page, G.W. and Patton, C. 19981. *Quick Answers to Quantitative Problems.* Academic Press, Inc. San Diego, CA.
- Ch. 2 Tabular Analysis, p. 13-24.
- Ch. 15 Indices, p. 179-188.
- Ch. 16 Net Benefit Evaluation, p. 189-194.

Sadovnik, A. (2006). Qualitative Research and Public Policy. In Handbook of Public Policy Analysis: Theory, Politics, and Methods (Vol. 125, pp. 417-427). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Williams-Taylor, Lisa. (2007). "Research Review Evidence-Based Programs and Practices: What Does it All Mean?" Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, Boyton Beach FL.

Required Video and Tutorials
Videos and Interactive Tutorials (in sequential or chronological order for the semester; dates are in schedule on Moodle; links are on Moodle))

- Lindsey, G. 2015. PA 5002 Video
    - "Welcome and Learning Objectives."
    - "Assignments."
    - "Conceptual Models in Policy Analysis."
    - "Policy Analysis and Science."
- McFarland, L. & Calarusse, C. 2015 "NASPAA Accreditation and Competencies." PA 5002 Introduction to Policy Analysis.
- Svarra, J. 2015. "Public Service Ethics and Policy Analysis." PA 5002 Introduction to Policy Analysis.
- Myers, S. 2015. 2015. "On Defining the Policy Problem." PA 5002 Introduction to Policy Analysis.
- Borton, K. and Intermill, M. (no date). "What is a Management Memo." The Hubert Project. http://www.youtube.com/user/HubertProject?blend=21&ob=5#p/a/u/1/pLiNedh0cWA [accessed 1/12/13]
- Friedemann-Sanchez, G. 2015. "The Use of Mixed Methods in Policy Analysis." PA 5002 Introduction to Policy Analysis.
- University of Minnesota Libraries. Workshops, Tutorials, and Guides. Finding and Evaluating Information (https://www.lib.umn.edu/instruction/tutorials; accessed 8/31/2015):
    - Creating an Effective Search Strategy (Interactive Tutorial)
    - Identifying and Using a Library Database (Interactive Tutorial)
    - Evaluating Sources (Interactive Tutorial)
    - Exploring a Scholarly Research Article (Interactive Tutorial)
    - Evidence-Based Practice (Interactive Tutorial)
    - Getting the most out of Google Scholar (video: 5 min)
- University of Minnesota Libraries. Workshops, Tutorials, and Guides. Communicating Research (https://www.lib.umn.edu/instruction/tutorials; accessed 8/31/2015):
    - Creating Posters in PowerPoint (Interactive Tutorial)
    - Effective Poster Design Elements (Interactive Tutorial)
    - Effective Poster Design Judging Exercise (Interactive Tutorial)

Course Schedule and Assignments
Table 2 lists due dates for reading and homework assignments. To complete PA 5002 successfully, you must complete seven assignments:

A1. Individual Problem Definition Brief (10%)
A2. Team Problem Definition Brief (10%)
A3. Team Evidence Brief (10%)
A4. Team Alternatives Brief (15%)
A5. Team Policy Poster (15%)
A6. Team Policy Brief (20% including self- and peer assessment)
A7. Individual Elevator Speech Video and Letter (20%)

These assignments, which are matched with course learning objectives in Table 3, include both individual and group or team assignments. Seventy percent (70%) of your grade is associated with your team project (A2-A6); 30% will be assigned individually (A1, A7). Your self- and peer assessment will not be graded per se, but your assessment will be used in computation of your team policy brief and poster presentation grades (A6).

Table 2. PA 5002 Course Schedule (subject to change given class progress covering topics)			
Week*	**Class Topics**	**Readings & Videos (Complete Before Class Session)**	**Assignments Due Noon on Day of Class**
1 10/28/15	• Exercise: practice in policy analysis • Team assignments • Syllabus and course review	PA 5002 Syllabus Videos • Lindsey: PA 5002 Welcome and Learning Objectives • Lindsey: PA 5002 Assignments • McFarland & Calarusse: NASPAA Accreditation and Competencies Bardach • Introduction • Part I The Eightfold Path, p. 1-11	
2 11/2/15	• Discussion: Eightfold Path • Exercise: problem definition	Bardach • Part I The Eightfold Path, p. 12-78 Video • Myers: On Defining the Policy Problem	A1. DRAFT Individual Problem Definition Brief
11/4/15	• Discussion: Models of policy analysis and the policy-making processes • Exercise: mapping policy arguments • Team meetings (if time available)	Dunn • Ch. 1. The Process of Policy Analysis, p. 2-30 Video • Lindsey Conceptual Models in Policy Analysis	A1. Final Individual Problem Definition Brief (10%)

3 11/9/15	• Discussion: Public service ethics
	• Exercise: Using the ASPA Code of Ethics
	• Team meetings (if time available)
		Bromell
		• Doing the Right Thing: Ethical Dilemmas in Public Policy Making
		Brock
		• Ethical Issues in the Use of Cost Effectiveness Analysis for the Prioritization of Health Care Resources
		ASPA
		• Code of Ethics
		• Practices to Promote the ASPA Code Of Ethics
		Video
		   o Jim Svarra
		Video & Guidelines for Memos
		• Hubert Project: What is a Management Memo?
		• Electronic Hallway:
		   o Boehrer 2003
		   o Dobel et al. 2003)
		   o Nye 2003	

11/11/15	• Discussion: Gathering Evidence • Exercise: literature search	Bardach • Part II Assembling the Evidence, p. 79-108 Video • Lindsey: Policy Analysis and Science UMN Library. Workshops, Tutorials, and Guides: • Tutorials on search strategies, evaluating sources, etc.	A2. Team Problem Definition Brief (10%)

Week*	Class Topics	Readings & Videos (Complete Before Class Session)	Assignments Due Noon on Day of Class
4 11/16/15	• Discussion: Evidence-Based Reviews	Maier & Imazeki • Ch. 2 Demography, *The Data Game* Anderson et al. • Evidence-Based Public Health Policy and Practice: Promises and Limits Drake, Aos, and Miller • Evidence-Based Public Policy Options to Reduce Crime and Criminal Justice Costs: Implications in Washington State Williams-Taylor • Research Review: Evidence Based Programs and Practices: What Does it all Mean? •	
11/18/15	• Discussion: Types of research	Bardach • Part III Smart "Best" Practices Research, p. 109-124 Mahoney & Goertz • A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research Sadovnik • Qualitative Research and Public Policy Video • Friedemann-Sanchez: Mixed Method	
5 11/23/15	• Discussion: Presentation of alternatives, outcomes, and criteria • Exercise: presentation of alternatives	Page and Patton • Ch. 2 Tabular Analysis, p. 13-24. • Ch. 15 Indices, p. 179-188 • Ch. 16 Net Benefit Estimation, p. 189-194	A3. Team Evidence Brief (10%)
11/25/15	o Discussion: specifying tradeoffs o Exercise: presentation of potential outcomes	Dunn • Case 1.1 The Goeller Scorecard (previously assigned)	
6 11/30/15	• Discussion: • Exercise: making posters in ppt	Video University Library: Workshops, Tutorials, and Guides. Communicating Research: "Creating Posters in Powerpoint," Effective Poster Design Elements."	A4. Team Alternatives Brief (15%)
12/2/15	• Activity: to be determined	• Examples of professional policy analyses	

Week*	Class Topics	Readings & Videos (Complete Before Class Session)	Assignments Due Noon on Day of Class
7 12/7/15	• Team poster presentations (electronic)		A5. Team Policy Poster (15%)
12/9/15	• Team poster presentations (electronic)		
8 12/14/15	• Discussion: Doing the right thing • Telling your story: elevator speeches	• Revisit ethics in policy analysis	A6. Team Policy Brief (20%)
12/16/15	• Discussion: Recap & Reflection		A7. Individual Elevator Speech Video and Letter (20%)

Table 3. PA 5002 Learning Objectives and Assignments	
Learning Objectives	**Opportunity to Demonstrate Competency**
1. Explain the basic terminology, theories, concepts, models, and tools used by policy analysts in policy-making processes	A7. Individual Elevator Speech and Letter (implicit in Assignments 1-6)
2. Use diverse sources of quantitative and qualitative evidence to define and structure policy problems, develop and assess alternative policies, and make concise policy recommendations that convey tradeoffs among alternatives	A1. Individual Problem Definition Brief A2. Team Problem Definition Brief A3. Team Evidence Brief A4. Team Alternatives Brief A5. Team Policy Poster A6. Team Policy Brief
3. Explain the limitations of evidence and analyses and the implications of uncertainty for policy-making and implementation	A3. Team Evidence Brief A4. Team Alternatives Brief A5. Team Policy Poster A6. Team Policy Brief
4. Explain the complementary roles of scientific inquiry, technical analysis, ethics, and normative value judgments in policy analysis	A7. Individual Elevator Speech and Letter
5. Write clear, short, and persuasive evidence-based policy briefs for diverse audiences	All assignments
6. Make clear, short, and persuasive oral presentations for diverse audiences	A5. Team Policy Poster A7. Individual Elevator Speech and Letter
7. Work more effectively with others	A2 – A6 (including peer assessment.

All assignments will be completed on one of the policy topics listed in Table 4. These topics were chosen for a number of reasons: each is timely, information about each will be readily available, and each is recurring in the sense that the problem always will be a matter of debate. The topics include policy problems at the national, state and local levels – most are important internationally and institutionally as well. An objective was to include a set of issues that reflect the varied interests of Humphrey School students and the expertise of Humphrey School faculty. That said, policy analysis is a general process, many policy analysts work in several areas, and this class will focus on the generality of the analytic process. We will assign teams to each of these topics the first day of class.

Table 4. Topics for PA 5002 Team Project Assignments.	
Policy Issue	**Examples of Questions that Conceptualize Policy Problems Differently**
1. Early Childhood, Primary, and Secondary Education	• <u>Federal, State, Local.</u> What is the most effective way to ensure high school graduates across the United States are equally prepared for life and work? • <u>Federal.</u> Should the federal government establish or encourage minimum educational standards for high school achievement? • <u>State.</u> Should Minnesota join other states in the Common Core initiative? • <u>State:</u> Should Minnesota provide early childhood education for all Minnesota preschool children?
2. Immigration	• <u>Federal.</u> How should the United States address illegal immigration? <u>Federal.</u> Should minors who enter the United States illegally be deported? • <u>Local.</u> Should municipal governments have the right to establish sanctuary zones for immigrants to demonstrate disagreement with federal law?
3. Racial, ethnic, and gender-based disparities	• <u>Federal.</u> How can America redress the legacy of slavery and the effects of discrimination? • <u>Federal.</u> Should America pay reparations to descendents of slaves? • <u>State and Local.</u> Given Supreme Court decisions that limit explicit consideration of race and ethnicity in some decisions (such as admission to graduate school), how can public institutions effectively provide opportunities for minorities? • <u>Federal, State, Local.</u> What are effective strategies for reducing gender-based wage disparities?
4. Counterfeit goods	• <u>International:</u> How can the World Trade Organization, the United Nations, and other international institutions address the growing trade of counterfeit goods? • <u>National:</u> Should the U.S. increase efforts to keep counterfeit goods from entering the country?
5. Panhandling in Minneapolis / St. Paul / Duluth	• <u>State:</u> Should the Minnesota legislature adopt legislation addressing panhandling so that laws are the same in each municipality? • <u>Local:</u> Should Minneapolis, St. Paul, or Duluth enact municipal ordinances to control panhandling within their borders?
6. Transportation	• <u>Federal:</u> Should Congress increase funding for state and local transportation initiatives? • <u>Federal:</u> Should Congress identify alternatives to the gas tax to fund transportation initiatives? • <u>State:</u> Should Minnesota invest more in transit, bicycling, and walking to diversify transportation options and address environmental and health impacts of vehicular transportation.
7. Water quality	• <u>Federal:</u> Should Congress create new programs to control pollution from nonpoint sources of water pollution? • <u>Federal:</u> Should Congress enact new legislation to control the effects of fracking on groundwater? • <u>State:</u> How can Minnesota control water agricultural water pollution from Minnesota farms and fields?

We have organized this series of assignments as a simulation. Here is the context:

> Assume that you've been hired as a policy analyst for *Policies that Work!*, a nonprofit, bipartisan think tank with the mission of encouraging evidence-based policies enhance economic opportunity and quality-of-life for individuals in the United States. *Policies that Work!* operates at the federal, state, and local levels, recognizes the complexity of democratic governance across levels of government, and is especially concerned about effective intergovernmental relations. In advance of the 2016 elections, *Policies that Work!* has received a large grant from a major foundation to prepare a set of policy briefs to provide candidates background information for establishing policy positions. Depending on the issue, the target audience will vary but could include candidates for city councils, mayoral offices, state legislatures, governorships, or Congress.

Your assignment at *Policies that Work!* is to work as a member of a three or four person team to prepare a policy brief an issue area. You have seven weeks to define the problems, gather evidence, assess alternatives and potential outcomes, make recommendations, and prepare your brief and related materials.

Assignment 1. Individual Problem Definition Brief is designed to provide individual practice in defining a problem and to inform your first team's assignments (i.e., A2). Team Problem Definition Brief). Assignments 3 – 6 are designed to simulate a typical policy analytic process, from problem structuring and collection of evidence to making and communicating findings and recommendations concisely in different formats as a member of a team. To underscore the importance of each step in the analytic process, each step in the process will be assessed independently, even though the steps are linked and cumulative (and in practice do not always occur sequentially). This step by step assessment will provide opportunities to learn from and revise previous submissions, thus strengthening your team's final policy brief and poster.

A1. Individual Problem Definition Brief (10%). This assignment is to prepare a problem structuring brief, no more than two pages long, that defines the policy problem to be analyzed. Although you will work on the problem assigned to your team, this brief will be an individual one, addressed to the instructor and your team-mates. The main purpose of this assignment is to give you practice in what is arguably the most difficult and important step in the process of policy analysis, namely, clarification and definition of the problem. This step is most important because the scope of all subsequent steps in the process follow from it. To complete this process, you will want to consider methods of problem definition and structuring described by Bardach. Among other items, your brief should answer the questions:

- What is the problem? Why is this issue a problem?
- Who are some of the stakeholders who are engaged with the problem?
- What are some of the legal, historical, political or economic aspects of the problem?

Your two page brief shall be in 11 or 12 point font, with 1.5 line spacing, and with a minimum of one inch margins. You may include appendixes or end notes if you think they are necessary.

A2. Team Problem Definition Brief (10%). This team assignment is to prepare a problem structuring brief similar to your individual brief but in collaboration with your new team members. Your team should answer the same questions as in your individual brief (A1). The main purpose of this assignment is to give you additional practice in thinking through and redefining a policy problem in a group context. We put together teams to work on policy analyses because the synthesis of multiple perspectives is one way to ensure consideration of the different facets and complexities of a policy problem. Because each person on your team will bring his or her own perspective to your discussions, you will need to talk through and

compare and contrast different conceptualizations of the problem. How your team does this is up to members of the team. As with the individual policy structuring brief, this brief shall be no more than two pages in length, in 11 or 12 point font, with 1.5 line spacing, and with a minimum of one inch margins. Appendixes are permissible.

A3. Team Evidence Brief (10%). This team assignment is to prepare a brief that presents factual evidence relevant to the scope, complexity, and tractability of your policy problem. The goal is to convey the types of quantitative and qualitative information available for understanding the problem and shaping alternative courses of action. You should not yet develop or present policy alternatives or evaluation criteria, forecast outcomes, or recommend a preferred alternative(s). The main purpose of this assignment is to give you practice in assessing the importance, validity, and reliability of evidence used in the policy process (i.e., to refine understanding of a problem or, in subsequent steps, to develop and assess alternatives). This brief shall be no longer than four pages including your problem statement, but not counting references. The body of your brief include at least one original table or matrix that summarizes evidence central to your argument. Use the same formatting as in the problem definition brief; appendixes are permissible.

A4. Team Alternatives Brief (15%). This team assignment is to prepare a brief that presents policy alternatives and potential outcomes based on the problem you have defined and the evidence you have gathered. The goal is to illustrate different strategies for addressing the problem and, to the extent you can, the outcomes that you would expect. The fact that we have choices means there are trade-offs in outcomes, in costs, in the ways we engagement of those affected by the policy. The key to this brief will be concise, effective presentation of differences in and tradeoffs among the alternatives you develop. Building on previous submissions, this brief shall be no longer than six pages not counting references. Aspects of alternatives and outcomes must be summarized in an original table or matrix. Use the same formatting as in previous submissions; appendixes are permissible.

A5. Team Poster Presentation (15%). This team assignment involves preparation and presentation of a poster – one scalable powerpoint slide – that summarizes your team's policy analysis. The main purpose for this assignment is to give you practice in summarizing your work succinctly in a different format prior to submission of your final policy brief. Each team will present its poster in a poster session electronically during class. Details for the poster session will be presented in class.

A6. Team Policy Brief (20%). This team assignment is to prepare a policy brief that presents your team's policy problem, evidence, policy alternatives and criteria for assessment of them, simple projections of the likely effects and outcomes of the alternatives, your team's recommendations, discussion of limitations and uncertainty associated with your analyses, and suggestions for monitoring of outcomes. The policy brief must incorporate information from your previous assignments, but should focus on recommendations and other new material. This brief shall include a one-page executive summary; the text shall be no longer than 10 pages, including the summary, but excluding references and appendixes. You shall use the same formatting requirements as previous brief s.

When you submit your Team Policy Brief, you also must complete a short assessment of the contributions made by your team members and reflection on your own learning during the course. This assignment will not be graded, but the assessments you make of your team members will be used to adjust grades for the team policy brief (A6).

A7. Individual Elevator Speech Video and Letter (20%). This individual assignment involves preparation of a very short (< 2 minute) video and follow-up letter (< 2 pages) in which you summarize your team's research and use your analyses to illustrate how you generally would approach the task of policy analysis. Here is the context for A7:

Assume that you're attending the annual meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) to present your *Policies that Work!* team policy brief for peer review. You find yourself walking down the hall alone with the Director of Congressional Research Service \(CRS) of the Library of Congress, which just happens to be the place you've always wanted to work. The Director, who's very good at small talk and also always on the lookout for talent, asks you politely what you're doing at the conference. You take this unexpected opportunity to provide your "elevator speech" summary of your team's research. The Director notes the clarity of your summary and the fire in your belly, hands you her card, and mentions that the CRS always is looking for good policy analysts. You take this comment as an opportunity to follow up, and the next day send a very brief letter (< two pages) declaring your interest in a position and, using your research for *Policies that Work!*, to illustrate generally how you would approach other policy problems if working for the CRS.

In your Elevator Speech video, you should summarize your *Policies that Work!* research. But in your letter, you should focus on the general process of policy analysis, referring to your team's research only when necessary to illuminate a point. The purpose of this assignment is to provide you the opportunity to communicate your understanding of the complexity and strengths and limitations of policy analysis. You should not focus institutional or administrative aspects of a position with CRS.

Policy on Incompletes. You and your team are expected to complete all assignments by their due date and to complete all course work by the last day of class. If you are unable to do so, you must negotiate an incomplete in advance of the particular due date and develop a written contract that describes the work that remains to be completed and the date by which the work will be submitted to the instructor. Except in the case of a documented emergency, failure to meet a deadline without prior notice and agreement will result in a penalty of a minimum of one letter grade.

Commitment to Academic Integrity . I expect the highest level of academic integrity, will adhere strictly to the University of Minnesota Student Conduct Code, and will enforce rules and procedures concerning academic misconduct, including plagiarism, whether inadvertent or intentional. If you are not familiar with activities considered to be academic misconduct, please review the Code: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Code_of_Conduct.pdf (accessed 8/31/2015).

Assessment
Assignments will be weighted as specified in the preceding section. Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A	93% - 100%	C	73% - 77%
A-	90% - 92%	C-	70% - 72%
B+	88% - 89%	D+	68% - 69%
B	83% - 87%	D	63% - 67%
B-	80% - 82%	D-	60% - 62%
C+	78% - 79%	F	< 60%