Associate Professor Jodi Sandfort
Humphrey School Room 238,
sandf002@umn.edu, 612-625-3536

This course examines the implementation of public policy and programs. Implementation is an integral, dynamic and often unpredictable component of the policy-making and systems change process. Policies are not only created by elected officials, who authorize and fund government activities, but also by state administrators, local managers, front-line staff, and citizens who interpret and interact with them.

Because of this complexity, this course introduces you to a multi-level implementation analysis. This analysis focuses on understanding how the core policy or program is understood at the policy field, organizational, and frontline levels. It also provides ways to better understand how a social process that involves power and culture often significantly shapes implementation processes and tasks. This is because public policy and program implementation occurs in a complex system, which introduces unexpected detours and creates outcomes unanticipated by policy makers.

Because implementation is inherently a social process, it requires skillful actors who can analyze situations *and* work effectively with others to direct resources, manage competing demands, and move toward desired outcomes. As such, students need to cultivate their abilities to be analytical, reflective and adaptive. This course is designed to help graduate students develop such skills.

In this course, we will work together to achieve these learning outcomes:

- Understand operations of a multi-level policy implementation system by apply appropriate theoretical and conceptual models. We will focus on three differentiated levels:
  - *Policy fields* shaped by policy design, government tools, available institutions, and networks.
  - *Organizations*, both authorizing agencies and service providing agencies shaped by program mandates and funding, cultural interpretations, and existing programs.
  - *Frontline* realities shaped by workloads, staff personal attributes and skills, and interactions with citizens.
- Conduct multi-level policy implementation analyses through field-based inquiry;
- Explore how authority can by used by implementers with social skill to improve implementation results that deliver public value;
- Communicate effectively virtually and face-to-face to build skills for working with professionals who have distinct vantage points about implementation processes and outcomes.

Means of Learning & Communicating With Each Other

To accomplish these outcomes, we will draw upon various learning materials: conceptual and theoretical readings; multi-media case analysis; in-depth field research; and small learning groups to support your research.

The Fall 2016 offering is offered in a hybrid format that leverage both face-to-face and online course elements, using an array of technological tools to learn together even when we are not physically present with each other. We will have eight face-to-face meetings over the course of the semester, each 3 hours each. In addition, you will meet face-to-face or virtually with a small learning group during weeks we are not meeting as a whole class. Additionally, you will spend considerable time doing research and implementation analysis on a policy or program of your selection. Like all graduate courses, you should plan to spend about 15 -20 hours per week on course related activities and assignments.

We will utilize an array of technologies: face-to-face class sessions, small learning groups, tools from the U of M Google suite, and Moodle 3.0 (including on-line forums, and audio-enhanced power points). Current practice and research suggests <u>students are successful in these types of technology-enriched classes</u> when they are:

- Open minded about sharing work, life, and educational experiences as part of the learning process;
- Able to communicate through writing;
- Willing to communicate with instructors if problems arise;
- Accept critical thinking and decision making as part of the learning process;
- Able to think ideas through before responding;
- Self-motivated and self-disciplined;
- Able to establish and maintain boundaries with on-line media (and manage your own expectations of you or me always being 'wired').

Success in the course is dependent on you mastering course content while simultaneously dealing with all of life's other responsibilities.

Although this is a course that leverages technology, this does not mean that communication with me should be more limited. ***If you have questions, concerns, recommendations, or emerging ideas about the course, let me know!*** The sooner the better. And I welcome face-to-face or virtual video conversations about the course. You also can communicate with me through our Moodle site, via phone, email, or in person before or after class. To make an appointment during my set office hours (Wednesday 8:30 – 10:30) follow the link to my calendar on the course web-page. If you would like to meet another time, please send me an email directly to set something up.

Throughout the semester, you will work with a *small learning group* to deepen your multi-level implementation analysis and help you stay on track. I will establish those groups for our first face-to-face meeting on September 7th.

Disability Services and Support
The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Disability Services (DS) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, we encourage you to contact me early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

Mental Health
As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol or drug problems, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist students with addressing these and other concerns. Learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health web site at http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students in this class will need to fulfill the following requirements (all assignments due by noon on the date noted). Assignments submitted after the due date will be penalize 5 points for each 24-hour period that they are late:

1) Complete all the *reading* and review *module introduction videos*, *video briefs,* and faculty-created *audio-enhanced power points*. These materials are grouped into modules within units.   In this 'flipped classroom' it is important that you keep up with these lecture and other content-rich materials;

2) Field Research Complete an individual *Multilevel implementation analysis brief* about a policy or program of your choosing. Submit 2-page project statement (due on 9/25) and draft worksheets (from the textbook Appendices) throughout the first half of the semester. This will enable Professor Sandfort and the small learning group to provide necessary support to the research process. The full brief and poster summarizing your research is due on November 16th.

3) *Contextual Analysis and Change Report.* The last month of the semester will allow you to go deeper in two or three sites within the implementation system to better understand authority, culture, and leadership for improving results in these settings. The last month of the semester will focus on this research. The final paper is due on December 16th.

4) In-class *presentations to the full class*. A final presentation of your contextual analysis and change report will be given during the 12/14 class.

GRADING DISTRIBUTION & CRITERIA OF EVALUATION

A student's grade in the course will be determined using the following weights and criteria:

Participation   15%
In a hybrid course, participation involves engaging with course materials, asking questions (virtually in forums and face-to-face), preparing cases for classroom discussions (including preparation of case materials) and engaging in your small learning group (including providing feedback on their interim products). It also involves being organized to conduct field-based research and asking for assistance when you encounter challenges. Members of small groups will be asked to evaluate each other's engagement and participation in their learning experience at the end of the semester, which will be taken into account for the calculation of this portion of the course grade.

Quizzes (4) & Reflection Posts (3)   **15%**
Virtual lectures and readings will communicate the core course concepts. Mastery of this material is important and will be assessed through three quizzes throughout the term. The application of the concepts also will be stressed through your research into a policy/program implementation of your choice (described below).

In addition, implementation practice requires that you are skilled at assessing your experiences and making strategies for action. As a result, there are three short reflection posts due at three points in the class. More information about each will be available on the course Moodle site.

Multilevel Field-based Analysis
Project Statement & Drafts of analysis   *10%*
To shape your field-based research, we begin with a clear statement of the policy and program to be explored. You will suggest an idea in the first week of the course and, after receiving some initial feedback, write it up to share with Professor Sandfort and your small learning group. Consider how you will design the investigation into field conditions at the various levels of analysi.

You will turn in drafts of your analysis at various levels. Your small learning group and Professor Sandfort will provide feedback that you can draw upon to hone your Multilevel Implementation Analysis Brief.

Multilevel Implementation Analysis Brief   *25%*
This 8-10 single-spaced assignment will tie together all of the research you complete from the initial research about the policy field, organizational analysis (both authoring and service agency), and frontline conditions. It will include relevant visual schematic representations of the various levels of analysis from worksheets and/or tables. Furthermore, the Brief will describe obvious implementation challenges and begin to consider potential ways to create the necessary change in system operation and/or target group conditions. The Brief will be assessed on a 100 point-scale according to these criteria: completeness of research;

application of concepts from course materials, identification of key implementation issues; professionalism, writing style and mechanics (free of spelling and grammatical errors, visual appeal, consistent citation method, etc).

Poster Presentation   10%

Mid-semester, you will make a presentation to the class about your multilevel research; your colleagues and professor will assess your effectiveness in communicating your analysis.

Contextual Analysis and Change Report   25%

This final assignment builds off (and can reference) the Multilevel implementation Analysis Brief.   This 5 -7 single-spaced page report analyzes the social system of implementation found at (at least) one site in the system and makes concrete recommendations for changes that could improve desired results. The Report will be assessed according to the following components: appropriateness of implementation analysis; thoroughness of research methodology; relevance of recommendations; use of course material; organization and professionalism (free of spelling, typographical, and grammatical errors, consistent citation method, etc).

During the last day of the course, you will make a 10 minute presentation of this analysis and strategy to class members.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "F" for the course. Students are expected to be familiar with what constitutes plagiarism. If students are uncertain, please consult the instructor or University of Minnesota policies.

FULL CITATIONS TO READINGS & OTHER LEARNING OBJECTS

Throughout, we will be using my book co-authored with Stephanie Moulton, *Effective Implementation in Practice: Integrating Public Policy and Management* (Jossey-Bass Publishing, 2015). We will supplement this material with other readings and multi-media learning objects. All concepts will be applied to your field-based research.

Introduction: Surveying the Landscape

Hubert Video Brief: Multi-level Implementation Analysis
Susan Evans and Peter Clarke (2011). "Disseminating Orphan Innovations," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Winter: 42-47.
Sandfort & Moulton, Preface, Chapter 1 & Chapter 2
Trish Greenhalgh, Glenn Robert, Fraster MacFarlane, Paul Bate, and Olivia Kyriakidou (2004). "Diffusion of Innovation in Service Organizations: Systematic Review and Recommendations," *Milbank Quarterly*. 82(4): 581-629.
Richard Thaler & Cass Sustein (2009), "Following the Herd," and "When do we need a Nudge," *Nudge: Improving Decisions about health, Wealth and Happiness*. Penguin Books.
Joseph Raelin (1997). "Action Learning and Action Science: Are they Different?" *Organizational Dynamics* 26:1, pg. 21-34.

Unit 1: Introduction to Multi-Level Analysis

Policy Fields
Sandfort & Moulton, Chapter 4 & Appendix 1 & 2
Hubert Video Brief: Policy Field Analysis
Heather C. Hill (2003). "Understanding Implementation: Street-Level Bureaucrats Resources
     for Reform." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory.* 13(3): 265-282.
Lawrence O'Toole (2003). "Interorganizational Relations in Implementation." *Handbook of
     Public Administration.* Sage Publications, pg. 234-245.
Hubert e-case: Safe Harbor – Minnesota's Effort to End Child Sex Trafficking

Organizational Sites
Sandfort & Moulton, Chapter 5, Appendix 3 & 4
Gwyn Bevan and Christopher Hood (2006). "What's Measured is What Matters: Targets and
     Gaming in the English Public Health Care System." *Public Administration* 84:3, 517-538.
Hubert e-Study: Reliability and Autonomy in Nonprofit Revenue
Hubert e-case: El Centro del la Raza

Module 3: Frontline Interactions
Sandfort & Moulton, Chapter 6, Appendix 5 & 6
R. Kent Weaver (2009)."Target Compliance: The Final Frontier of Policy Implementation,"
     Governance Studies, 1-11.
Tony Bovaird (2007). "Beyond Engagement and Participation: User and Community
     Coproduction of Public Services. *Public Administration Review*. September – October: 846-
     860.
Gene Hall, Allison Dymnick, Jennifer Coffey, and Melissa Brodowski (2014). "Using Evidence-
     Based Constructs to Assess Extent of Implementation of Evidence-Based Interventions.
     ASPE Issue Brief. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
Hubert e-case: Reach out and Read

Unit 2: Changing Implementation Systems

System's Analysis
Sandfort & Moulton, Chapter 3
Keith Lawrence, Andrea A. Anderson, Gretchen Susi, Stacey Sutton, Anne C. Kubisch,
     Raymond Codrington (2009). *Constructing a Racial Equity Theory of Change: A Practical
     Guide for Designing Strategies to Close Chronic Racial Outcome Gaps*, Aspen Institute.
Richard Elmore (1979-80), "Backwards Mapping: Implementation Research and Policy
     Decisions," Political Science Quarterly 94:4, pg. 601-616. (Optional)
Hubert Video Brief: Backwards Mapping

Delving into Social Dynamics
Sandfort & Mouton, Chapter 7
Neil Fligstein (2008). "Fields, Power and Social Skill and the Theory of Fields," *Sociological
     Theory* 19(2): 107-125.

Leading Improvements
Sandfort & Moulton, Part III introduction, as well as Chapter 8

Karen Blasé, Dean Fixsen, Barbara Sims and Caryn Ward (2015). "Implementation Science: Changing Hearts, Minds, Behavior, and Systems to Improve Educational Outcomes," National Implementation Research Network.