

Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Minor – Spring 2021

I. Core Questions: *Please answer one of the following three questions:*

1. Is power adequately studied in the public policy field? Do we understand how it works in framing policy questions? In the policy process? In the relationship between government and citizens? And more? Do some approaches to the study of policy do a better job of making sense of power than others? Compare (at least) two different approaches to the empirical study of public policy and make a case.
2. For many decades, there have been debates regarding the extent to which rationality can and/or should be brought into government decision making. Construct an essay in which you lay out the major schools of thought regarding rationality in public policy. What are the similarities and differences in these schools of thought, both in terms of their orientations toward rationality and their conclusions regarding the relevance of rationality in public policy decision making? In the end, how promising are these respective accounts of rationality in providing a basis for improving the policymaking process?
3. You have just been offered a faculty position at the University of X and they are requesting a draft syllabus for an undergraduate "Introduction to Public Policy" course. Identify four major themes that you would cover in the course and delineate the major elements of each theme (including relevant scholarship) that you would want students to learn.

II. Substantive Area Questions: *Please answer one of the following two questions:*

1. In many ways housing policy remains one of the most unresolved policy issues—and it is, perhaps, for this reason that it is largely absent from the policy literature. What does the policy literature have to offer the study of housing affordability? And what does the housing literature have to offer the study of public policy?
2. So much of our current housing policy is the result of idiosyncratic policies that stem from legal interventions into private conflicts. Describe the influence of court intervention into housing policy. According to the scholars, what are the benefits of legal intervention on housing affordability or access? What are the drawbacks? What does this say about the capacity for law to address the especially vexing problems of housing inequality?

Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Minor – Winter 2021

I. Core Questions: *Please answer one of the following three questions:*

1. Some leading theories of policymaking, notably the garbage can model, the policy streams model, and the advocacy coalition framework, have been criticized for explaining too much, and therefore not explaining anything. Put differently, some critics claim that the implications of such policymaking theories are not testable. Construct an essay in which you summarize and critically evaluate these theories. To what extent do you think that critics are accurate in their assessments?
2. In the context of the current public health crisis, there has been a renewal of public and scholarly discussion of the concept of "state capacity." What do political scientists like Skocpol, Hacker and others say about the notion that the United States is a "weak state," and does the concept of state capacity help us understand the American response to the coronavirus pandemic?
3. One of the first and most elemental lessons that students of public policy learn is that the policy process can be broken down into distinctive steps or stages. Yet policy scholars disagree about the analytical leverage that can be gained by doing so. Some, like John Kingdon and Aaron Wildavsky, have focused on critical features of a particular stage, such as agenda-setting or implementation, highlighting their particular impact on policy and political outcomes. Others, like Deborah Stone, have argued that deconstructing the policy process into discrete stages yields inherently flawed analysis. Critically evaluate the merits and limitations of conceptualizing and investigating the policy process and its outcomes in terms of distinct stages. Use specific policy examples to vindicate your argument.

II. Substantive Area Questions: *Please answer one of the following two questions:*

1. Perhaps no single group has supported Donald Trump more than rural Americans, who believe his nationalist populist message speaks to their distress. However, unlike Trump, rural populists of an earlier era diagnosed monopoly economic power as the cause of their distress. Among other policy responses, they advocated antitrust. Today, some policy analysts have returned to an older progressive populism. They argue that the neoliberal turn in antitrust caused rural distress and its reform can help revitalize rural America. Do you agree? What prospects does antitrust reform have for revitalizing rural American, economically, socially, and democratically?
2. Globalization, based on capitalist mobility in search of low costs, has lots of social costs: inequality, union decline, deindustrialization, poverty, and the collapse of civil society. Is there another way? Can business be geographically rooted, interdependent, civically minded, and more egalitarian and still be economically viable? Does the industrial district, the pluralist commonwealth, or some other model provide a viable alternative to globalization? If so, what sorts of policies are necessary to support that model? Be sure to address both the theory and the evidence associated with the alternative(s) under discussion.

Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Minor – Spring 2020

I. Core Questions

1. For a generation now, public policy scholars have called for democratizing the policy process and the administrative state through deliberative and discursive democracy, empowered participation, democratic experimentalism, and collaborative governance. Are these proposals and projects the same? Does the literature provide firm conclusions about whether any of these forms work and/or what can be done to make them work better? Write an essay in response to these questions, which is informed by practical empirical examples (and other evidence) drawn from the literature.
2. In the context of the current public health crisis, there has been a renewal of public and scholarly discussion of the concept of "state capacity." What do political scientists like Skocpol, Hacker and others say about the notion that the United States is a "weak state," and does the concept of state capacity help us understand the American response to the coronavirus pandemic?
3. Many political scientists who study public policy are interested in "policy feedback" (the ways in which policy affects politics). Policy feedback is thought to lead to "path dependency" which creates possibilities and limitations for reform. Discuss path dependency in policymaking and explain how and why the development of policies may in turn create a series of political opportunities and constraints. Using a substantive example you are familiar with, explain how policy decisions made in the past have shaped and influenced policymaking today. Given your analysis of policy feedbacks or path dependency in this case, explain how well this literature might guide policymakers to craft policies with staying power.

II. Substantive Area Questions

1. Calisky and Callon distinguish between *formalist* and *substantialist* approaches to studying the economy. Although substantialists agree over a lot, they also disagree over *how much* and in *what ways* public policy, law (or government institutions) and culture makes economies. Explain the substantialist perspective, recount the differences among substantialists, and take a position on what sort of perspective is more convincing in making sense of an important empirical issue (such as cross-national variation in the organization of markets; financialization of the US economy; or the historical development of the corporation in the United States).

2. In the "varieties of capitalism" framework, one of the key differences between liberal and coordinated market economies (e.g. the US and Germany, respectively) is the different ways in which corporate governance is organized. Specifically it is claimed that "patient capital" is a crucial component of and condition for the coordinated variety of capitalism. However, in both varieties of capitalism there is evidence that capital has become more "impatient" over recent decades.

Discuss some of the causes and consequences of this shift in corporate governance. Are there policy proposals that could revive "patient capital", or are the causes of its decline too rooted in cultural, ideological and technological changes to be reversed?

3. Since the late twentieth century, labor in the US has been divided by a shrinking group of unionized workers *inside* the system organized under the National Labor Relations Act and a growing group of intersectional workers *outside* of that system. During that time, work has also become increasingly precarious. Is it possible to rethink social class in ways that can overcome that divide, advance public policy to improve the quality of work and support for workers, and foster political solidarity? If so, how? If not, why not? Write an essay, which is informed your understanding of the historical relationship between changing conceptions of social class, labor politics and public policy (law) in the United States.
4. Traditionally, three central roles of labor unions have been collective bargaining, member services and political action (lobbying, campaigning, social movement activism etc.). The decline of unions over recent decades has therefore raised concerns about their decreasing capacity to perform each of these functions. But are unions essential as providers of these goods? Or are there alternative means of achieving the goals unions once sought to achieve, even absent a revival of union membership?
5. Recent analyses of the coronavirus death rate in the United States suggest that African Americans have died from the disease at two-to-three times the rate of whites, Asians, and Latinos. While medical and public health researchers are exploring a wide variety of factors, what explanations might we derive from the scholarly literature on poverty and race? Two decades ago, for example, Douglass Massey and Nancy Denton pointed to an interlocking set of individual actions, institutional practices, and government policies that fueled persistent poverty and segregation for African Americans. Based on your reading of the poverty and race literature, which studies and findings in this field are most important for understanding the impact of COVID-19 on African Americans?
6. Numerous welfare state scholars have shown that U.S. efforts to fight poverty have paled in comparison to its war on welfare for the poor. What best explains America's deep-seated opposition to welfare? Some studies highlight the role of key political leaders and officials in shaping a system of poverty governance that is particularly punitive to the poor. Others focus on public attitudes and widely shared ideological commitments (such as individualism, racial attitudes, perceptions of welfare recipients as undeserving, or

neoliberal paternalism). In your assessment of this literature, should we understand American's war on welfare as something that is driven from above (top-down), below (bottom-up), or a combination of the two?

**Public Policy Minor Exam
Spring 2019**

CORE

Answer ONE of the following two questions.

- 1) Whether at a local, national or international scale, collaborative governance is no more than interest group liberalism with a new name. As such, it suffers from all the same problems -- among them capture, the inability to plan or achieve justice, delegitimation of public authority, the ratification of the status quo, and the decline in the rule of law. Drawing upon the theory of collaborative governance and at least two empirical examples, evaluate this claim.
- 2) Sanford Schram argues that how we study issues significantly affects what ultimately gets done about them. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this claim? While critically evaluating his argument, provide evidence from policy examples different from the one that Schram focuses on, namely, welfare policy.

FINANCIAL AND CREDIT POLICY

Answer ONE of the following two questions.

- 1) What are the key ***indicators*** of a government's "financial policies"? How have financial policies of the US (or other countries) varied over time? What do the major scholars of this literature suggest are the three major influences (independent variables) on why countries change their financial policies (or why they vary across countries)? Briefly discuss empirical evidence from the US over time (or if you prefer, comparing across countries) that bears on the validity of such claims.
- 2) Scholars of mortgage securitization agree and disagree over the timing of its origins, its causes, its role in the financial crisis of 2007, and whether it is sustainable after the crisis. Explain those agreements and disagreements? Which analyses and evidence do you find convincing and why?

TO: Tish Ramey
FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Spring 2018

Students taking a minor in Public Policy must answer two (2) questions: one from the Core section and one from the theoretical/substantive section.

Core: Answer ONE of the following:

1. Much of public policy theory attempts to explain "the policy process." Identify three claims in the literature about the policy process that you believe are well-supported by the evidence. Now, assess how well these claims do at explaining / fitting the first 15 months of policy-making under President Donald Trump. In short, does Trump's presidency require any change to our understanding of how policy is made in the United States.
2. Analysis of public policy is a prominent feature of many crucial studies of political power in our discipline, from Dahl and Bachrach & Baratz to Lukes and Gaventa. How well do their arguments and findings about power travel across substantive policy realms? Moreover, how well do their claims hold up when applied to actual policy processes and outcomes? Select one policy arena you know well (excluding the policy arena featured in your substantive question) and assess the relative strength of their conceptions and theories of political power.
3. The study of public policy is naturally multidisciplinary, with contributions from such disparate disciplines as political science, public administration, law, sociology, communication, and economics. What is it (if anything) that separates political science in terms of its contribution to our understanding of public policy, broadly speaking? Select three specific research areas in public policy and lay out the unique contributions (if any) of political science to knowledge in these areas. In the end, what does the discipline of political science contribute to the study of public policy?

Substantive Questions: Please answer ONE question from your substantive subfield. Students testing in public law must answer the public law question in order to graduate with the public law designation.

Immigration:

1. Despite some caricatures of the American past, the United States has never had an "open door" era for immigration. Indeed, federal, state, and local officials have targeted and regulated "undesirable" immigrants in distinctive ways historically. How and why have these practices of culling out "undesirable" immigrants changed over time?
2. Immigration control is a classic example of what scholars call an "intermestic" or "hinge" issue that cuts across domestic and international policy. Does this matter? If so, how? In your answer, be sure to provide specific substantive examples to bolster your answer.

Housing:

1. Much of the public policy literature focuses on what many refer to as "wicked problems"—conflicts over essential and scarce resources or widespread societal afflictions that are enduring, multidimensional, and often contentious. In many ways housing presents the ultimate "wicked problem"—especially when it comes to issues of affordability and access. If you were to develop a public policy course on housing affordability and access, which public policy scholars, theories, concepts, approaches would you include? In what ways does this scholarship capture the "wickedness" of housing conflicts and the availability of promising practices? In what ways does this literature fail to capture particular aspects of political or policy struggles over housing?
2. Recent trends in the policy literature highlight an increasing interest in the role of private actors in

making public policy. Where early policy scholars focused on the decision-making authority of formal policy agents and institutions (or the role of private actors in influencing the decisions of public officials)—recent scholarship has focused on the capacity for private actors to respond to policy conflicts while remaining largely outside of traditional domains of policy reform. Using housing as a case study, describe the ways in which *private* actors create distinct opportunities for policy reform or programmatic innovation in policy arenas traditionally perceived as *public*—all the while existing and operating largely outside of public structures of governance. As a public policy scholar how would you use existing policy concepts or theories to account for 1) the shortfalls or failures in public governance driving the actions of these private actors; 2) the approaches used by private actors to fill policy gaps, shortfalls or missteps; 3) the conditions under which private actors may be limited in affecting widespread change and 4) the ways in which private actors may be perfectly or uniquely positioned to impose pressures on public policy institutions.

Public Law:

1. In Michael McCann's incisive critique of Gerald Rosenberg's *Hollow Hope*, McCann explores the difference between court-centered and dispute-centered approaches to the study of legal advocacy and legal action. Provide multiple examples of each from the public law scholarship to articulate the difference between these two scholarly approaches. What are the characteristic differences between these two scholarly orientations? What are the benefits and costs of these approaches? In what ways is the utility of each approach contingent upon the kinds of puzzles that scholars are attempting to resolve?
2. Public policy scholars have largely ignored the role of legal actors and institutions in initiating, creating and reforming public policy. Public law scholars have responded by developing theories, concepts and approaches that highlight how legal agents and institutions influence the scope and breadth of a range of public policy debates. Using both the policy and public law literature to provide examples and support 1) identify the ways in which the exclusion of legal actors and institutions from the public policy canon limits our understanding of public policy development and implementation and 2) describe the important theories, concepts and approaches provided by public law scholars to address this void and to articulate how legal actors and institutions make and shape public policy.

TO: Tish Ramey
FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Spring 2017

CORE – Answer one

1-One of the first and most elemental lessons that students of public policy learn is that the policy process can be broken down into distinctive steps or stages. Yet policy scholars disagree about the analytical leverage that can be gained by doing so. Some, like John Kingdon and Aaron Wildavsky, have focused on critical features of a particular stage, such as agenda-setting or implementation, highlighting their particular impact on policy and political outcomes. Others, like Deborah Stone, have argued that deconstructing the policy process into discrete stages yields inherently flawed analysis. Critically evaluate the merits and limitations of conceptualizing and investigating the policy process and its outcomes in terms of distinct stages. Use specific policy examples to vindicate your argument.

2-For many decades, there have been debates regarding the extent to which rationality can and/or should be brought into government decision making. Construct an essay in which you lay out the major schools of thought regarding rationality in public policy. What are the similarities and differences in these schools of thought, both in terms of their orientations toward rationality and their conclusions regarding the relevance of rationality in public policy decision-making? In the end, how promising are these respective accounts of rationality in providing a basis for improving the policymaking process and policy performance?

Monetary and Financial Policy – Answer one

1) How do ideas shape monetary and banking policy? What's the relative role of ideology, theory, measurement, and historical or cross case analogy in the making of monetary and banking policy? Do different sorts of reasoning prevail in eras of stability and crisis? And what, if anything, do we know about the effects of different sorts of reasoning on policy performance? Do some ways of thinking fare better than others?

2) How should we make sense of the neoliberal and deregulatory turn in monetary and banking policy since the 1970s? What explains its origins, development and ongoing practice? Has it been primarily an economic or political phenomenon or some combination of the two?

Public Law – Answer one

1. In many ways, the marriage of public law and public policy is of recent vintage. Public law scholars have only recently highlighted courts as policymakers, and

public policy scholars have, in turn, ignored the distinct contributions and characteristics of court-made policy. As a scholar interested in the intersections of public law and public policy, describe how the public policy literature fails to account for courts in their accounts. What are the costs of neglecting court-produced policy? How would public policy accounts or arguments change or improve if courts were added to the mix? In what ways has public law scholarship attempted to fill this gap? How have they succeeded and/or failed? In what ways would you attempt to merge these two scholarly arenas?

2. Unlike other public policy institutions, the role of the courts in public policy has been relatively unregulated. Despite rhetoric suggesting otherwise, there is little constitutional language at either the federal or state level explicitly guiding how courts should operate in their role as policy agents. To a large degree their power is largely created rather than endowed. In many ways courts have emerged as significant venues for policy reform because of the structural shortcomings of other policy venues. Describe how courts have evolved as policymakers. What are the unique characteristics of courts as policymakers? What roles do they play in policy reform efforts? What are the costs and benefits of using courts to produce policy reforms? Please discuss these issues in the context of at least two different substantive policy arenas. In what way does policy context influence the reach or power of the courts?

TO: Tish Ramey
FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Spring 2016

Core questions – Answer one

- We often think of democracy as an approach to governance that attempts to have policy reflect “the will of the people.” What are the major obstacles to putting this vision into practice? Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of at least three models that are in use or have been put forth to overcome these obstacles.
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of theories of policy implementation that follow a top-down or bottom-up approach?

Water Policy – Answer one

- “Water policy” involves efforts as diverse as flood control; availability for industry, agriculture, and residential use; pollution; sanitation; recreation; transportation; and habitat. Is there any systematic policy framework or policy advice that you could provide to help policy-makers see common themes across these nominally-diverse problems? Is there a set of guidelines or rules of thumb that a policy-maker could use to devise policies that “fit” the quite different types of problems that water policy must address?
- A variety of policy approaches have been used to deal with problems of water quality and quantity, including government regulation, market mechanisms, and local collaborative governance. What are the main differences between these policy approaches? What are the pros and cons of each? Which approach shows the most promise in adequately managing water and water-related natural resources, and why?

Public Policy Minor Field Exam
Fall Term 2015

I. Public Policy “Core” Questions

Please answer ONE of the following questions:

1. In the past twenty years, students of public policy have turned increasingly to the health of democracy. Following the work of Ingram and Schneider, social constructionists have taught us how widespread negative constructions of target populations undermine democracy by fostering "degenerative politics." Others have turned their attention to normative work, theorizing models of democratic policy making, like "empowered participatory governance," "collaborative governance," and "discursive democracy." Still others, have studied whether these – and other – models of democratic reform have been effective in practice. Evaluate this literature by addressing two questions. First, in theory can these (or other) models of democratic policy practice ameliorate degenerative politics? Second, have they done so in practice? (Note that you need not address all 3 of these theories/models and you may choose other appropriate ones. Be sure, however, to match theory and empirical examples appropriately.)
2. To what extent can we explain the adoption of a given policy as the result of policy innovation or from policy diffusion? To the extent that innovation or diffusion are the "causes" of a given policy's adoption, what role do other "standard" determinants play in explaining the adoption of a given policy? Use your essay to lay out the analytic framework you would recommend for thinking about these issues.
3. What specific challenges arise in collaborative processes where significant power asymmetries exist among the different types of non-state actors involved, notably industry? Are these being addressed satisfactorily in theory and practice (within the collaboration literature and elsewhere)? How does the structure and functioning of the state contribute to the challenges you have identified?

II. Public Policy “Theme” Questions – Criminal Justice

Please answer ONE of the following questions:

1. The notion of “the carceral state” has emerged as an important concept for scholars and activists in the U.S., capturing an elaborate system of punishment and surveillance that reaches well beyond prison yards. Embedded within a larger American polity, numerous observers argue that the carceral state has transformed how significant public institutions and processes function, from elections to education to social policies. Is the concept of the carceral state useful for understanding the impact of the criminal justice system on American political life today? How has it transformed public policy beyond prisons, and what are its implications for democratic membership in the U.S.?

2. A wide range of scholars has begun to look at the criminal justice system as a platform to study how race and gender complicate how individuals experience and benefit from public policy initiatives. Both as consumers and objects of criminal law, we know that racial and gender minorities are subjected to different rules and protections from individuals and institutions charged with protecting the public. Few scholars, however, consider how sexuality intersects with criminal justice policy goals. Is sexuality different from gender and race? If so, in what way? What do we learn from examining criminal justice through the lens of sexuality? Please be sure to address both the protective and punitive aspects of the criminal justice system.

TO: Tish Ramey
FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Spring 2015

Core

- Some issues seem to have a permanent place on the public agenda, whereas others never break through or, once on the agenda, they fall off. What are the main factors that account for longevity on the agenda? Is the absence of these factors the reason why some issues fall off the agenda, or are there other factors that account for a loss of agenda status?
- The “path dependency” literature suggests that policy feedback is an important concept that creates possibilities and limitations for political and institutional reform. Discuss path dependency and explain how and why the development of policies may in turn create a series of political opportunities and constraints. Use a substantive example you are familiar with to illustrate your argument. Given your analysis of path dependency in this case, explain how this literature could guide policymakers to craft policy reforms that are likely to be politically feasible.

Criminal Justice, Incarceration, and Sexuality

- Since the 1960s Warren Court and Attica-led prison reforms, much of the scholarship on American incarceration has centered on questions of civil rights. Literature has questioned the degree to which prisons have reified the race, class, and gender divisions that have led to massive inequalities in society. To what degree does the story about sexual orientation discrimination echo the findings of this research? To what degree does it raise different concerns that have yet to be addressed?
- How useful is Ingram and Schneider’s framework for analyzing the social construction of target populations for making sense of class, racial, sexuality and gender stratification in the US criminal justice system? Is it general enough and analytically incisive enough to provide an umbrella under which a variety of different studies and approaches can co-exist? Or are there other theories and methods available in the literature that are superior?

TO: Tish Ramey
FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Winter 2015

Core: Answer 1 Question

- Democratic experimentalism, empowered participatory governance, collaborative governance, directly deliberative polyarchy, Grass Roots Ecosystem Management (GREM), and experimentalist governance are no more than old wine in new bottles. Like “interest group liberalism” of an earlier era, they suffer from an inability to plan or achieve justice. Do you agree? Why or why not? Draw upon *at least* one policy area to make your case.
- Some leading theories of policymaking, notably the garbage can model, the policy streams model, and the advocacy coalition framework, have been criticized for explaining too much, and therefore not explaining anything. Put differently, some critics claim that the implications of such policymaking theories are not testable. Construct an essay in which you summarize and critically evaluate these theories. To what extent do you think that critics are accurate in their assessments?
- Many public policy scholars focus their research on trying to advance alternative descriptions of the policy-making process that counter prevailing top-down centralized conceptions of policy development. Describe two such alternative frames and the specific scholarship that elaborates these new models. Using one policy arena to illustrate these two models explain how they differ from the “common wisdom” on traditional or hierarchical governance. What do these alternative models bring to the table? What is left unanswered? Why?

Media/Foreign Policy: Answer 1 Question

- Journalists, and political pundits have argued that bureaucrats wield too much authority in the making of public policy. Construct an essay in which you first outline and then critically evaluate this argument, being sure to address the following questions from the perspective of policy-oriented research in political science. What are the origins of bureaucratic discretion? Under what conditions do bureaucrats enjoy substantial autonomy in policymaking? Who are the outside actors that typically do and do not participate in bureaucratic policymaking? How successful are these various actors in influencing bureaucratic decision-making? What are the instruments that officials in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches utilize to influence the structure and process of bureaucratic decision making? How effective are these instruments in managing authority delegated to the bureaucracy?
- In many ways the media complicates explanations about policy development. They are not thought of as policy actors and yet they are, undoubtedly, influential. How have policy scholars addressed the role of the media in the policy process? Do these explanations accurately reflect the significance of the media as policy players? Using one policy arena, and responding to the public policy literature more broadly, explain how you would articulate the role of the media in the policy process.

TO: Tish Ramey
FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Spring 2014

Core questions

- Some students of public policy reverse the traditional causal arrow in policy studies, asking how policy makes politics, instead of how politics affects policy. Among the many issues they address, is how policy shapes power, identities, interests, political capacity, and citizenship. What is the payoff of this scholarship? Has it generated testable hypotheses, valid generalizations or novel empirical interpretations? Or can we conclude nothing more than policy effects politics? Use examples from specific policy areas to illustrate your argument.
- What is a democratic policy experiment? What makes it different from a classical policy experiment (as in Campbell's "reforms as experiments") and from mere deliberative, discursive or participatory democracy?

European Immigration

- European countries vary considerably in the policies they have with respect to immigrants and rules regarding citizenship. Describe 2 or 3 key ways in which European immigration policies vary and then identify the major factors that scholars use to explain this variation.
- In his classic application of James Q. Wilson's model of policy costs and benefits, Gary Freeman claimed that many advanced industrial democracies receive large numbers of immigrants despite popular preferences for restrictions. First, evaluate the central features of his own model of immigration politics and policymaking, and competing views in the relevant literature. Second, analyze how effectively his theoretical claims explain immigration policy choices and outcomes in a sample of European countries.

Immigration Policy

- Comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) in the United States is driven by varied agendas regarding legalization, recruitment of high-skilled workers, family reunification, border control, internal enforcement, temporary farm labor, and other concerns. How, if at all, is the struggle over CIR influenced by how immigrant identities are socially and political constructed on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, and/or legal status?
- To what extent are immigration politics and policies in America shaped by distinctive U.S. political structures and processes? In answering this question, be sure to analyze at least two structures or processes (such as federalism, congressional rules, divided government, the role of the courts, and so forth) and to explain their impact on the policymaking process.

National Environmental Policy

- Identify 3 or 4 key variables that scholars use to explain variation in national environmental policy. Illustrate the explanatory power of these variables either by explaining variation in the strength of environmental policy across several countries OR by explaining variation in the strength of environmental policy across environmental issues within a single country.
- Since the 1970s, domestic environmental policy in advanced industrial democracies has been the subject of a wide variety of policy innovations, from market-based initiatives and habitat conservation plans to information sharing and soft law. Given what we know about the record of these many innovations, were the critics of command-and-control correct? Or is there still a place for command-and-control in domestic environmental regulation?

FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Winter 2014

Core: Answer one question

- Much of the public policy literature is devoted to responding to rational-choice models of the policy process that describe policy-making process as centralized and fully-informed. You have been invited to lecture a group of graduate students about these alternatives. Please provide an overview of three different alternatives to the rational choice model. What are the benefits of each approach? What are the weaknesses?
- The fundamental challenge for public policy these days is accountability. In a world of devolution, private contracting and globalization, it is difficult to figure out whom to hold accountable and to what standards. Why has the problem of accountability become so acute, not just in the US, but also internationally and in other countries? Are there any convincing solutions?

Theme on Post-Ethnic Conflict Reconciliation: Answer one question

- Identify three major sources of ethnic conflict. Then *comparatively* assess two different strategies for post-ethnic reconciliation in terms of both a) the means by which those strategies address these underlying sources of conflict and b) the extent to which one or the other is more successful in addressing these sources and in remedying them for the future. If time allows after fully answering this question, identify other criteria (other than "effectiveness") that would be relevant to determining which strategy to adopt in a given post-conflict situation.
- Has the scholarly literature on post-ethnic conflict reconciliation evolved to the point where we can generalize about the dynamics of "success" or "failure" in the reconciliation process? Or are the best insights about post-ethnic conflict reconciliation drawn from very case-specific research, or by work targeting a particular region? First, clarify definitions of "success" and "failure" in this literature. Second, select three relevant examples of reconciliation from different global regions and discuss how well scholarly analyses and prescriptions regarding the reconciliation process travel across the cases.

Policy Comp, Fall 2013

Core Choose one.

1- In *From Soldiers to Citizens*, Suzanne Mettler argues that the framing and implementation of public policy routinely conveys important messages to its targets. In particular, Mettler finds that the G.I. Bill conveyed to its recipients that government “was for and about people like them.” These messages, in turn, helped to shape levels of civic engagement or political participation among these recipients. How does this study relate to the debate among scholars over public policy and social constructions? And how does it connect to the broader policy feedbacks literature?

2- In many areas of human endeavor, we aspire to do better in the future than we have in the past, we establish procedures to evaluate our progress, and we revise our behavior in response to those evaluations so that we do improve. In what ways does policy-making fit this model? In what ways does it diverge from this model? Discuss whether a “rational” model of policy-making (a la Stokey and Zeckhauser) does better or worse according to this criterion of “progress” than a “discursive” model of policy-making (a la Dryzek or Stone).

European Welfare States Choose one.

1- Advocates of democratic experimentalism (DE) think this model of governance holds out great promise for policy innovation, learning and performance upgrading among the member nations of the EU. What is the logic underlying their hopes? Why do they think DE is superior to the available alternatives? What is the evidence on which they base their hopes? Are they convincing? Why or why not?

2- National stereotypes of European welfare states once provided a great deal of purchase on explaining comparative differences in public policy. Can they survive (explain) retrenchment, qualitative innovations in policy, and extension to cases beyond their initial sample?

3- The EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) involves a system of agricultural subsidies that accounts for some 35-45% of the total EU budget. Is it appropriate to think of this as a welfare policy? If not, why not? If so, how well does it compare to other EU welfare policies? Clarify appropriate criteria for such a comparison and, separately, how the CAP compares to at least one other EU welfare policy.

FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Spring 2013

Theme: Core (Answer 1 question)

- Many scholars have argued that “participatory democracy” offers an improvement on traditional forms of democratic government. Identify and describe at least three criteria relative to which scholars claim that participatory democracy performs better than traditional forms of democracy. In addition, provide empirical evidence of whether participatory democracy, *in practice*, performs better with respect to those criteria.
- Choose a policy issue and examine it in light of the policy cycle. Be sure to discuss the relevance of each of the following in your answer: agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, policy evaluation, and policy change. Also, discuss the most important considerations at each step.
- The “path dependency” literature suggests that policy feedback is an important concept that creates possibilities and limitations for political and institutional reform. Discuss path dependency and explain how and why the development of policies may in turn create a series of political opportunities and constraints. Use a substantive example you are familiar with to illustrate your argument. Given your analysis of path dependency in this case, explain how this literature could guide policymakers to craft policy reforms that are likely to be politically feasible.

Theme: Supreme Court (Answer 1 question)

- The public policy literature has a tendency to ignore the role of courts as policy actors. Theories that seek to explain how policies are developed or implemented or how the characteristics of policy venues influence either policy support or outcomes tend to disregard the unique qualities of judicial actors. In what ways can these theories adequately address judicial policymaking? How are they lacking? If you were to add courts or legal actors into the policy literature how would these theories change? Please use three theories from the policy literature to explore these questions. Please cite examples from at least two substantive policy arenas.
- Does the Supreme Court generally lead public opinion or follow it? Or does it lead public opinion in some issue areas or during some periods and follow it in others? Regardless of your answer, explain why you believe the Supreme Court tends to lead or follow public opinion when it does.

FR: Public Policy Comprehensive Exam Evaluating Committee
RE: Questions for minor comprehensive exam in Public Policy
DT: Spring 2013

Theme: Core (Answer 1 question)

- Many scholars have argued that “participatory democracy” offers an improvement on traditional forms of democratic government. Identify and describe at least three criteria relative to which scholars claim that participatory democracy performs better than traditional forms of democracy. In addition, provide empirical evidence of whether participatory democracy, in practice, performs better with respect to those criteria.
- Choose a policy issue and examine it in light of the policy cycle. Be sure to discuss the relevance of each of the following in your answer: agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, policy evaluation, and policy change. Also, discuss the most important considerations at each step.
- The “path dependency” literature suggests that policy feedback is an important concept that creates possibilities and limitations for political and institutional reform. Discuss path dependency and explain how and why the development of policies may in turn create a series of political opportunities and constraints. Use a substantive example you are familiar with to illustrate your argument. Given your analysis of path dependency in this case, explain how this literature could guide policymakers to craft policy reforms that are likely to be politically feasible.

Theme: American environmental policy (Answer 1 question)

- In what ways do the dynamics of American environmental policy look similar to the dynamics of other realms of American policy (e.g., health care, immigration, education, and the like). In what ways does it look different? Explain what factors make it operate similarly or differently from other issue areas.
- In recent decades, the perceived limitations of the Command and Control approach to environmental regulation in the U.S. have led some to advocate markets as a better basis for environmental regulation. Yet, this approach has been fiercely resisted by some. Discuss the pros and cons of designing environmental regulations around market forces. Explain why this issue is so contentious and why you believe markets either ill- or well-suited to addressing environmental problems.

Public Policy Minor Comprehensive Exam
Winter 2013

Answer 1 question from the “Core” section and 1 question from the “Financial regulation” section.

Theme: Core

- Much of the literature about the policymaking process explains why policies are not rational. Outline and briefly explain the steps in the rational decision-making model. Then select three or more reasons why policy decision-making sometimes deviates from that model. Using the explanations you selected, discuss how and why the literature on the policymaking process is inconsistent with the rational decision-making model. Please be specific about how your examples constitute specific deviations from the expectations or assumptions of the rational model.
- Two factors that seem to influence a particular group’s ability to get what it wants from public policy, according to various scholars, are: 1) the perception that the group is deserving or undeserving; and 2) the political organization and power of the group. Select two specific groups and critically analyze the significance of each factor in shaping their relative success in obtaining key policy goals. What does your analysis suggest in terms of how social constructions, organization, and power resources influence policy outcomes and the political fortunes of different groups.

Theme: Financial regulation

- According to many scholars, weak regulation is the proximate cause of financial crises. Delineate both the analytical and empirical strengths AND weaknesses of these arguments. Are there other explanations of financial crises that are more convincing?
- Scholars agree that finance has become an ever larger part of the US economy since the 1980s. But they disagree over the causes of “financialization.” Among the most prominent contending explanations are those that stress politics, economic transactions, or the role of economists. Citing appropriate literature, explain these three explanations of financialization. In your view, does one of these explanations better explain the cumulative evidence presented in all of these works? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

Public Policy Minor comprehensive exam
Fall 2012

Answer 1 question from the “Core” section and 1 question from the “Financial regulation” section.

Theme: Core

- At the outset of their classic study of implementation, Pressman and Wildavsky observe that “policies normally contain both goals and the means for achieving them.” They later note that an authoritatively adopted policy is “only a collection of words prior to implementation,” and they underscore the argument that a policy is at most “a point of departure for bargaining among implementers.” Critically evaluate the significance of implementation to policymaking as developed theoretically and empirically in the subsequent scholarly literature. Then test or apply these propositions to two policy areas with which you are familiar.
- Much of the public policy/administration literature focuses on describing alternate models of policy-making to replace more centralized and hierarchical policy-making narratives. Citing the appropriate literature, use two policy areas to describe three such alternatives. In what ways do these alternatives “solve the problem” of centralized policymaking? In what ways do these alternatives introduce new costs? Do you believe these alternatives offer an accurate view of the policy process? Why/why not?

Theme: Financial regulation

- Explanations of financial regulation (either comparative variation or historical change in one nation) mirror the larger debates in political science. They divide on explanations that stress institutions, ideas and interests. Review the literature, according to these three distinctions, and assess the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective. Is one consistently superior to others? If not, for what purposes is each explanatory focus most analytically useful.
- Financial markets are not forged in the state of nature by economic considerations alone. They are embedded in social, ideological, conceptual and political contexts. Explain these “embeddedness” arguments about finance. How do they help us explain finance? Are they useful normatively – that is, for diagnosing problems and proposing reforms?

Core Section

Please answer ONE of the following two questions.

1. Many scholars have argued that “participatory democracy” can improve democratic governance. Identify two criteria with respect to which participatory democracy is alleged to perform better. Describe empirical evidence from at least three studies that provide empirical evidence that participatory democracy actually does perform better with respect to those criteria. Lastly, identify at least one criteria of “good governance” that participatory democracy tends to inhibit or make worse.
2. Contemporary pragmatists (like Ansell, Sabel, and Fung) agree with social constructionists (like Stone, Ingram and Schneider, and Schram) that all forms of policy rationality are inescapably political. Rational models of policy-making do not merely represent the world, they socially construct it; and in doing so they conceal power and bias. Nonetheless, pragmatists also think it is possible to harness politics to ameliorate pressing policy problems and improve democracy. How? Given the constructivist criticisms of rational policy analysis, do you find pragmatist proposals convincing? Why or why not?

Specialization Section

Please answer ONE of the following two questions.

1. Rehnquist Court scholars often regard the Court's caselaw on federalism and states' rights as its most profound contribution to American jurisprudence. Scholars of tribal sovereignty, however, argue that the Rehnquist Court has played an equally significant--and for some a deleterious--role in altering what had been 150 years of stable jurisprudence granting deference to tribal sovereignty. Explain how the Rehnquist Court altered this trajectory. What were the salient cases? What is the Court's reasoning? How can we contextualize these cases within the Court's overall jurisprudence? Where has this left issues of tribal sovereignty?
2. Does the study of Indian rights, identity and sovereignty offer students of public policy fresh ways of understanding how ethnicity, culture and philosophies of governance can shape policy formation? Although Indian tribes and nations reside within the geographic boundaries of the US--and are influenced to some degree by US political and social forces--a tradition of sovereignty from local and national legislative and legal frameworks has allowed tribal policy to follow a different procedural and substantive path. To what degree does the literature on policymaking capture modes of policy development within the tribal context? How can we describe policymaking within this context? If tribal leaders and U.S. policy elites hold different philosophies about policymaking processes, to what degree do these differences create tensions when they are required to partner or face-off on matters of public policy? In short, what does the study of tribal policymaking tell us about the policy process in America?

Answer one question from each section below.

Theme: Core

- For some time, political scientists and other scholars have studied the influence of politically active social groups on the U.S. policy-making process and on policy outcomes. Yet how do public policies affect the identities and relative power of social groups and populations that they target? As you address this question, please discuss the impact of policy on target groups or populations in two distinct policy areas.
- Experimentation is a central theme in the normative policy literature. In 1969, Donald Campbell wrote that by designing reforms as quasi experiments, it would be possible to subject the policy process to the discipline of the scientific method, and thereby reduce self-interested pronouncements and advance valid inferences about the success and failure of policies. These claims, critics argue, are overblown. They fail to see the inherently political nature of all policy analysis. Explain and take a position on this debate.
- Public policy is considered a distinct subfield by some political scientists but not by others. Identify at least two strong arguments for treating public policy as a distinct subfield. Identify at least two strong arguments for treating public policy concerns as part of other subfields, including US politics, comparative politics, international relations, and theory.
- In *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Kingdon interviews a range of executive branch and legislative staff as well as extra-governmental actors to identify how ideas are transformed into actual policies (and why many ideas never land on the government's agenda). However, there is one key policy-making institution missing from his analysis: the courts. In what ways, if any, would the inclusion of the courts alter his findings? Should the courts be included in studies of policymaking and agenda-setting, or was Kingdon right to leave them out?

Theme question: immigration policy

- The feminization of international migration is a demographic fact. The percentage of women who are either permanent immigrants or temporary migrants has grown steadily over the past half-century and women now comprise the majority of international migrants. First, critically evaluate the scholarly literature that has emerged on gender aspects of international migration during the past two decades – both in terms of its theoretical and empirical dimensions. Second, focusing on what you consider to be the most glaring limitations of this literature, briefly explain how you would construct a study to redress key theoretical and/or empirical gaps.
- Comprehensive, national immigration reform has been stuck in neutral for more than a decade. Why has it proven so elusive? What does this epic policy struggle reveal about American political life?

Answer one question from each section below.

Theme: Core

- For some time, political scientists and other scholars have studied the influence of politically active social groups on the U.S. policy-making process and on policy outcomes. Yet how do public policies affect the identities and relative power of social groups and populations that they target? As you address this question, please discuss the impact of policy on target groups or populations in two distinct policy areas.
- Experimentation is a central theme in the normative policy literature. In 1969, Donald Campbell wrote that by designing reforms as quasi experiments, it would be possible to subject the policy process to the discipline of the scientific method, and thereby reduce self-interested pronouncements and advance valid inferences about the success and failure of policies. These claims, critics argue, are overblown. They fail to see the inherently political nature of all policy analysis. Explain and take a position on this debate.
- Public policy is considered a distinct subfield by some political scientists but not by others. Identify at least two strong arguments for treating public policy as a distinct subfield. Identify at least two strong arguments for treating public policy concerns as part of other subfields, including US politics, comparative politics, international relations, and theory.
- In *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Kingdon interviews a range of executive branch and legislative staff as well as extra-governmental actors to identify how ideas are transformed into actual policies (and why many ideas never land on the government's agenda). However, there is one key policy-making institution missing from his analysis: the courts. In what ways, if any, would the inclusion of the courts alter his findings? Should the courts be included in studies of policymaking and agenda-setting, or was Kingdon right to leave them out?

Theme question: regulatory policy

- Many critics of command and control regulation argue that it is outmoded. It is better replaced by market-driven forms or regulation by “soft law,” or “experimentalism.” What’s the nature of the critique? Do you find it convincing? And do you find any (or perhaps all) of these alternatives convincing?
- Rational Choice theories purport to be able to explain business regulation – when it occurs, why it occurs, and what form it takes? Can they? If no, why not? If yes, please be sure to address the critiques.
- You have just been hired as an assistant professor and have been asked to teach your first course on “Public Policy and Regulation.” The chair of the department has asked that your course have a) theoretical component regarding the big “themes” of the policy process related to regulation and b) a more applied component that identified the major regulatory options or strategies that students might use in the jobs they expect to take in the public sector after graduation. Identify both the big theoretical themes and the major regulatory options.

Public Policy Major Comprehensive Exam
Winter 2011

Part I. Choose one

1. In most studies of the politics of public policy, variation in policy outputs (or outcomes) is the dependent variable. In another tradition, the causal arrow is reversed: policy determines politics. What is the nature of the claims in the latter tradition? How has this perspective developed and changed over time? And what is its scholarly payoff? Has it generated testable hypotheses, valid generalizations or novel interpretations of public policy? Be sure to draw from applications to particular policy areas to make your case.

2. Nearly two decades ago, Kent Weaver and Bert Rockman led a variety of scholars in exploring whether and how political institutions influence public policy. In particular, they raised two fundamental questions:

What are the effects of differences in institutional arrangements for governmental effectiveness, if any? WHICH institutions matter and how do they affect governmental performance?

Focusing on governmental performance and domestic policymaking during the past two decades, how would you respond to these questions today?

Part II. Choose one

1. Experimentation and democracy have an affinity. In the ideal both separate the rights of personhood from the right to be wrong. The idea that you can experiment without fear of losing your livelihood or freedom to experiment again is at the core not only of the hopes of (social) science but also of those, like John Dewey, who have hoped make modern democracies more participatory. What is the nature of these arguments? Are they realistic? Are they convincing? Are they supported by empirical research?

2. In response to growing concerns about the elitism of centralized hierarchical governance and the inefficiencies of deliberative democracy, practitioners at all levels of government and within the private and public sectors are increasingly relying on collaborative governance to solve policy problems. Drawing on the literature and at least one policy area discuss the following: what problems does collaborative governance claim to solve? In what ways does collaborative governance resolve these issues, fall short of its goals, or introduce new inefficiencies or shortcomings into the policy process? Are the benefits of this policy process, as some would suggest, contingent, or does this mode of policymaking offer more promise than either deliberation or centralized decision-making across the board?

Part III. Answer the following question

As a response to the democratic deficit of the interest group liberalism policy-making of the early to mid 20th century, the enactment of the large "green state" legislation in the 1970s (like the Clean Air Act) intended to open the policy process to citizens and public interest groups through legal challenges in the courts. Some argue that this trend of adversarial legalism has produced worse results for environmental protection, more contentious politics and policy gridlock. In response, a new form of collaborative policy-making has been touted as the solution. However, this method too has attracted critique. Some critics argue that collaborative policy-making is a return to "policy with law," as Lowi described the iron-triangle interest group liberalism of mid-century policy-making. Discuss the implications of these developments for democracy and environmental protection in environmental policy-making (i.e. how do we make policy to best achieve both democracy and environmental protection?).

Public Policy

Minor Comprehensive Exam

Fall 2010

Answer one question from each section below.

Theme: Core

- Some political scientists in traditional subfields might be tempted to generally describe the public policy literature as “data rich, theory poor.” Critically evaluate this conclusion, reflecting carefully on what you consider to be the most significant theoretical contributions (if any) and frailties (if any) of the policy literature. Be sure to develop a clear argument about the theoretical state of the policy field.
- The deliberative (discursive or argumentative) turn in policy studies is nearly two decades old. Assess its accomplishments in light of its initial critique of the field and its promise to strike out in a new direction. Has it spawned a coherent research program? What should its place be within the field of public policy studies?
- Many scholars have argued that “participatory democracy” offers an improvement on existing forms of democratic government. Describe at least three criteria with respect to which participatory democracy is alleged to perform better. In addition, provide empirical evidence of whether participatory democracy actually does perform better with respect to those criteria.

Theme: Domestic politics and security policy

- The study of American military and foreign policy owes a great deal to Charles Tilly’s famous quip that “states make war and war makes states.” Is this a valid generalization? Or does the historical experience of American military and foreign policy necessitate its revision? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Defying traditional divides in the study of foreign and domestic policy, a growing scholarly literature examines the influence of warfare on U.S. domestic politics and policy. (1) Sort out the major findings and claims of these studies, and pinpoint the most important disagreements and/or limitations across this literature. (2) Develop a hypothetical research design on this subject that would allow you to test rival arguments and findings and/or redress limitations in earlier work.
- Compare and contrast American responses to the security threat posed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War and that posed by terrorists like Al Qaeda currently. Do domestic political variables do better than nature-of-the-threat variables in explaining these differences in American responses?

Public Policy

Minor Comprehensive Exam

Fall 2010

Answer one question from each section below.

Theme: Core

- Some political scientists in traditional subfields might be tempted to generally describe the public policy literature as “data rich, theory poor.” Critically evaluate this conclusion, reflecting carefully on what you consider to be the most significant theoretical contributions (if any) and frailties (if any) of the policy literature. Be sure to develop a clear argument about the theoretical state of the policy field.
- Many scholars have argued that “participatory democracy” offers an improvement on existing forms of democratic government. Describe at least three criteria with respect to which participatory democracy is alleged to perform better. In addition, provide empirical evidence of whether participatory democracy actually does perform better with respect to those criteria.
- The deliberative (discursive or argumentative) turn in policy studies is nearly two decades old. Assess its accomplishments in light of its initial critique of the field and its promise to strike out in a new direction. Has it spawned a coherent research program? What should its place be within the field of public policy studies?

Theme: Art and cultural policy

- Most artists, if not others, consider art to be severely underfunded. What political changes would need to occur for funding of the arts to increase in both magnitude and stability?
- There is no shortage of academics and other observers writing about official efforts to govern the arts and culture, yet it is a topic that has received relatively scant attention from public policy scholars in the social sciences. (1) Make a case for why social scientists should pay as much attention to the arts and cultural policy as they do to more familiar concerns such as social policy or environmental policy, assessing the state of current research and explaining this subject’s most promising theoretical and empirical angles. (2) Develop a hypothetical research design on the arts and cultural policy that allows you to put those promising avenues to the test (be sure to demonstrate how you have constructed your research so that you might be surprised by the results).

Public Policy Comprehensive Exam, Fall 2009

Please answer two of the following four questions:

1. In most public policy schools, political scientists represent a decided minority of the faculty. Suppose that you have joined the faculty at one of these schools, and that you have been asked to defend whether political science has done much to enhance our understanding of the policy-making process or its outcomes. In particular, write an essay that explains to scholars in other disciplines what, in your view, are the three most important theoretical and/or empirical contributions that political science has made to the study of public policy and why.
2. Positivist policy analysis promises to help overcome political conflict and social chaos. Stokey and Zeckhauser quote economist Milton Friedman that “differences about policy among disinterested citizens derive predominantly from different predictions about the consequences of taking action—differences that in principle can be eliminated by the progress of positive social science—rather than from fundamental differences in basic values, difference about which men can ultimately only fight.” Explain and evaluate this claim. If you agree, how would you respond to critics like Stone or Lindblom? If you disagree, what do you think the role of policy analysis can and should be in mitigating conflict and chaos in liberal democracies?
3. President Obama came into office with an ambitious agenda for policy change. Select one substantive policy area and analyze the prospects for non-incremental innovation drawing on your knowledge of this area and the policy literature. Be sure to highlight the variables or dynamics that you find to be the most important in assessing these future prospects, and to explain why you privilege some over others.
4. Students of public policy conceptualize the relationship between means and ends in a variety of different ways. For some, the means/ends distinction is very problematic in practice, perhaps even impossible to keep clear. For others, however, even though there might be difficulties, abandoning the effort to maintain the means/ends distinction means we are doomed to poor planning, ad-hoc policy making, and no standards by which to judge improvement. Identify the protagonists in this debate and take a position on two issues. First, as an empirical matter, is it possible to maintain the means/ends distinction in practice? Second, if it is possible, is it good? If it is not, are we, in fact, doomed?

PUBLIC POLICY COMPREHENSIVE EXAM, SPRING 2009

ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM EACH SECTION.

CORE

1. A number of classic empirical studies in public policy appear to demonstrate the incompatibility of rational policy analysis and democratic politics. For some, this means policy administrators (experts) should be shielded from politics. For others, it makes more sense to acknowledge the inescapably political nature of policy analysis, and subject it to more democracy. Either way, protagonists in this debate raise troubling questions about the relationship between democratic participation and social improvement. Explain this debate and take a position yourself.
2. The study of public policy has a long and checkered record in our discipline. Has political science made valuable contributions to our understanding of the policy process? If so, what are they? In turn, what insights, if any, does public policy scholarship offer for political science writ large?

COMPARATIVE POLICY

1. Some scholars argue that neoliberalism and/or welfare state retrenchment is leading to the convergence of social policy in advanced industrial democracies. Given what you know, do you think convergence has occurred or is likely to occur in the future?
2. How does studying comparative public policy from a historical perspective (i.e., introducing temporality) enhance our understanding of policy processes and outcomes? In addition to providing a critical assessment of the relevant literature, be sure to discuss some empirical studies of particular policy areas.

Public Policy Minor Comp. Exam

Spring, 2004

Answer 1 question from each theme.

Theme: Core

1. The Oxford English Dictionary defines democracy as government by the people. . . A state or community in which the power of government resides in or is exercised by the people. If this means anything, it means that government policy should reflect the will of the people. What are the major obstacles to putting this vision into practice? Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of at least three models that are in use or have been put forth to overcome these obstacles.
2. An enduring issue in the study of public policy is represented by the divide between those who stress that policy making is best understood as a process of incremental decision making, and those who embrace a vision of rational comprehensive approaches to the making of public policy decisions. What is this divide all about and how does it affect our understanding of how political institutions should be designed and how knowledge should be mobilized in support of good policy? Is the divide one that can be overcome?

Theme: Governance

1. Students of public policy have turned more and more to the problem of governance in recent years. Explain why. And, drawing upon scholarship in at least one specific policy area, assess whether this been a productive turn in policy studies.
2. What are the major factors that prompt governance reform? That is, what prompts change in the governance structures of a country? For each of these factors, delineate the logic by which change in those factors lead to change in governance structures. Provide examples of countries that have experienced changes in their governance structures and illustrate how these changes were likely prompted by the factors you mention. Discuss how a researcher could determine, in any given case, whether one factor was more responsible than other factors for changes in governance structure.

Public Policy Minor Comp Exam

Fall 2003

Directions: Answer one question from each theme.

A. Core

1. Is the view that specific knowledge and expertise are essential to making effective policy decisions consistent or inconsistent with the view that effective policy decisions require a discursive process involving broad public participation? Are these views logically consistent? If they are logically consistent, are they consistent or inconsistent in practice? In developing your answer, you should consider both "policy" knowledge and expertise as well as more "scientific" knowledge and expertise.
2. Many students of public policy think that good policy making can resolve political conflict. They disagree, however, over what constitutes good policy-making and the reasons why it might ameliorate conflict. Survey the policy literature for these sorts of arguments; outline the lines of debate between the authors you choose; and take a position. Who is convincing, who is not, and why?

B. Decisionmaking

1. There is a rich stream in the literature on public policy decisionmaking which celebrates "incrementalism." What is this interest in "incrementalism" all about, and what is right and what is wrong with its celebration?
2. In 1971, Graham Allison wrote his book "Essence of Decision" which delineated three models of foreign policy decisionmaking. This exam question has two parts. First, to what extent has more recent scholarship built on, extended, refuted, or replaced those three models? That is, if you were to write a book today, what models would you present as the major models of decisionmaking in America (and it can be more or fewer than three models)? Second, are Allison's three models or the models you suggest might replace them as applicable to domestic policy decisionmaking at the national, state, and municipal levels as they are to foreign policy decisionmaking?

Comprehensive Exam in Public Policy

A. Core

1. The Oxford English Dictionary defines democracy as "government by the people.....A state or community in which the power of government resides in or is exercised by the people." If this means anything, it means that government policy should reflect "the will of the people." What are the major obstacles to putting this vision into practice? Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of at least three models that are in use or have been put forth to overcome these obstacles.

2. Students of public policy conceptualize the relationship between means and ends in a variety of different ways. For some, the means/ends distinction is very problematic in practice, perhaps even impossible to keep clear. For others, however, even though there might be difficulties, abandoning the effort to maintain the means/ends distinction means we are doomed to poor planning, ad-hoc policy making, and no standards by which to judge improvement. Identify the protagonists in this debate and take a position on two issues. First, as an empirical matter, is it possible to maintain the means/ends distinction in practice? Second, if it is possible, is it good? If it is not, are we, in fact, doomed?

B. Theme: Technology Policy

1. Recent work on economic and technical innovation has stressed the tacit dimensions of knowledge. In this view, some sorts of technical knowledge cannot be codified or written down in a rulebook or a manual. The implication is that innovation necessitates local knowledge, face-to-face relations, and learning-by-doing. Explain, evaluate and assess the implications of this position for public policy. In other words, do you agree with this position? And, drawing upon your answer to the first question, explain the proper role of the state in economic or technology policy.

2. "Debates over technology policy in the US nicely illustrate larger policy debates over 'government failure' vs. 'market failure' and the proper roles of government and the private sector in serving societal purposes." With reference to the evolution of US technology policy, the changing objectives of technology policy, and the nature of technology itself, explain why one might make such a statement.

Comprehensive Exam in Public Policy

A. Core

1. There is a heavy strain of normative content in most theories of public policy, i.e., they as often proclaim how policy "should" work as they describe how policy "does" work. Compare and contrast various theories and theorists' views about the "proper" role that policymakers, bureaucrats, citizens, corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and scientists should have in the policy process in democracies.

2. Students of public policy conceptualize the relationship between means and ends in a variety of different ways. For some, the means/ends distinction is very problematic in practice, perhaps even impossible to keep clear. For others, however, even though there might be difficulties, abandoning the effort to maintain the means/ends distinction means we are doomed to poor planning, ad-hoc policy making, and no standards by which to judge improvement. Identify the protagonists in this debate and take a position on two issues. First, as an empirical matter, is it possible to maintain the means/ends distinction in practice? Second, if it is possible, is it good? If it is not, are we, in fact, doomed?

B. Theme: Public Administration, Implementation, and Regulation

1. To paraphrase from the title of Pressman and Wildavsky's famous book "Why are great expectations in Washington dashed in Oakland?" Why are legislators so often disappointed in the policies that flow from the laws they write? Why are they so often even more disappointed by the ultimate impacts on the problem that motivated the writing of the laws in the first place?

2. The debate over business regulation is a microcosm of the broader paradigmatic debates in political science. As such, it is also a good site to arbitrate those debates. Explain how different theories of regulation mirror the broader theoretical disputes in the field. Which approaches to business regulation do you find the most convincing and why?

Comprehensive Exam in Public Policy

A. Core.

1. Some observers of the OECD countries would argue that the central public policy dilemma in these countries is managing the tensions between democracy and technocracy. What accounts for these tensions, how serious are they, and what principles of institutional design seem most promising for managing them?
2. Students of public policy conceptualize the relationship between means and ends in a variety of different ways. For some, the means/ends distinction is very problematic in practice, perhaps even impossible to keep clear. For others, however, even though there might be difficulties, abandoning the effort to maintain the means/ends distinction means we are doomed to poor planning, ad-hoc policy making, and no standards by which to judge improvement. Identify the protagonists in this debate and take a position on two issues. First, as an empirical matter, is it possible to maintain the means/ends distinction in practice? Second, if it is possible, is it good? If it is not, are we, in fact, doomed?

B. Decision Making.

1. The message from thirty years of behavioral decision-making research might be summed up as: "People's capacity for rational action falls significantly short of what is assumed by standard models of rational-choice." But several current lines of empirical research appear to contradict this, suggesting alternatively: "People's decision making processes might not conform to the specifics of the normative model, but their choices are, nevertheless, often 'better than rational'--or, at least, 'fast, frugal, and reconstructable as consistent with the normative model.'" Do you think that partisans on either side of this dispute would agree with such characterizations? Where does this dispute leave theorists who must work from models of 'human agency' in their efforts to understand policy processes and, more generally, political action?
2. An ongoing challenge in the study of public policy decision making is to reconcile new knowledge about the properties of human cognition with the decision making behaviors of public organizations. With reference to theories of "incrementalism" and rational decision making, what are the main problems in achieving such a reconciliation and how well has the challenge been met?

Public Policy Comprehensive Examination Questions: Spring 2001

Directions: Answer one question from each theme. Examination is due to the Graduate Coordinator no later than 4:30 pm on Wednesday, May 9.

Core

1. A number of classic empirical studies in public policy appear to demonstrate the incompatibility of rational policy analysis and democratic politics. For some, this means policy administrators (experts) should be shielded from politics. For others, it makes more sense to acknowledge the inescapably political nature of policy analysis and subject it to more democracy. Either way, protagonists in this debate raise troubling questions about the relationship between democratic participation and social improvement. Explain this debate and take a position yourself.
2. The theme of "learning" runs through much of the policy literature, but is approached differently by different authors in the various streams, or traditions, of policy studies. With reference to at least three of these streams, write an essay in which you compare and contrast the ways different scholars treat such issues as the importance of learning, the things to be learned, who is to learn, the possibilities for - and obstacles to - learning, and the methods of learning available. In your own view, how much attention should be given to learning in policy studies?

Comparative

1. Comparative analysis offers us an opportunity to assess the claim that "institutions matter" and to judge the performance of different institutional arrangements in the making and implementation of policy. Some comparative institutionalists, for instance, think the United States could do with a good dose of European-style corporatism in the belief that it could improve social relations, the policy process, and policy outcomes. What is their argument? With reference to at least two policy areas, how would you evaluate their argument? How does the comparative method help us demonstrate the limits, as well as the possibilities, for institutional reform (e.g. even if the US would benefit from corporatism, is it possible here? Why? Why not?)?
2. What is the proper role for the state in the economy? Why is this question central to the study of comparative public policy? Is there a more important question for the field? If so, what is it and why is it more important? Make explicit reference to leading scholars and theories in the field.

Comprehensive Exam in Public Policy

Fall 2000

Public Policy Minor Comprehensive Exam: Fall 2000

Core: Approaches and Policy Theory

Answer one of the following two questions:

1-Over the past 20 years, an underlying tension has existed in the study and practice of public policy between those who give primacy to the problems of "market failure" in thinking about public policy, and those who focus on the problems of "government failure." If you were asked by a graduate student to explain the meaning and theoretical significance of these terms for the study of public policy, how would you do so? What would you recommend he/she read, and why?

2-Is the view that specific knowledge and expertise are essential to making effective policy decisions consistent or inconsistent with the view that effective policy decisions require a discursive process involving broad public participation? Are these views logically consistent? If they are logically consistent, are they consistent or inconsistent in practice? In developing your answer, you should consider both "policy" knowledge and expertise, as well as more "scientific" knowledge and expertise.

Bureaucracy

Answer one of the following two questions:

1-How do bureaucracies influence the policy process in democracies? Do they cause policy to diverge from "democratically ideal" outcomes that would occur in their absence? Do they help facilitate democratic governance? Or do they do both? Drawing upon your empirical knowledge of how bureaucracies actually influence the policy process, take a position on this debate over the relationship between bureaucracy and democracy.

2-Legal formalists think we must hold public policy implementation to the standards of the rule of law. Bureaucrats without clear directives (with excess discretion) will never be able to plan or achieve justice. Critics of formalism, by contrast, argue that the unreflective application of formal rules is at best unrealistic; at worst it is self defeating, costly, and undemocratic. Professional administrators, who implement public policy, need more, not less, discretion so that they can forge cooperative relations with those they must deal with in society. Drawing upon the evidence available in the literature, as well as reasoned argument, take a position on this debate.

Public Policy Comprehensive Examination
Spring 2000

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Approaches and Policy Theory.

Answer one of the following two questions.

1-Existing literature on public policy appears to answer two different types of questions: normative ones regarding how public policy should be conducted and explanatory ones regarding how public policy is conducted. Evaluate this claim about the literature and assess the ways in which the two veins of scholarship are antithetical, complementary, or simply independent of each other.

2-Positivist policy analysis promises to mitigate political conflict and social chaos. Stokey and Zeckhauser quote economist Milton Friedman that "differences about policy among disinterested citizens derive predominantly from different predictions about the consequences of taking action — differences that in principle can be eliminated by the progress of positive social science — rather than from fundamental differences in basic values, difference about which men can ultimately only fight." Explain and evaluate this claim. If you agree, how would you respond to critics like Stone or Lindblom? If you disagree, what do you think the role of policy analysis can and should be in liberal democracies?

Agenda setting

Answer one of the following two questions.

1-One can argue that in the field of policy studies, some approaches are better suited for explaining some aspects of the policy process, while other approaches are more suitable for other aspects. If so, approaches which focus on agenda setting may provide useful cases for understanding this variability in explanatory power of the different conceptual strategies found policy studies. Write an essay in which you critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of at least two discussions of agenda setting found in the literature for explaining the politics of, and outcomes of, public policy processes. Illustrate your discussion with reference to two or more areas of public policy.

2-You have just been appointed advisor to the President for an issue area of utmost concern to you. You have several key policy initiatives you want to promote in this area. Delineate a theoretically-informed strategy that describes the factors that you will consider in deciding when and how to work on your initiatives so that they have the greatest chance of getting on the policy agenda and being successfully passed into legislation by the US government.

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
MAJOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
[REDACTED] - SPRING TERM, 1996

PUBLIC POLICY

Write on **ONE** question from **EACH** theme (three questions total).

THEME - Administrative Theory

1. One might characterize the organizational and bureaucratic literature as essentially arguing that the impact of bureaucracies on policy is to transform inputs of relatively rational policy decisions into outputs that frustrate or even contradict public policy goals. Analyze how well this characterization reflects (or fails to reflect) this literature. If this is an accurate characterization of the impact of bureaucracies on policy, explain why we have not found some other institutional means of implementing public policy.
2. There are two current approaches to explaining organizational behavior. The first focuses on the fact that organizations live in a political, economic and social environment that constantly affects their behavior. The second approach to organizations emphasizes internal matters such as the nature of the tasks or struggles for power. Describe each of these approaches to organizations, justifying them by reference to research. Do you believe that these two approaches are compatible or incompatible? If you believe that they can be reconciled, explain how (Hint: Avoid using vague metaphors such as the closed-open system distinction).

THEME - Decision Making Theory and Evaluation

1. "The problem of cooperation" (alternatively: "The Hobbesian problem of order") is often argued as being fundamental to social theory. After all the attention it has received, is there theoretical convergence with respect to "solutions"--or simply onrushing theoretical fragmentation? If the former, what do theorists agree on? ...is there a role, in producing such fragmentation, for *methodological* conflict? ...or does, as the cliché has it, "the truth lie somewhere in-between"?
2. Compare and contrast the bounded rationality or satisfying approach to decision making with the neo-classical model of decision making. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each view? Which view is more likely to lead to hypotheses that can be falsified? Which view presents a more accurate picture about how decisions are actually made?

THEME - Political Economy

1. Economists normally see competition as completely beneficial but scholars such as Hirschman (in Exit, Voice and Loyalty) and Mancur Olson (in The Logic of Collective Action) show that there are a number of situations where competition does not act as a corrective influence but instead makes things worse. Explain these conditions going into as much detail as possible.
2. Compare and contrast the political business cycle and partisan stories about the effects of politics on macroeconomic outcomes. Which account provides a more accurate picture of this relationship? Why do you think that the other account is less empirically useful? Be careful to use as much evidence and literature as possible.

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
MAJOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
[REDACTED] - SPRING TERM, 1996

PUBLIC POLICY

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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
FIRST MINOR FIELD COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
[REDACTED] **SPRING TERM, 1996**

PUBLIC POLICY

Write on **ONE** question from **EACH** theme (two questions total).

THEME - Approaches and Frameworks

1. One thread of public policy theory consists of normative theories of how public policy should be conducted, as opposed to analytic theories of how public policy is conducted. One component of a normative tension -- both within and among theories of public policy -- involves debate over the "proper" roles for a) the public and b) policy analysts. Characterize the major features of this debate, analyze the major points of conflict between competing views of these roles, and identify whether (and, if so, how) the competing views can be synthesized.
2. The problem with interest group liberalism, writes Lowi, is that by elevating informal bargaining to an end in itself, public policy can neither plan nor achieve justice. His alternative, *juridical democracy*, promises a better outcome. Critics, however, are skeptical of Lowi's objectivist and formalist assumptions. Many call for more, not less, participation at *all* stages of the policy process. Take a position on this debate.

THEME - Decision Making (Trust)

1. Are conceptions of "trust" in the behavioral literature consistent with conceptions of "trust" in the institutional literature? If they *are* consistent, can we infer success in bridging the micro-macro gap--or just accidental convergence without much theoretical awareness between the two literature's?
2. Some critics of rational choice theory, such as Sabel, Granovetter and Lorenz, argue that trust, not the instrumental pursuit of self-interest, is a precondition for economic development. Furthermore, they charge, efforts to explain trust within a rational choice paradigm fail. Explain why they think this is so and take a position. Do you agree? Why or why not?

FIRST MINOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

PUBLIC POLICY

Will answer ONE question from each theme.

THEME - Applied Policy Analysis

1. Applied policy analysis is presumably intended to make policy making more rational. In light of what you consider to be the essence of rationality in policy making, assess the prospects for this project.
2. According to Charles Murray in his book Losing Ground what mechanisms have caused the problems he delineates in this book? Do you agree or disagree with Murray's position? Defend your position using evidence where possible. Why exactly do you think Murray is right or wrong?

THEME - Political Economy

1. There is a tension, some say an irreconcilable contradiction, between capitalism and democracy. At a minimum, democracy demands rough equality among citizens, while markets privilege the few who control investment. Even so, some regulatory institutions and industrial governance structures seem better able to reconcile capitalism and democracy than others. Discuss. Make sure to outline the normative criteria by which you will judge "reconciliation" before you discuss and evaluate different governance structures.
2. Compare and contrast the arguments made by Hirschman in Exit, Voice, and Loyalty or Olson's Logic of Collective Action on their relevance to politics. Which perspective provides a more useful way to answer fundamental questions in political science. Why exactly is the perspective you have chosen superior to the perspective you did not choose?

Winter 95

FIRST MINOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

PUBLIC POLICY

Will answer ONE question from each theme.

THEME - Applied Policy Analysis

1. Applied policy analysis is presumably intended to make policy making more rational. In light of what you consider to be the essence of rationality in policy making, assess the prospects for this project.
2. Name the five most important criteria against which any public policy should be evaluated (these criteria should apply equally well to all policy issue areas from health care to military spending). Which of these criteria is an "analytic" policy approach best suited to achieve? Which of these criteria is an "argumentative" policy approach best suited to achieve? You must provide empirical examples to illustrate the theoretical argument you develop.

THEME - Public Administration, Implementation and Regulation

1. What do you think the regulatory policy process would look like in Beck's risk society? How would it differ from the way regulation currently works in the United States?
2. "Effective regulatory policy in a democracy requires that a balance be found between direct responsiveness to political interests and insulation from such interests".

Critically evaluate this proposition with reference to how the discovery of this balance might vary from country to country (according to institutional arrangements and political cultures) and from policy area to policy area within any given country.

MAJOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
PUBLIC POLICY
FALL 1994

Will answer **ONE** from the core and **ONE** from each remaining theme.

Core theme: Public Policy

1. Who, what, and why are the most important entities in policy making? The entities you address here can be individuals, collectivities, or less tangible phenomena such as discourses. You can be selective in the entities you cover.
2. Most political scientist interested in public policy seem to stress centralized solutions to public problems while economists almost invariably opt for decentralized market based approaches. What are the exact strengths and weaknesses of each approach? Probably neither of these general procedures invariably will be superior regardless of the circumstances. What are the exact conditions that will make one or the other approach more effective than the alternative? What are the circumstances that will make the second alternative approach more effective? Why exactly is this the case?

Theme: Applied Policy Analysis

1. Evaluate the role that policy analysts play in current American policy making. What benefits do policy analytic tools contribute to policy making? What problems do they introduce into the policy making process? Delineate the strongest possible argument for why policy making should be significantly influenced by policy analytic tools. Delineate the strongest possible competing argument for why policy analytic tools should be excluded from the policy debate.
2. Has policy analysis indeed undergone an argumentative turn? If so, what is the essence of this turn? Is it a turn for the better or worse? Compare the attractiveness of argumentative policy analysis with its more established alternatives.
3. Why exactly was Charles Murray wrong? Use the materials from the reading to explain why the Murray thesis that disincentives furnished by welfare programs led to maladaptive behavior by the underclass is incorrect. you may, of course, challenge the question and argue that Murray was right but in either case you must make extensive use of the literature to support your case.

FIRST MINOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
PUBLIC POLICY
FALL 1994

Will answer **ONE** from the core and **ONE** from each remaining theme.

Core theme: Approaches and Frameworks

1. Some authors suggest that policy determination is mostly a matter of structural constraint, responding in particular to economic imperatives. Do you agree? If not, who or what are the most important agents in policy determination?
2. One's sense of the good is partially dependent upon one's sense of the possible. Political scientists who disagree over the description of the constraints upon cities in the United States also evaluate the current state of urban democracy and the prospects for reform differently. Contrast at least two perspectives on: 1) the constitutional and economic constraints upon American cities, 2) the current health of urban democracy, and 3) the possibilities for reform.

Theme: Public Administration, Implementation, and Regulation

1. Is there a key to effective policy implementation? Or do the pathologies identified by critics of bureaucracy ensure that effective implementation is generally impossible?
2. Much of the literature adopts an organizational approach to the study of public policy. These policy analysts attempt to apply theories from the literature in complex organizations to explain policy outcomes. Is this the most effective analytic approach in your opinion? Do you believe the literature on organizations and administration is up to the task? Why or why not?

Sp. 94

FIRST MINOR FIELD COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

PUBLIC POLICY



Will answer two(2) questions (one for each theme) out of a total of four(4) questions.

THEME-Approaches and Frameworks

1. Allison develops three models of foreign policy decision-making. To what extent are these three models applicable to domestic policy decision-making at the national, state, and municipal levels? How could his insights improve theories developed to analyze decision-making at these other levels of governance? How could these theories contribute to an improved version of Allison's models?
2. Nobody argues seriously for the adequacy of a simple rational actor model as an explanatory or descriptive model. How then do we account for the prominence of this model in the literature? In the light of your own preferred model of how policy typically gets made, is there any place for the rational actor model as inspiration, starting point, or foil?

THEME -Political Economy

1. What is the exact relationship between economic power and political power in the United States? With an extensive use of the literature on these issues, compare and contrast the major models of this relationship making sure to give reasons why you think some models are more or less plausible than others. Remember that the quality of your answer depends on both the breadth and the depth of your discussion.
2. Compare and contrast regulation with pure market controls over economic enterprises. What are the specific strengths and weaknesses of each and when will each be most appropriate? Be sure to answer all parts of the question!

PUBLIC POLICY/PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Answer 2 of the 3 Questions

1. "Rationality" is a recurring theme in the study of public policy and administration. Discuss the various ways in which the concept is used, and their implications for the conduct of policy and administration.
2. A number of authors have presented models of how the policy process actually works. Identify the authors whose conception of the policy process seems particularly plausible to you; compare and evaluate their contributions to the study of the policy process.
3. Do you believe bureaucracy as a form of social and political organization is becoming more or less functional in today's world? Defend your answer; use examples.

PUBLIC POLICY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM EACH PART.

PART A

1. How important are understandings of the nature and functioning of bureaucracy affect your efforts in constructing a general theory of public administration? Is such a theory possible? In this regard how useful are the works of Weber, Taylor, March and Simon, Barnard, Scott, Thompson, Selznick, Lipsky, and others? Elaborate.
2. What is "Implementation" in the US policy system? What are the theoretical significance of Pressman and Wildavsky's EDA study and Allison's study of the management of the Cuban Missile Crisis? Discuss. Then expand your scope of inquiry to include the works of Derthick, Murphy, Kaufman, Bardach, and Lipsky. Are they consistent with the conceptual framework as presented by Pressman, Wildavsky, and Allison?

PART B

3. Consider these three approaches to policy making: (1) policy making is best understood in terms of the role of political institutions in each of the key stages in the policy process; (2) public policy is governed by a systemic bias on the distribution of power in the broader economic-political context; and (3) distinct types of policy generate different kinds of politics. What are the strength and weakness of each approach? Are they in conflict? Or can they complement each other? Discuss by drawing on relevant works in the policy literature.
4. The role of government in regulating private interest has become a major concern for policy analysts. Compare and contrast the various conceptual schemes as presented by Bauer et al., Lindblom, Stigler, Wilson, Tufte, and Bernstein. In light of these works, to what extent is private power bounded by public institutions and public process of decision making? Or rather the other way around? What, then, contributes to policy stability and change in the polity? From these works, how much do we know about the practice of democratic governance in the market system?

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Write on one of the two questions advanced for each of the three themes:

THEME 1: ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY

1. There are two current approaches to explaining organizational behavior. The first emphasizes that organizations live in a political, economic, and social environment that constantly affects their behavior. The second emphasizes the impact of internal matters such as the nature of the tasks or struggles for power. Without wasting time talking about the closed-open distinction, describe these two positions, justifying them by reference to the literature. Then explain why you think one is more useful than the other. Finally, do you believe that these theories are compatible or incompatible? Why, exactly? (Be sure to answer all three parts.)
2. There is a variety of ways to conceptualize relations between organizations and their environments in the literature. Compare and contrast these approaches and explain why you think that some are more useful for explaining how organizations change. Build a good case for your choice(s).

THEME 2: DECISION MAKING

3. SEU is said to be both an empirical and a normative model. Can the same be said for the prisoner's dilemma and related models? How adequate are such models in empirical terms? What normative (ethical?) implications, if any, can be drawn from prisoner's dilemma analyses (including empirical analyses)?
4. Are we rational? Does it matter?

THEME 3: APPROACHES AND FRAMEWORKS

5. There exist numerous theoretical models that attempt to explain the essence of policy making. What do you think are the most important models that have been advanced? Which, if any, do you accept? Which, if any, do you reject? Justify your comparative judgments.
6. Can a rational actor model of policy making ever be approximated? If so, when and why? If not, why have reformers persistently tried to apply such a model?

Comprehensive Exam Questions for the Public Policy Field

Please answer three of the following for your major field:

1. It is now (about) 30 years since Lindblom published his classic "science of muddling through." Do we know more today about decision-making than Lindblom did thirty years ago? In the light of this knowledge, (a) how accurate is disjointed incrementalism as an empirical model, (b) how attractive is it as a normative model?
2. Critically evaluate the economic approach to applied policy analysis. What would a "political" alternative to this approach look like? Would this political alternative be preferable to the economic approach?
3. Consider the literature on Implementation. Why is implementation an important topic in public policy? What theoretical progress has been made in this subfield over the past 15 to 20 years?
4. Some political scientists and most sociologists typically emphasize groups when they seek to explain outcomes while political scientists interested in public choice and economists stress the effects of actions by independent individuals. Which of these two strategies is more useful as an explanation for public policy? Using references to the literature, develop arguments which compare and contrast the effectiveness of these two approaches to explanations for public policy.
5. Thompson, Mintzberg and many others take a contingency approach to organizations when they emphasize the joint effects of internal matters such as technology and environmental factors which are external to the organization such as relations with markets or other organizations. Without wasting time talking about the closed/open system distinction, develop some propositions about the behavior of organizations that stress the joint influence of both internal and external effects.

SOCIAL WELFARE FIELD

Answer 2 of the 3 Questions

- 1) In light of what we now learn about the New Deal and the Great Society, to what extent and in what specific manners would you restructure the social welfare state in the U.S. Explain your policy recommendations in terms of (a) overall conceptual construct, (b) empirical basis, and (c) briefly, economic and political feasibility.
- 2) Racial inequality has been a dominant theme in the social welfare literature. Which interpretation do you find most convincing. Explain. Then discuss the shortcomings of other alternate perspectives.
- 3) Understanding of Social Welfare policy has been influenced by both the "liberal" and the "marxist" perspectives. Define each of these 2 approaches and identify some representative works. Discuss the utility of these perspectives by assessing their strengths and weaknesses, both conceptually and empirically.

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Answer three, with at least one from each group.

-I-

1. Select some type of policy program and advise the policy-maker on key considerations for successful implementation.
2. What are some ways to evaluate public policy programs, which make most sense to you?
3. Outline a "realist's" view of public policymaking emphasizing those factors that you think could most likely be overlooked.
4. Organizing the subject of public policy has been tried many times without much success. Try your own hand at this, explaining your "concept" as you go.

-II-

1. How has the organization of Federal administration, particularly in respect to the structure of its personnel processes, dealt with the inherent tension between democratic principles and the need for efficient administration? Do not confine your answer to a single historical era.
2. Organizations have been described as continually seeking certainty in an uncertain environment. Discuss and compare the way that M. Crozier, James Thompson, and Victor Thompson deal with the conflicting needs of the individual and the organization for the reduction of uncertainty.
3. Compare the methods of motivating work in the Scientific Management and Human Relations schools. Are there any common points of understanding around which a general theory of work motivation can be (or has been) built?
4. Discuss the costs and benefits of incremental budgeting in contemporary administration. What major attempts have been made to develop non-incremental approaches to budget analysis?

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PUBLIC POLICY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM EACH PART.

PART A

1. How important are understandings of the nature and functioning of bureaucracy affect your efforts in constructing a general theory of public administration? Is such a theory possible? In this regard how useful are the works of Weber, Taylor, March and Simon, Barnard, Scott, Thompson, Selznick, Lipsky, and others? Elaborate.
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1. There are two current approaches to explaining organizational behavior. The first emphasizes that organizations live in a political, economic, and social environment that constantly affects their behavior. The second emphasizes the impact of internal matters such as the nature of the tasks or struggles for power. Without wasting time talking about the closed-open distinction, describe Two these ~~to~~ positions, justifying them by reference to the literature. Then explain why you think one is more useful than the other. Finally, do you believe that these theories are compatible or incompatible? Why, exactly? (Be sure to answer all three parts.)
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5. There exist numerous theoretical models that attempt to explain the essence of policy making. What do you think are the most important models that have been advanced? Which, if any, do you accept? Which, if any, do you reject? Justify your comparative judgments.
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1. "Rationality" is a recurring theme in the study of public policy and administration. Discuss the various ways in which the concept is used, and their implications for the conduct of policy and administration.
2. A number of authors have presented models of how the policy process actually works. Identify the authors whose conception of the policy process seems particularly plausible to you; compare and evaluate their contributions to the study of the policy process.
3. Do you believe bureaucracy as a form of social and political organization is becoming more or less functional in today's world? Defend your answer; use examples.

Exam Questions for Public Policy and Administration field,
Please answer two of the following for your minor field.

1. Discuss the relevance of political institutions and institutional dynamics in understanding policy change and continuity.
2. Evaluate the prospects for, and constraints upon, rational action in public policy making.
3. Applied policy analysis is sometimes accused of a normative bias toward the status quo. Does this bias exist? If so, does it apply more to some kinds of policy analysis than to others?
4. How precisely do policy makers within organizations arrive at decisions? Compare and contrast the major approaches to decision making. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each view as a scientific explanation?
5. What are the precise advantages and disadvantages of the various forms of grouping within organizations? Under what conditions will grouping by function (or by means) be more effective than grouping by market (or by ends)? When exactly will the matrix form of organization be used and what are its advantages and disadvantages? Be as specific as possible in your answer!

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