Course Description

The historical profession has come a long way since the time when history was defined as “past politics.” In recent years, social history has grown in prominence, leading some to question whether there was still a place for the study of our political past. Fortunately, a new generation of scholars has combined political analysis with an appreciation for social and cultural movements in American history. The diverse field of “policy history” looks beyond the surface events of political history to examine the origins, implementations, and consequences of public policies. Policy historians are concerned with explaining how government policies developed in a variety of areas, including labor relations, civil rights, welfare, and women’s issues. Policy historians also examine how private actors interact with public policymakers. These private actors include trade associations, labor unions, women’s groups, environmentalists, consumer activists, foundations, and “think tanks,” among others.

We will also examine how courts and federal administrative agencies—the Postal Service, IRS, Small Business Administration and U.S. Army—act both as initiators of social change and respond to it. The archives for the courts and agencies are rich, with ample opportunities for research into the deep bowels of the government. We will pay less attention to presidential archives but they are a gold mine for those researching a range of topics that you might not think were covered under “presidential history”!

Required readings

We are all responsible for the “Required Readings” (see syllabus). In addition, each student will read and report on two supplementary works related to their historiographical review at the end of the semester. This literature review is aimed at forming background knowledge for a research paper in HIST 555 (Spring 2015). The list of suggested readings at the end of this syllabus is a starting point. The Journal of Policy History is also a “must” reference for reviews and literature on your topic. NOTE: JPH has published special issues, each with a collection of essays on policy history dealing with different topics: constitutional debates, birth control, drug control, immigration, etc. See http://www.psupress.org/books/series/book_SeriesIPh.html or http://goo.gl/eZdMei

Assignments

Discussion (25%)

All students are expected to contribute to weekly discussions. Speak up and listen respectfully to others in the group. Convey your understanding of the material, place it in historical context, but also bring your own perspective to bear.
Leading Discussion

Each student will lead one discussion of common readings. Please prepare 3-5 questions about the weekly reading (make these questions available to your colleagues one week prior to our discussion).

Reading Log (15%)

Briefly summarize the main theses of the book, and assess the quality of sources, analysis and presentation. Relate the reading to evolving issues in policy history. Note: Journal writing is informal, a diary of your reflections on the material, not a simple regurgitation of the main points. You should a) demonstrate content mastery (i.e., you’ve done the reading); b) reflect critically on the assignment; and c) list questions for discussion and relate the material to other readings in the course. Because journal writing is informal, you may digress by relating the readings to other courses, current events or your life experiences.

Government Document Exercises (10%)

This exercise introduces you to the richness of SIUC’s Government Document Collection.

Book Reviews (15%):

Choose two books not part of the required (common) readings. Then, write two book reviews and present your findings to the class. Distribute a one-page sheet summarizing the book’s main points. The written review is due the following week.

Historiographical Essay (35%):

You will write a 10-15 page essay on a major subject in U.S. history, 1800-present. You are NOT confined to policy history. Explain the principal schools of thought and discuss recent directions in scholarship. Append a select bibliography of important works in your subfield of history. Which issues continue to divide scholars?

Identify one or more topics that deserve further attention. Discuss potential source material to research these topics. During the last several weeks of the semester, you will present your essay to the group.
SCHEDULE OF READING ASSIGNMENTS

August 24  Introduction

August 31  The Significance of Policy History


September 7  Nineteenth Century: Government as Agent of Change


September 14: Path Not Taken (and Why): Wartime Decision Making


September 21 American Exceptionalism? The Welfare State, 1865-1920s

**Introduction to Government Documents** (meet at Morris Library)


**(ESSAY TOPIC DUE)**

September 28 American Exceptionalism? The Welfare State, 1865-1920s (continued)

Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* (1992), Part III

**(PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE)**

October 5  Reconstruction-Great Depression: Civil Wrongs

October 12  The Law of Unintended Consequences

Gillon, “That’s Not What We Meant to Do”: Reform and Its Unintended Consequences (2000)

October 19  Post-World War II: The Origins and Ironies of Affirmative Action
(Annotated Bibliography Due)


October 26  The Seventies Onward: The Rise of “America’s Army”


November 2: Public Policy and Private Armies


November 9: Speaking Truth to Power? The Historian as Bureaucrat


November 16  Oral Presentations

November 23  NO CLASS

November 30: Oral Presentations

December 7  Career Tips for Public Policy History [HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY DUE]
As you seek works to include in your literature review and topic proposal, begin by considering these collections of essays (if they pertain to your broader area of interest):

http://www.psupress.org/books/series/book_SeriesIPh.html

- **Civil Rights in the United States** Edited by Hugh Graham
- **The Constitution and Public Policy in U.S. History** Edited by Julian E. Zelizer, and Bruce J. Schulman
- **Drug Control Policy** Edited by William O. Walker III
- **Environmental Politics and Policy, 1960s–1990s** Otis L. Graham
- **The Future of the Democratic Left in Industrial Democracies** Edited by Erwin C. Hargrove
- **Health Care Policy in Contemporary America** Edited by Alan I. Marcus, and Edited by Hamilton Cravens
- **Integrating the Sixties** Edited by Brian Balogh
- **Loss of Confidence** Edited by David Brian Robertson
- **Money and Politics** Edited by Paula Baker
- **New Directions in Policy History** Edited by Julian E. Zelizer
- **New Perspectives on Public Health Policy** Edited by James Mohr
- **The Politics of Abortion and Birth Control in Historical Perspective** Edited by Donald T. Critchlow
- **Refugees and the Asylum Dilemma in the West** Edited by Gil Loescher
- **Ruling Passions** Edited by Richard R. John
- **Urban Public Policy** Edited by Martin A. Melosi

**Suggested Readings**

Andrew, *Power to Destroy: The Political Uses of the IRS from Kennedy to Nixon* (2002)
-----.. *Pride, Prejudice, and Politics: Roosevelt versus Recovery, 1933-38* (1990)
Burns, *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox* (1956)
Clark, *Deliver us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (1976)
Critchlow, ed. *Politics of Abortion and Birth Control in Historical Perspective* (1996)


Dunlavy, Politics and Industrialization: Early Railroads in the U.S. and Prussia (1994)


Gillon, “That’s Not What We Meant to Do”: Reform and Its Unintended Consequences in Twentieth-Century America (2000)


Haber, Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920 (1964)

Hamburger, Law and Judicial Duty (2010)

Hawley, New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly (1966)


Holtzman, The Townsend Movement: A Study in Old Age Pressure Politics (1963)


Hughes, Governmental Habit Redux (1990)

Jencks, Rethinking Social Policy: Race, Poverty and the Underclass


Keller, Affairs of State: Public Life in Late Nineteenth Century America (1977)

Keller, Regulating a New Economy: Public Policy and Economic Change in America, 1900-1933 (1990)

Kerr, Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League (1985)

Kessler-Harris, In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in 20th-century America (2001)


Knight, Confederate Invention: The Story of the Confederate States Patent Office and Its Inventors (2011)

Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940 (1963)

Lombardo, Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court, and Buck v. Bell (2010)

Lowi, The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States (1979)


Moreno, From Direct Action to Affirmative Action: Fair Employment Policy in America, 1933-72 (1997)

Richardson, The Greatest Nation on Earth: Republican Economic Policies During the Civil War (1997)
Schlesinger, *Coming of the New Deal* (1958)
Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks* (1978)
Stein, *Presidential Economics from Roosevelt to Clinton* (1994)
Tate, *Cigarette Wars: The Triumph of the Little White Slaver* (1999)
Ware, *Partner and I: Molly Dewson, Feminism, and New Deal Politics* (1987)
Wilson, Joan Hoff. *Herbert Hoover: Forgotten Progressive* (1975)