

Faculty of Economics and Political Science

Public Opinion and Policy Making

Information :

Course Code : PMM 307

Level : Undergraduate

Course Hours : 3.00- Hours

Department : Department of Political Mass Media

Area Of Study :

This course presents theories of public opinion and their relation with the public sphere concept. It treats the historical forms of public opinion which is built on press, surveys and the common actors. It also analyzes the impact of public media on public policy by introducing the mechanisms of public opinion formation and their significance in any political system. This includes providing an analysis for policy making from the problem-solving process perspective. In return, this leads to the discussion of the main principles of democracy and its challenges, the different actors of communication such as political parties, interest associations and media. In other words, the course examines the interplay between policy development and institutions, as well as review normative and empirical model of policy making and its relation to public opinion.

Course Goals:

- Compare normative and empirical models of policy making.
- Investigate the effects of public opinion on policy making
- Inspect cases where policy making affects public opinion
- Examine challenges facing the democracy-building process in various countries
- Evaluate the impact of citizen media on public opinion and public policy

Description :

This course presents theories of public opinion and their relation with the public sphere concept. It treats the historical forms of public opinion which is built on press, surveys and the common actors. It also analyzes the impact of public media on public policy by introducing the mechanisms of public opinion formation and their significance in any political system. This includes providing an analysis for policy making from the problem-solving process perspective. In return, this leads to the discussion of the main principles of democracy and its challenges, the different actors of communication such as political parties, interest associations and media. In other words, the course examines the interplay between policy development and institutions, as well as review normative and empirical model of policy making and its relation to public opinion.

Course outcomes :

a. Knowledge and Understanding: :

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| 1 - | Discuss the relationship between policy making and public opinion |
| 2 - | Explain policy making models |
| 3 - | Identify the public sphere in various areas |

b. Intellectual Skills: :

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| 1 - | Analyze the relationship between media-ownership, public opinion and policy making |
| 2 - | Examine the process of media regulation around the world |
| 3 - | Compare the role of media in democratic countries with its role in other countries |
| 4 - | Examine the public sphere in different regions |

c. Professional and Practical Skills: :

1 -	Employ policy making models to develop existing media forms
2 -	Demonstrate how policies affect the democracy building process

d. General and Transferable Skills: :

1 -	Use computers and the Internet.
2 -	Work in a team environment.
3 -	Translate to and from other languages.
4 -	Apply practical and professional problem solving

Course Topic And Contents :

Topic	No. of hours	Lecture	Tutorial / Practical
Introduction and syllabus	3	1	
Public Opinion and Public Sphere	3	1	
The Public Opinion and Policy Making Complex Relationship	3	1	
Public Opinion as a Factor in the Policy Making Process	3	1	
Knowing your People: What Policy Makers Know about their People?	3	1	
Policy Makers' Tools in Shaping Public Opinion	3	1	
The Complete Cycle: Media, Public Opinion, and Public Policy	3	1	
Midterm Exam		1	
Government-owned Media Organizations: How Influential?	3	1	
Edge of Private Media Organizations	3	1	
Relationships: Interest Groups, Media, and Policy Makers	3	1	
Media's Impact on Public Policy in Democracies	3	1	
Media's Impact on Public Policy in Dictatorships	3	1	
Questions about Democracy - Review	3	1	
Final Exam		1	

Teaching And Learning Methodologies :

Demonstration videos
Presentation
Simulations
Debates
Group discussion
Research Paper

Course Assessment :

Methods of assessment	Relative weight %	Week No	Assess What
Course Work (Attendance, Participation, Assignments, Quizzes, Research Paper)	30.00		To assess understanding and theoretical background of the intellectual and practical skills.

Final Exam	40.00	15	To assess knowledge and intellectual skills
Midterm Exam	30.00	8	To assess professional skills

Recommended books :

Brandice Canes-Wrone, Who Leads Whom? Presidents, Policy, and the Public, Chicago University of Chicago Press, 2005

Pawson, Ray and Geoff Wong, Public Opinion and Policy making, Social Policy & Administration, 2013

Lynn Kirby, Public Opinion and Policy-making: The Pollster as Presidential Advisor, Ph.D. Dissertation, Georgetown University, 2002