Syllabus for PUBPL 304-001
Public Policy Analysis
Spring 2025
TTh 3:05 pm – 4:20 pm, Olmsted E-243

Professor: Dr. Daniel J. Mallinson

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Class hashtag	#pubpl304
Course Webpage	Link

Course Description

What is more important, clean water or jobs? Should a policy maximize effectiveness or efficiency? Is is possible to balance these things? How do we systematically analyze and solve problems? This course examines the struggle over competing values and ideas during the policy making process. It explores how the selection and definition of policy goals (i.e., equity, efficiency, welfare, liberty, and security), problem definitions, and solutions shape our evaluation of public policy. Furthermore, the course will help students build skills in policy research and the writing skills required of policy analysts. Finally, students will work in teams to conduct policy research on pressing problems facing Harrisburg and Pennsylvania. Given that this is a W course, writing is a major aspect of student assessment.

Learning Goals and Objectives

- Goal 1: Students will gain factual knowledge about contemporary policy debates
  - Objective 1a: Students will learn the background of current policy problems facing federal, state, and local governments
  - Objective 1b: Students will learn about the competing proposals for solving these problems
- Goal 2: Students will understand the policy process
  - Objective 2a: Students will learn key policy theories: the policy cycle, Multiple Streams Approach, Advocacy Coalition Framework, and Punctuated Equilibrium

  - Objective 2b: Students will learn the role of formal and informal actors in the identification of problems, development of alternative, decision-making, and implementation of policy

- Goal 3: Students will analyze and critically evaluate competing policy ideas
  - Objective 3a: Students will identify competing values and goals in proposed public policies
  - Objective 3b: Students will evaluate the logic of a policy proposal; including the facts, assumptions, and inferences being presented (and ignored) by the proposer
  - Objective 3c: Students will develop analytical skills including identifying primary sources, creating and evaluating arguments, evaluating the graphical presentation of data, and more

- Goal 4: Students will develop their oral and written communication skills
  - Objective 4a: Students will contribute to class discussion and debates, as well as present research findings as a team
  - Objective 4b: Students will learn how to write in multiple forms, including a longer policy paper, shorter executive summary, and policy brief
  - Objective 4c: Students will learn how to evaluate the writing of others and how to reflect on their own writing

Methods for Learning and Teaching: This course will contain a mix of lecture, class discussion, and teamwork. It is vital for your own comprehension of the course material that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings and any relevant happenings in the news.

Reaching Our Goals

Attendance: Your attendance in class is always expected. Attending class will allow you to keep up with the course and provide for meaningful discussion as a class. I will be taking attendance in order to grade participation, but also as a way to get to know you. Please contact me via e-mail if you are unable to attend class. I will follow the University's attendance policy when it comes to excused absences. See https://handbook.psu.edu/content/class-attendance.

Preparation and Participation: I expect you to read the assigned material before class and be able to discuss what you read. Contributing to class discussion will make the course more interesting and will enhance your understanding of the material. Furthermore, it is helpful to keep up with current policy debates in the news, since they will be useful for reinforcing the concepts discussed in class.

Discussion Ground Rule #1 is Respect: We will be discussing some tough public policy problems in this course. There will inevitably be divergent opinions, some of them very strong, among the class. It is important that you be respectful of your peers and their opinions, lived experiences, and beliefs.

Do Not Suffer in Silence: Please do not suffer in silence throughout the course if you are struggling. Instead, let me know — as soon as possible — what things are not making sense and we can work it out. If you are having a problem of any kind in the course, please talk to me about it as soon as possible.

Be Flexible: While the syllabus represents an agreement between us, I reserve the right to revise and modify it throughout the course, if it is necessary to achieve our goals. Situations beyond either of our control can also emerge that require changes to the course. I will notify you right away when any changes are made.

Current Events: Politics happens in real time and the material we cover in class relates to these events. This is a great opportunity to become informed about national, state, and local policy developments. We will regularly discuss current events that are related to the class. Please be aware of what is going on, particularly as it relates to government bureaucracy. I will regularly tweet news stories relevant to our class using the hashtag #pubpl304. If you don't know where to start in finding news, just ask me.

E-mail Policy: I will work to respond to e-mails by the next business day. This means that e-mails sent on the weekends will be responded to by Monday.

Readings

The following book is required for the course:

Birkland, Thomas A. 2020. *An Introduction to the Policy Process.* Fifth Edition. New York: Routledge. ISBN 978-1-138-49561-6. (Link for Amazon)

Additional required readings that are not from the Birkland book will be made available on Canvas.

Lecture Slides

I will be using lecture slides throughout the course. These will be uploaded to the course website (`https://sites.psu.edu/djmallinson/pubpl-304`) and Canvas prior to each class period.

Assessing Your Progress Towards Our Goals

The following types of assessment will be used to track your progress towards meeting our course goals: policy paper, executive summary, reflection essay, peer review, and participation.

Each component represents the following percentage of your final grade:

Policy Paper	40%
Executive Summary	15%
Peer Review	15%
Reflection Essay	15%
Participation	15%

We will use the following grade scale:

Letter	Percent
A	94 to 100
A-	90 to 93
B+	87 to 89
B	84 to 86
B-	80 to 83
C+	77 to 79
C	70 to 76
D	60 to 69
F	Below 60

Policy Analysis Project: The entire class will be working on a policy analysis project focused on a problem facing the Harrisburg region. This will help you develop project management, writing, and analytical skills. It will also provide a practical and tangible product that you can use when applying for jobs or graduate school. Within the class, you will be part of a team that will be responsible for part of the research project. Each team will produce a chapter for a final class white paper. Additionally, each team will try their hand at writing an executive summary and the best one will be used in the final report. See Appendix A for more details and deadlines.

Peer Review: Peer review is a standard practice in the scientific process. It involves other experts reviewing your work and providing their feedback, hopefully in a constructive manner. You will provide one short peer review for another team during the course. It will provide constructive feedback on their chapter. We will talk in class about what makes for a quality peer review. See Appendix B for more details.

Executive Summary: Policy research papers are more often than not accompanied by shorter executive summaries of the research findings. To be honest, those are read more often than the entire paper. You will thus work together to craft an effective executive summary for your policy paper. See Appendix C for more details.

Reflection Essay: At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete a reflective essay on what you learned through the team project. See Appendix D for more details.

Participation: Attending and engaging in class is incredibly important. It not only enriches the learning experience for yourself and your classmates, but also prepares you for succeeding in the working world. Thus participation will represent 15 percent of your final score. Your attendance is a relatively small component of your final participation score. Of greater importance are the small homework tasks that will be assigned periodically throughout the class, an evaluation of your contributions to the team project, and a subjective assessment of your engagement in class by the instructor.

Students also have an obligation to notify me within the first three weeks of the semester if they will miss any class session due to a religious observance. I am pleased to do this, but will need notification in order to plan make-up work.

Make-Up Grades: You are allowed to make-up academic work only in the case of excused absences. These absences may include missing class for a University-sanctioned activity (with proper documentation), illness, religious observance, or family responsibilities. If you know in advance that you are going to miss class, please contact me before the absence to make arrangements for completing the work. If you are absent for an unexpected reason, please check in with me as soon as possible. You will have one week from the day of your return to class to make up a missed assignment.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle.

According to Penn State policy G-9: Academic Integrity, an academic integrity violation is "an intentional, unintentional, or attempted violation of course or assessment policies to gain an academic advantage or to advantage or disadvantage another student academically." Unless your instructor tells you otherwise, you must complete all course work entirely on your own, using only sources that have been permitted by your instructor, and you may not assist other students with papers, quizzes, exams, or other assessments. If your instructor allows you to use ideas, images, or word phrases created by another person (e.g., from Course Hero or Chegg) or by generative technology, such as ChatGPT, you must identify their source. You may not submit false or fabricated information, use the same academic work for credit

in multiple courses, or share instructional content. Please be aware that Turnitin may be utilized as a plagiarism detection tool in this course. Students with questions about academic integrity should ask their instructor **before submitting work**.

Students facing allegations of academic misconduct may not drop/withdraw from the affected course unless they are cleared of wrongdoing (see G-9: Academic Integrity). Attempted drops will be prevented or reversed, and students will be expected to complete course work and meet course deadlines. Students who are found responsible for academic integrity violations face academic outcomes, which can be severe, and put themselves at jeopardy for other outcomes which may include ineligibility for Dean's List, pass/fail elections, and grade forgiveness. Students may also face consequences from their home/major program and/or The Schreyer Honors College.

See also the Penn State academic integrity resources at https://integrity.psu.edu/academic-integrity and the academic integrity policy of Penn State Harrisburg: http://harrisburg.psu.edu/academics/academic-guidelines-and-policies.

Disability Access

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Penn State values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. Every Penn State campus has a Student Disability Resources (SDR) office. SDR at Penn State Harrisburg is located in the Student Enrichment Center(SEC) Room 205.

To receive consideration for academic accommodations, auxiliary aids, and/or services, please contact SDR. SDR will engage students in an individualized, interactive, and confidential process to review requests on a case-by-case basis. For more information, please visit the SDR website (harrisburg.psu.edu/disability-services).

Please contact the SDR Office at Penn State Harrisburg if you have any questions or would like to discuss accommodations. You can call 717-948-6025, email hbgsdr@psu.edu, or visit the office Monday to Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Counseling Services

Success in college depends heavily on your personal health and wellbeing. Please recognize that some stress and anxiety is a normal part of life and the college experience, and it can be compounded by unexpected setbacks or life changes outside the classroom. Penn State Harrisburg has a number of support options listed in this syllabus.

If you are experiencing issues that feel unmanageable, you reach the point that you have difficulty concentrating and/or feeling motivated, or have anxiety or feelings of depression that interfere with your ability to take care of yourself or your daily responsibilities, please consider talking with someone in CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services). We have a range of services to help you navigate issues that are impacting your ability to be healthy, well, and productive at college.

You can learn more about the confidential mental health services available on campus by visiting the Counseling and Psychological Services website or by calling (717) 948-6025 Monday through Friday 8am to 5pm. CAPS is located on the 2nd floor of the Student Enrichment Center, Suite 205.

You can speak to an available counselor 24/7/365 any time by calling 1-877-229-6400 or by texting "LIONS" to 741741.

Educational Equity

Penn State takes great pride in fostering a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and/or incivility due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity at the Report Bias site: https://equity.psu.edu/reportbias. Penn State's Code of Conduct can be found at the following link: https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/support-safety-conduct/student-conduct/code-conduct.

Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to Student Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at 717-948-6180.

Mandated Reporting

Penn State is committed to equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment for all persons. It is the policy of the University to maintain an environment free of harassment and free of discrimination against any person because of age, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, creed, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), veteran status, sex, sexual orientation, marital or family status, pregnancy, pregnancy-related conditions, or physical or mental disability, gender, perceived gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information or political ideas. Discriminatory conduct and harassment, as well as sexual misconduct and relationship violence, violates the dignity of individuals, impedes the realization of the University's educational mission, and will not be tolerated. Gender-based and sexual harassment, including sexual violence, are forms of gender discrimination in that they deny or limit an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from University programs or activities. For reporting resources, and support,

please visit titleix.psu.edu.

Penn State strongly encourages all members of the campus community to take appropriate action by providing support and encouraging those impacted by such incidents to submit a report to Student Advocacy, Dr. Kelly Weaber or Aimee Wheeler (information below). You may also submit a report online by using the Incident Report Form found here: Office of Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Response Incident Report Form. If the University Title IX staff receives information about an incident, they will reach out to offer information about resources, rights, and procedural options available to you.

At Penn State Harrisburg, your contacts are:

Dr. Kelly Weaber, Associate Director, Student Advocacy Penn State Harrisburg 212 Student Enrichment Center 717-948-4396 krw5476@psu.edu

Aimee Wheeler, Student Advocacy Specialist Penn State Harrisburg 212 Student Enrichment Center 717-948-4396 Asw5677@psu.edu

Penn State's Title IX Coordinator is: Title IX Coordinator titleix@psu.edu

Other resources that are available include:

- Penn State Harrisburg Counseling and Psychological Services, SEC 205 - 717-948-6025
- PSU Crisis Service Lines (24/7): Text "LIONS" to 741741 or call (877) 229-6400
- Department of Safety & Police
  - Campus Police: 717-979-7976
  - Local Police: 717-543-2200 or 911
- EmergencyL 911
- Rape Crisis Center – 717-238-7273 or 1-800-654-1211
- Penn State Harrisburg Student Health Services, 220 Capital Union Building: 717-948-6015
- Penn State Hotline: 800-560-1637 (Anonymous reporting)

In Case of Emergency In the event of a University-wide emergency, course requirements, classes, deadlines, and grading schemes are subject to changes that may include alternative delivery methods, alternative methods of interaction with the instructor, class materials, and/or classmates, and a revised semester calendar and/or grading scheme.

For more general information about the emergency situation, please refer to:

- Penn State Harrisburg's home page at http://harrisburg.psu.edu/
- PSUAlert (http://psualert.psu.edu/psualert/). This is a service designed to alert the Penn State community via text messages to cell phones when situations arise on campus that affect the ability of the campus - students, faculty and staff - to function normally. Everyone is encouraged to sign up to receive the text alerts.
- Messages will be placed at the 717-948-6000 campus phone number

In the case of a University-wide emergency, please refer to the following about changes in this course:

- Canvas: https://psu.instructure.com/courses/2116052
- Instructor's email: mallinson@psu.edu

Basic Needs Statement

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to life, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Office of Student Affairs (syw10@psu.edu, 717-948-6180) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable him to provide any resources that he may possess.

Writing Tutoring and Other Academic Support

The Russell E. Horn Sr. Learning Center may have a tutor who can assist you with this course. An appointment is recommended. Appointments are available in-person or on Zoom, depending on your preference. All services are free of charge to Penn State Harrisburg Students.

To make an appointment:

Visit: Student Enrichment Center Room 201 Or go to: starfish.psu.edu and click on "My Success Network" Or call: 717-948-6475 Or email: PSHLearningCtr@psu.edu

The Learning Center can help you in a variety of ways:

Academic Success Coaching Get help with time management, organization, test-taking, study skills, as well as speech and presentation preparation and delivery.

Subject Area Tutoring Courses including accounting, biological and behavioral science, computer science, economics, finance, mathematics, physical sciences, statistics, engineering, and some world languages are supported by peer and professional tutoring.

Writing Get help with the development of essays, papers, resumes, cover letters, scholarship applications and much more. We can help at any stage from brainstorming ideas to citing sources to polishing your final product, including citations.

The Lambert Undergraduate Advising Center can assist you with exploring majors and minors, understanding academic policies, and planning courses for future semesters.

Drop-in Quick Question Advising is available during the semester both in-person and online (no appointment necessary!). See dates, times, and locations at: `bit.ly/whatsnexthbg`

To contact the Advising Center:

Visit: Student Enrichment Center Room 204 Or call: 717-948-6604 Or email: HBGAdvisingCenter@psu.edu

Course Schedule

We will attempt to follow this schedule as closely as possible, but we may take more time on some concepts and less time on others. For this reason, a digital version of this syllabus can be found on my website. Slides used in class will also be posted on the online syllabus and Canvas before class. All changes to the schedule will be announced in class or via e-mail and the online syllabus will be constantly up-to-date. Required course readings are listed and due dates for assignments are in bold. Links to some additional readings are included in the syllabus on my website, others will be uploaded to Canvas. If you have trouble, please do not hesitate to e-mail me.

Week 1: Introduction

- January 14: Introduction to the class and each other
- January 16: What is Public Policy?
  - Birkland Chapter 1
  - **What is Public Policy? Assignment Due**
- January 18: **Regular Drop Deadline**

Week 2: The Policymaking System

- January 21: The Policy Process as a System
  - Birkland Chapter 2
- January 23: The Policy Process as a System
  - Birkland Chapter 2

Week 3: Structure and History of Policymaking

- January 28: Structure and History
  - Birkland Chapter 3
  - **Systems Theory Homework Due**
- January 30: Structure and History
  - Birkland Chapter 3

Week 4: Policy Analysis

- February 4: Policy Analysis in Principle
  - Bardach and Patashnik Chapter 1 (See Canvas)
  - Erdman, Jeremy. 2018. "." *Post Grad Survival Guide*. February 27.
- February 6: Policy Analysis in Practice
  - Meet in teams during class

Week 5: Policy Writing

- February 11: Policy Writing
  - Smith Chapter 4 (See Canvas)
  - Writing the Executive Summary
  - **Complete and upload the certificate for the Penn State Academic Integrity Training**
- February 13: Librarian Presentation
  - Library Resources Page

Week 6: Research Week

- February 18: Team Research Day
  - **No Class Meeting**
  - **Project Questions Due**
- February 20: HOLD: Madsen Visit
  - **Annotated Bibliography Due**

Week 7: Official and Unofficial Actors

- February 25: Official Actors
  - Birkland Chapter 4
- February 27: Unofficial Actors
  - Birkland Chapter 5
  - **Chapter Outline Due**

Week 8: Agenda Setting and Social Construction

- March 4: Agenda Setting
  - Birkland Chapter 6
  - **Official and Unofficial Actors Assignment Due**
- March 6: Social Construction
  - Birkland Chapter 6
  - **Agenda Setting Assignment Due**

Week 9: Spring Break

- March 11 and 13
  - No Class

Week 10: Research Week

- March 18: Work on Rough Draft in Teams
  - I will be in the classroom to answer questions
  - **Social Construction Assignment Due**
- March 20: Work on Rough Draft in Teams
  - I will be in the classroom to answer questions
  - **First Rough Draft Due**

Week 11: Policy Types

- March 25: Policy Types
  - Birkland Chapter 7
- March 27: Policy Types
  - Birkland Chapter 7
  - **Peer Review Due**

Week 12: Research Week

- April 1: Research Day
  - Work on revisions to your report chapter
- April 3: Research Day
  - Work on revisions to your report chapter

Week 13: Policy Design and Implementation

- April 8: Design and Tools
  - Birkland Chapter 9
  - **Second Rough Draft Due**
- April 10: Implementation

  - Birkland Chapter 10
  - **Public Goods Assignment Due**

Week 14: Failure, Learning, and the Profession

- April 15: Policy Failure and Learning
  - Birkland Chapter 10
- April 17: Policy Science and the Profession
  - Birkland Chapter 11
  - Education for Public Service
  - Professional Masters
  - PhD
  - **Executive Summary Due**

Week 15: Presenting Policy

- April 22: Presenting Policy
  - Smith Chapter 9 (See Canvas)
- April 24: Briefing

Week 16: Research Week

- April 29: Work on Final Copy in Teams
  - I will be in the classroom to answer questions
- May 1: Work on Final Copy in Teams
  - I will be in the classroom to answer questions

Week 17: Finals Week

- **Final Paper and Reflection Essay Due May 6**

Appendices

A Policy Research Paper

This course is designed to not only give you an overview of the policy process, policy analysis, and policy as a profession, but to get you engaged directly in policy work. We do that through a partnership with members of Pennsylvania state government. This class has published five white papers. It's first in 2020: *Improving Community Use of Harrisburg's Reservoir Park*. It's second in 2021: *Implementing Harrisburg's Comprehensive Plan*. The third in 2022: *Coping with Severe Weather in Harrisburg*. The fourth in 2023: *Addressing the Challenges of Homelessness and Education in PA District 104*. The fifth in 2024: Addressing the Challenges of Education, Housing, Cannabis, and Workforce Development in PA District 104. This semester we will again be working with State Representative Dave Madsen on a topic relevant to the Harrisburg region.

There are several intentions with this project. One is to partner with a real life client. A second is to provide you with a real-world policy research experience and artifacts of your participation in that research. In the past, my students have successfully used their policy writing assignments in job interviews. They can also be useful for graduate school applications. Essentially, we want to move beyond the once and done nature of final projects and, instead, have you work on something that is more meaningful personally, professionally, and societally.

Your chapter will be graded based on how thoroughly, yet succinctly, it discusses the policy problem and potential solutions. I expect you will use the analysis and writing resources we learn in this class. Further, it is expected to be well polished in terms of grammar and readability. Finally, I expect you to use the following "data" in your analysis: (1) scholarly literature; (2) relevant quantitative data; (3) and exemplar policies from other cities. A layout template will be provided for formatting your chapter of the report.

Individual project grades will be adjusted based on feedback received in the end-of-semester peer evaluation surveys. This will help me understand the extent of each student's participation in the overall project.

The Task:
Your task is to work with your teammates to develop practical and actionable recommendations for the Pennsylvania General Assembly. These cannot be pie in the sky ideas. You will need to research the specific context in Harrisburg, including the state's finances and staff, to make good recommendations. You should look to other states for ideas, as well as the academic literature. Finally, you should recommend a funding source for anything that

you propose. Be creative, there is a lot of federal funding available right now. So tell the state how to get it.

The Client:
When you are conducting policy research it is important to consider the audience. In this case, our class is working for a client: a member of the General Assembly that represents PA District 104. You need to always keep that in mind when doing your research, and especially when writing your results and recommendations. Make recommendations that the state can implement.

The Process:
There is an iterative and creative process to this research. Once you start to narrow your topic, your team should think about what specific policy problems it will be researching. Once you have identified the topic(s) and problem(s) for your section, use Bardach and Patashnik's Eightfold Path approach to do your analysis. I have posted those readings in Canvas and we will discuss them in class in a few weeks. As you do your research, learn about the city, draw from the scholarly literature and policy reports, and draw examples from other cities. But bear in mind who the client is (see above for a reminder). You need to consider the economic, social, political, and structural environments in Pennsylvania and the Harrisburg region and how feasible your recommendations are given those environments.

As you work on solutions and recommendations, be creative! Think outside the box. You MUST also look for possible funding streams for your recommendations. Research relevant private, state, and federal grant programs. This ties back to making feasible recommendations. If you want to work toward something big, think about what the first five years of that goal would look like. In 1960, Kennedy said we would land on the moon. It did not happen until 1969, as a lot of other developments had to happen first. As you work through your research, you will need to sometimes revisit your problem framing, additional literature, and get feedback from me. This is what I mean by the project being iterative.

The Product: Each team will produce one chapter in a final class report. The chapter should follow the formatting guidance that I will provide later in the semester. It should have the following outline:

1. Introduction, including statement of the specific policy problem(s) your chapter is addressing.
2. An evaluation of the relevant social, economic, political, and structural environments that cause and are affected by that problem.
3. A presentation of possible solutions to the problem.
4. An **formal** evaluation of those options. This should include formal analysis like a simple cost-benefit analysis or an outcomes matrix, like that presented in Bardach and

Patashnik. Your team must develop criteria by which you will evaluate each of the options.

5. Specific recommendations, including potential sources of funding and timeline for implementation.

6. A conclusion.

Humility:
It is important to have humility in this work. Many of you do not live in Harrisburg City, Steelton, or Highspire. That has some advantage, as you can provide an outside perspective, but it can also be a hindrance. Namely, analysts can get into a position where they speak down to the client, chastising them or mischaracterizing the environments. Be objective, but not condescending.

Your Team:
View your teammates as partners in doing this work. I am also a partner, here to provide support. View me as your director, coach, or boss. Whichever is most helpful to you. I want you to succeed at this. I am happy to look at drafts of things along the way. I am also happy to meet with your team to hash out ideas and provide direction. But you need to be proactive in working on this. Do not wait to the last minute or we will all be disappointed with the final product.

Resources:
In addition to me, Emily Reed (emilyreed@psu.edu) at the Penn State Harrisburg library is here to support you (see her excellent library guide: https://guides.libraries.psu.edu/HB/pubpl304w).

Annotated Bibliography Due February 20

Chapter Outline Due February 27

First Rough Draft Due March 20

Second Rough Draft Due April 8

Final Report Due May 6

B Peer Review

Peer review is an important standard for academic research, including much policy research. Peer review provides an objective and outside set of eyes to check over your work. Refer to this *Step-by-Step Guide to Writing a Peer Review* for your review. Note that the aim of a solid review is not to summarize the work you are reading, but to critique it. A good critique is not simply about tearing apart a piece of work, but to identify avenues for strengthening the weaknesses you identify. Your review should be at least three double-spaced pages.

Due March 27

C Executive Summary

A strong executive summary is vital when producing policy research for a government, think tank, or other public and private consumption (e.g., contract work). Most decision makers will have little time to read your entire report. Their staff may do so, but having a shorter summary of the key points is helpful for getting your information into the policymaking conversation. Using the resources we discuss in class, as well as whatever other helpful resources you can find online, your team will need to write a two-page (single spaced) executive summary that will be the cover for the final copy of the research report. I will choose the strongest executive summary to serve as the summary for our final report.

The executive summary will be graded on how well is summarizes *the entire report* while keeping to two pages. Less successful summaries offer vague background information without speaking to the specific recommendations of the overall report. A successful summary uses strong, direct, and positive language to convince a reader of your recommendations.

Due April 17

D Reflection Essay

I would like you to write reflection answering the following questions:[1].

- List the major steps that your team went through in producing the research paper, presentation, and brief
- What is the most important thing you learned in this project?
- What do you wish you had spent more time on or done differently?
- What part of the project did you do your best work on?
- What was the most enjoyable part of the project?
- What was the least enjoyable part of this project?
- How could your teacher change this project to make it better next time?

Essays that thoughtfully reflect on each question and not only answer the what questions, but explain why the student feels the way they do, will receive the highest grades. These should be no *shorter* than two pages.

Due May 6

[1] H/T to the Buck Institute for Education for these questions: https://www.bie.org/object/document/self_reflection_on_project_work