Archer Center Independent Study & Research

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Course Information
PA 8331
Archer Center Independent Study & Research

Summer 2024
Mon 6-9 p.m. ET

Class meets in person at the Archer Center except where noted
Professor Contact Information
Professor  Michelle L. Chin-Miller, Ph.D.
Office Phone  202-955-9035
Email Address  mlc140530@utdallas.edu, mchin@utsystem.edu
Office Location  1750 Pennsylvania Ave NW Suite 900, Washington, DC 20006
Office Hours  4-6 pm ET Mon/Tues or by appointment

Lecturer Contact Information

All Lecturers hold office hours by appointment.

Lecturer Education & Labor Policy Working Group
Prof. Allison Dembeck, MA (email: ada210000@UTDallas.edu)

Lecturer Health Policy Working Group
Prof. Waverly Gordon, MHA, JD (email: Waverly.Gordon@UTDallas.edu)

Lecturer General Domestic Policy Working Group
Prof. Sandra LaMura, JD (email: Sandra.LaMura@UTDallas.edu)

Lecturer Global Affairs/Homeland Security Policy Working Group
Prof. Yvette Badu-Nimako, JD (email: Yvette.Badu-Nimako@UTDallas.edu)

Class Materials
The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class, as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, they are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions
Admission to Graduate Archer Fellowship Program.

Course Overview
This course is tailored to each student’s graduate program of study. Each student will work independently with Dr. Chin and the Archer Center Lecturers to develop a policy research project that aligns with and advances the student’s professional, academic and/or research goals.

Students are required to participate in policy working groups (listed below), where Fellows will meet in person each week with their assigned Archer Center Lecturer and relevant policy experts to discuss their policy proposals. Weekly meetings will take place at the Archer Center.

The policy working groups are:
- General Domestic (GEN) Policy Working Group (Sandra LaMura)
- Education (ED) Policy Working Group (Allison Dembeck)
- Health Policy (HP) Working Group (Waverly Gordon)

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes
Upon completing the class, students will be able to:

1. Students will identify knowledge resources that are unique to D.C. or which are otherwise more easily obtainable in D.C. than in Texas.
2. Students will identify a public policy problem and will describe and develop strategies for assessing the policy problem.
3. Students will develop strategies for resolving or addressing the policy problem.
4. Students will determine linkages between their specific academic/research interests, their internship experience, and knowledge resources noted above (#1).

**Required Textbooks and Materials**

**eLearning**
All course materials available on eLearning. All assignments, except where noted, should be submitted to eLearning. Login to your eLearning account [here](#).

**Required materials**
- Access to a computer and reliable internet service.
- *You should be able to access the required readings online through the links provided (some may require your UTD credentials to access) or posted to the course website on e-Learning. You can access the UT Dallas Eugene McDermott Library’s online catalog and databases here: [https://www.utdallas.edu/library/](https://www.utdallas.edu/library/).*

**General reading**
- *Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports* ([https:// CRS reports.congress.gov](https://crsreports.congress.gov))
- General periodicals that cover federal policymaking and politics
  - Congress & White House
    - *Politico* ([https://www.politico.com/](https://www.politico.com/))
    - *Roll Call* ([https://www.rollcall.com/](https://www.rollcall.com/))
  - Federal Agencies
  - General coverage
    - *Axios* ([https://www.axios.com](https://www.axios.com))
- Topic-specific periodicals – There are many journals focused on specific policy domains. You should identify the leading journals in your topic area of interest. Work with your lecturer to identify these periodicals.

**Policy Working Group**
Identify at least one federal agency that has jurisdiction over the policies that interest you. Then,

a. Read the public law that authorizes the agency. When was it adopted? What was the congressional vote? Read a few news articles related to the agency’s founding to get a
sense of the public and political support for the agency. Compare the original coverage to contemporaneous coverage to see how the agency’s public/political support has changed.

b. Read the **agency’s strategic plan**. What are the agency’s priority goals? How do these goals relate to the preferences/priorities of the President and Congress?

c. Read the **agency’s organizational chart**. Who are the leaders of the agencies key components? How many of these components are staffed by political appointees? How many political appointees have been nominated but are not yet confirmed?

d. Read the **FY 2024 budget** for the agency that was issued by OMB. What are the Administration’s priorities, based on the allocation of resources in the proposed budget?

e. Read the actual FY 2024 budget adopted by Congress to see how much the agency received in FY 2024 appropriations. What are the differences between the President’s proposed budget and actual congressional appropriation?

2. Identify and read the public law that pertains to your policy interest. *Example*: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) authorizes federal preK-12 education programs. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination by direct providers of housing. The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act revised the structure of the Defense Department. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 authorized the E-Rate program to provide telecommunications to schools and libraries. The Social Security Act authorized the system of benefits for old-age workers, benefits for victims of industrial accidents, unemployment insurance, aid for dependent mothers and children, the blind, and the physically handicapped.

**Writing resources** (Not required, but listed for reference)

- **Drafting a policy memo**

- **Use of Social Media**

- **Op-eds and Letters to the Editor**
Course Policies

Course Details
Each class meets weekly on Monday from 6-8 pm at the Archer Center, or other locations as noted. Lecturers reserve the right to meet off-site at locations relevant to the course experience.

Assignments
Students must produce these deliverables by the posted dates.

i. Participation (20%) – Lecturer to keep track of these grades
   1. List of knowledge resources (such as reference materials/sources, advocacy organizations, policy stakeholders, thought leaders) in DC that are relevant to the policy paper. Submit on eLearning (worth 5%) by June 21, 11:59 pm local time.
   2. Create spreadsheet with information about relevant policy network sources. Submit to your lecturer (worth 5%). Also include notes of any meetings with real world policy stakeholders to discuss the policy recommendation. Also include notes about relevant linkages to your specific academic/research interests, and/or your internship experience. Due in eLearning by July 15, 11:59 pm local time. Note: You should aim to work on this spreadsheet from the beginning of the summer term.
   3. Weekly attendance and interaction with guest speakers (worth 10%). This includes weekly classes and the Congressional Conversation (bipartisan, off-the-record, conversation and coffee with members of Congress).

ii. Policy Paper (70%) – Lecturer to keep track of these grades (except for first draft submission)
   1. Draft of policy paper submitted by May 1. Email Word document to Dr. Chin-Miller prior to arrival in DC, who will forward drafts to the lecturers.
   2. Practice Workshop Presentation – July 15 (worth 5%)
   3. Final Policy Research/Background Paper electronic copy due in eLearning by July 19, 11:59 pm local time (worth 60%).
   4. Policy Murder Board presentation – July 22 (worth 5%)

iii. Advocacy Materials (10%) – Lecturer to keep track of grades for these items.
   1. Advocacy Materials due by WORKSHOP meeting July 15 (5 pm CT/ 6 pm ET). Submit materials to eLearning.
      a. 1-page summary of your policy recommendation (worth 5%)
      b. PowerPoint presentation (worth 5%)

NOTE: Meet independently with your Archer Center Lecturer to get feedback on written drafts of your policy research/background paper before the final due date of July 19.

Details: Policy Research/Background Paper

• Paper Specs: No more than 10 pages (excluding Title page, Works Cited/Bibliography, and Appendix), 12-pt font, double-space, APA/MLA format. Each page following the title page should include a header with your full name and the page number.
• **Description:** Papers will address a policy topic relevant to the student’s academic and research goals. Students must draw on and incorporate knowledge resources to describe and develop their strategies for assessing and addressing the policy-related issue. The topic can be one that aligns with a student’s internship work and/or graduate studies, and the topic that the student has selected in Professor Shute’s course.

• **Organization:** The paper should be organized as follows:
  
  o Title Page: Your name, title of the paper, date.
  
  o Abstract: Brief description of research and findings.
  
  o Overview/Introduction: What’s the policy topic and specific problem to be analyzed? Why is it important or salient at this time?
  
  o Background: What is known about past and present federal or state government responses to the policy problem? Summarize the legislative history of the policy problem. Who are the stakeholders impacted by the policy?
  
  o Analysis of Solution Options: What are options for solving the policy problem? What are the costs/benefits of these various options? Who benefits and who is disadvantaged by implementation of the options? What governmental policy actors are responsible for the adoption/implementation/enforcement of the options? What are political obstacles to success in adoption/implementation/enforcement?
  
  o Recommendations: Which solution do you recommend and why? Under what political conditions do you expect to achieve success?
  
  o Appendix: In this section, you should include a list of empirical research questions that emerge from your research on this policy topic, and also provide a proposal(s) for publications, conference presentations and/or future research projects.
  
  o Works Cited/Bibliography: Complete list of citations.

**Late Assignments**
Late work may be penalized at the discretion of the student’s supervising lecturer. Students should contact their supervising lecturer to request any accommodations or additional time to complete the assignment.

**Grading Policy**
All writing assignments must be submitted before a final grade will be posted.
20% - Participation
10% - Advocacy Materials
70% - Policy Research/Background Paper/Abstract

**Grading Scale**

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<td>A+</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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Final grades will be reported to UT Dallas and your home UT System institution by **August 9, 2024** and posted in accordance with their respective grade submission deadlines. **Note:** UT System campuses vary in their use of the +/- grading scale. Grades for students enrolled at campuses that do not follow this system will be reported as follows: A (90-100), B (80-89), C (70-79), D (60-69), F (59 or lower).

**Academic Integrity**
Students are expected to abide by the academic rules and regulations established by the University of Texas at Dallas, which is the academic home for the Archer Center (see https://www.utdallas.edu/conduct/integrity/ for a guide to ensuring academic integrity).

**Harassment Reporting Requirements**
Senate Bill 212 (SB 212), which took effect as of January 1, 2020, is a Texas State Law that requires all employees (both faculty and staff) at a public or private post-secondary institution to promptly report any knowledge of any incidents of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking "committed by or against a person who was a student enrolled at or an employee of the institution at the time of the incident". Please note that both the instructor and the TA for this class are mandatory reporters and MUST share with the Title IX office any information about sexual harassment/assault shared with us by a student whether in-person or as part of a journal or other class assignment. Note that a report to the Title IX office does not obligate a victim to take any action, but this type of information CANNOT be kept strictly confidential except when shared with designated confidential employees. A confidential employee is someone a student can go to and talk about a Title IX matter without triggering that employee to have to report the situation to have it automatically investigated. A list of confidential employees is available on the Title IX website.

**Comet Creed**
This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

**Academic Support Resources**
The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students. Please see http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources.

**UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures**
The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor and Lecturers.

**Academic Calendar**

Unless otherwise noted, the Policy Working Groups will meet **in-person AT THE ARCHER CENTER** each Monday from 6-8 pm ET. In general, the first hour will be reserved for meetings with guest speakers, followed by focused discussions within your policy working group in the second hour.

**Week 1**

**May 30 (THU) – Overview of Policy Development**
Guest Speaker: **Arushi Sharma Frank** (principal, Luminary Strategies; former energy markets policy lead and senior counsel for Tesla)
1-2 pm ET Meet with Policy Working Group lecturers and AFAA members working in congressional offices (Location: Capitol Visitors Center)
Week 2 - June 3 – Budget Development
Guest Speaker: Marianne Clifford Upton (retired Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government)

6-7 pm ET All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
7-8 pm ET Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

Week 3 - June 10 – Role of Congressional Leadership
Dr. Brendan Dunn, founder, Phronesis (former policy advisor & counsel, Republican Leader Mitch McConnell) and Darrel Thompson, partner, theGROUP (former policy advisor, Democratic Leader Harry Reid)

6-7 pm ET All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
7-8 pm ET Meet with your policy working group & lecturer


Week 4 - June 17– Role of Congressional Member Office
Your Lecturers discuss the role that Congressional Member Offices play in the policy process. Be prepared to discuss how you plan to shop your policy proposals to congressional staff and Members.

6-8 pm ET Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

*ASSIGNMENT due by June 21: Knowledge/Information spreadsheet due in eLearning by 11:59 pm ET.

Week 5 - June 24 – Role of White House Policy Advisors
Guest Speakers: Paul Teller (former White House advisor, Vice President Mike Pence).

6-7 pm ET All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
7-8 pm ET Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

Week 6 - July 1 – Agency Roles in Policy Development
Guest Speakers: Education Policy (TBD); Health Policy (Jennifer Robyn Black, legislative analyst, FDA); General Domestic (TBD); Global Affairs & Homeland Security (Prof. John Amaya, former deputy chief of staff, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement).

6-7 pm ET Policy Working Groups meet separately with guests
7-8 pm ET Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

Week 7 - July 8 - Role of Committees in Congress
Meet with committee staff relevant to your policy working groups to discuss the role that congressional committees play in the policy process and plan your strategy for advancing your policy proposals.

6-8 pm ET Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

Friday, July 12, 9-10 am [limited seats] – Breakfast meeting with Robin Millican, Sr. Director of U.S. Policy and Advocacy, Breakthrough Energy. (Location: 1333 H St. NW Suite 520E). Sign up by 7/1 here: https://utdallas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0GGEl4QAqn8EMUS

Week 8 - July 15 - WORKSHOP of Presentations
6-8 pm ET Each Policy Working Group presents to their lecturer and provides peer-feedback on the proposals.
ASSIGNMENTS due by July 15: Submit Policy network spreadsheet & Advocacy Materials to eLearning. Bring working draft presentation to class. NOTE: Final paper is due July 19 (submit to eLearning).

Week 9 - July 22 – Policy Murder Boards

6-8 pm ET Each Policy Working Group presents their policy recommendations to a panel of experts.

Week 10 – July 29 – Final Evaluation

6-8 pm ET Each Policy Working Group also meets with their lecturer to discuss their final proposals and to determine the final audience and action for the recommendation.