

In this course, we analyze urban and regional problems and policy responses.

Urban problems are longstanding, complex, and devilishly difficult to address. We rarely "solve" urban problems, but at times, we are able to ease them, ignore them, slow their growth, reduce their impact, tackle the root causes, and help people adjust. If we can't "fix" cities, why keep trying? We keep chipping away at urban problems because cities and metro areas are important. They are the geographic, economic, institutional, and social organizing units of society in the U.S. and many other countries, as well as home to more than 80 percent of the U.S. population. We also have strong precedent (although not universal support) for policy that aids the disadvantaged, who tend to cluster in urban areas (especially cities).

You will learn how to assess urban problems in the highly inter-related areas of policy formation and implementation.

You will emerge with a more nuanced way of thinking about how cities work, and how we might make them work better. Specifically, you will be able to:

- Conduct quick, basic analysis of urban and regional issues.
- Identify sources of information and assemble evidence regarding urban problems and solutions.
- Analyze and evaluate proposed solutions, and understand the tradeoffs among the positive, negative, and unintended consequences of options.
- Communicate the results of analysis effectively in writing and verbally.

Assignments are designed to give students a broad background in policy analysis and research design, obtain knowledge of commonly used analytical techniques and their theoretical underpinnings, and develop the ability to think critically about assumptions and approaches used in analyzing public policies.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course, but I assume that you have a basic understanding of U.S. political institutions and the policymaking process. Check Blackboard for supplementary readings designed to give you the needed foundation.

Instructor:

Nancy Y. Augustine, PhD

nya@gwu.edu

Office Hours:

Available to meet by phone
most days of the week

Class meeting:

Thursday, 6:10 – 8:00pm

Tompkins 205

August 27 - December 10

Method of Instruction and Classroom Policies

Higher education works best when it becomes a vigorous and lively marketplace of ideas in which **all points of view are heard**. Free expression in the classroom is an integral part of this process. At the same time, higher education works best when all of us approach the enterprise with empathy and respect for others, irrespective of their ideology, political views, or identity.

Respect for Diversity: It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource.

We value civility because that is the kind of community we want, and we care for it because civility permits intellectual exploration and growth.

I see my role as a combination lecturer and facilitator. I will spend part of class time conveying information to you. But deeper learning takes places when students themselves make the connections, apply concepts, discuss implications, ask questions, and consider options. I use a variety of techniques to make that happen.

I see your role as an active contributor to the learning process. You will have opportunities to participate through in-class discussions and group activities. Read the assigned materials before class, each week, take notes, and be prepared to discuss. The required readings will be a launching point for lectures and discussions, not a substitute.

Attendance in class is required, but I realize that it might not always be possible. As a courtesy, contact me a few days before class, when you know that you will be out. *Submit the weekly assignment on time. ~~After class, write up a 500-word summary of a solution to the week's problem, one that we did not discuss in class. No copying and pasting.~~*

I use Blackboard extensively. Please check it regularly. I post announcements on the home page and distribute them by email when time sensitive. An area of the course home page is supposed to alert you to new content, upcoming due dates, and posting of grades.

~~Several days of the week,~~ I am in **my office on campus** on some Mondays and Fridays. You are welcome to stop by any time that my door is open. Don't worry; if I don't have time, I will shoo you away. I am also available for appointments ~~or you can come during office hours.~~

We will be busy in every class session and we don't need any **electronic distractions**. You may bring a laptop or smart phone, but only for taking notes or accessing relevant course material during discussion. Do not use your laptop or smart phone in class to surf the internet, check your email, update your Facebook status, catch up on your Twitter feed, or the like. When you are engaged with your device, you create a dead zone in the class. It creates a distraction to you, to the students around you, and to me.

Your Time Commitment

The university has adopted a policy on contact time and independent work time required for each credit-hour earned. The policy requires me to advise you how you should expect to allocate your time for this course.

In general, you should expect to spend an average of 4 hours of preparation for class (reading, reviewing notes, preparing weekly question) and 2 hours in class, each week. In addition, you will select weeks when you prepare a problem overview (6 hours) and a policy solution (20 hours). Both involve an in-class presentation. I strongly recommend that you get ahead during the lighter weeks. My approximation of your minimum time commitment is as follows:

Activity	Min Hrs	Points
Class time (14 weeks @ 2 hrs)	28	200 (class participation)
Readings, notes, prep weekly questions (14 wks @ 4 hrs)	56	200 (weekly questions)
<i>State of the Cities</i> analysis	25	300
Final writing assignment	25	300
TOTAL	140	1000

Assignments overview

Assignment details will be posted on Blackboard. Submit all assignments through Blackboard by the given due date.

Class participation (200 points)

Contribute through attendance, group work, and class discussion, throughout the term. Class discussions will center on readings, lectures, and presentations.

- Attendance is required. As a courtesy, contact me a few days before class, when you know that you will be out.
- Contribute to class discussions by referring to points made in the readings, making connections to previous discussions and readings, applying concepts to concrete situations, identifying pros and cons, assessing the impact of policies and problems on different groups, among other methods.
- Group work assignments will be provided in class and will generally not require work outside of class. You may be asked to submit group work for my review.

ASSIGNMENT: Weekly questions (total 200 points)

Each week, I will give you questions based on the readings. Submit *before* class through Blackboard. In most weeks, we will address these questions during class. *Submit even if you have to miss class.*

ASSIGNMENT: *State of the Cities* analysis (300 points)

You will apply the analytical method used in National League of Cities' *State of the Cities 2018* to one city of your choosing. We will study their report and the method in week 4. Parts of the assignment will be due throughout the semester.

ASSIGNMENT: Final writing assignment (300 points)

A final writing assignment will ask you to synthesize the policy areas discussed, this semester. You will receive a set of study questions. Then I will give you a subset of those questions, and you will have some choices. No promises, but last year, I distributed 10 study questions. Then I assigned one required question and let students choose 4 of 6 questions to answer. Questions ask you to carry out the same kind of analysis that we will be doing in class all semester.

Class Schedule – overview

1	Aug 30 - Intro to urban and regional policy
2	Sep 6 – What state and local governments do (federalism)
3	Sep 13 – Wicked problems and problem definitions
4	Sep 20 – <i>State of the Cities</i> and content analysis
5	Sep 27 – Immigration
6	Oct 4 – Infrastructure
7	Oct 11 – Technology
8	Oct 18 – Employment
9	Oct 25 – Concentrated poverty and segregation
10	Nov 1 – Community-police relations
11	Nov 8 – Case study: Eric Garner
12	Nov 15 – Crime and incarceration
	<i>Nov 22 – Thanksgiving; NO CLASS</i>
13	Nov 29 – Protecting low-income tenants
14	Dec 6 – Wrap-up

Letter grading will be based on percentage of points earned:

92.5+ A: Excellent and exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well-reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of exceptional professional quality.

90.0 – 92.4 A-: Very Good: Very strong work for a graduate student. Shows signs of creativity and a strong understanding of appropriate analytical approaches, is thorough and well-reasoned, and meets professional standards.

88.0 - 89.9 B+: Good: Sound work for a graduate student; well-reasoned and thorough, without serious analytical shortcomings. This grade indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives of this graduate course.

86.0 - 87.9 B: Adequate: Competent work for a graduate student with some evident weaknesses. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but the understanding or application of some important issues is less than complete.

84.0 - 85.9 B-: Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student but meets minimal expectations in the course. Understanding of key issues is incomplete. (A B- average in all courses is not sufficient to sustain graduate status in good standing.)

82.0 - 83.9 C+: Deficient: Inadequate work for a graduate student; rarely meets minimal expectations for the course. Work is poorly developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstandings of important issues.

80.0 - 81.9 C: Deficient – see above

78.0 - 79.9 C-: Deficient – see above

Less than 78.0 F: Unacceptable: Work fails to meet minimal expectations or course credit for a graduate student. Performance has consistently failed to meet minimum course requirements. Weaknesses and limitations are pervasive.

UNIVERSITY AND CLASS POLICIES

Syllabus: This syllabus is your guide to the course. If any questions arise, please check the syllabus before contacting me. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and I may revise content during the semester. Please be generous in sharing notes with each other.

Late or Missed Class: Attendance is required. Any unexcused absence will result in a deduction from your grade. If you are late or absent from class, you must obtain all announcements, assignments, and handouts from Blackboard or classmates.

Submission of Written Work Products: It is your responsibility to make sure that you are able to access Blackboard to make your submissions on time. All work must be submitted by the assigned due date in order to receive full credit. Only extreme circumstances warrant exceptions. Unexcused late submissions will be marked down for each day that they are late.

Academic Honesty: All examinations and other graded work products are to be completed in conformance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. It states, in part: "Academic dishonesty is

defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." Note especially the definition of plagiarism: "intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information." For the remainder of the code, and for more information about standards for conduct as well as your rights as a student, see <https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/>.

Incompletes: You must request an incomplete no later than the last day of classes in the semester. You will fill out the CCAS contract for incompletes for both of us to sign and you will submit a copy to the School Director. Go to <http://bulletin.gwu.edu/university-regulations/university-regulations.pdf> for the full policy on incompletes.

Changing Grades after Completion of Course: No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: If you need extra time on exams or assignments due to a disability, let me know in the first week of class. Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should also contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>.

University Counseling Center: The University Counseling Center (UCC), 202-994-5300, offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations; confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. <https://healthcenter.gwu.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services>.

Security: In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

University Policy on Religious Holidays: Respect for diversity is one of GW's core values, extending to all aspects of our community. In keeping with this value, the university has adopted guidelines, recommended by the Faculty Senate, that ensure students and faculty may observe religious holidays without academic penalty:

- That students notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance;
- That faculty continue to extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations;
- That faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities;
- That, prior to each semester, the administration circulate to faculty a schedule of religious holidays most frequently observed by GW students;
- That student members of other religious groups are also entitled to the same courtesies and accommodations; and
- That the administration conveys this policy to students by including it in the schedule of classes and other places deemed appropriate.

DETAILED CLASS SCHEDULE

1. Introduction to urban and regional policy (Aug 30)

Readings:

1. I assume that you have a basic understanding of U.S. political institutions and the policymaking process. At a minimum, you should skim the materials on the basics of state and local government arrangements.
 - Basics of state and local government arrangements: <http://www.nlc.org/resource/cities-101-types-of-local-governments> Cities 101 (National League of Cities)
 - About America_How the United States Is Governed.pdf – (U.S. State Department)
 2. Also read
 - Inman, chapter 1 (Introduction: City Prospects, City Policies)
 - Bardach, Introduction, Step One: Define the Problem, and Step Two: Assemble Some Evidence (p xv – 15)
 3. You will be given time to read the following in class, but if you need extra time, please read ahead.
 - McKisson, Michael (2013) "Bikes to be banned in Warren Underpass" Bicycle Tucson. <http://www.bicycletucson.com/all-posts/streetcar-to-ban-bikes-in-warren-underpass-on-ua-campus/16295>.
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2. What state and local governments do (Sep 7)

Readings:

Bowman and Kearney, *State and Local Government: The Essentials, 6th Edition*, chapter 2, "Federalism and the States."

National League of Cities, "City Rights in an Era of Preemption: A State-by-State Analysis, 2018 Update."

Shipan and Volden (2012) "Policy Diffusion: Seven Lessons for Scholars and Practitioners," *Public Administration Review*, Volume 72, Issue 6, pages 788–796.

3. Wicked problems and problem definitions (Sep 13)

Questions for this week:

- What is a wicked problem?
- What are some examples of wicked problems that we see in urban areas?
- Are wicked problems completely unsolvable? Why do we bother with them?

Readings:

You will see some overlap in Conklin and APS, but their emphases are different. Conklin is more general, and gives examples from many realms. The APS piece applies directly to public policy and public administration.

- Conklin, Wicked Problems and Social Complexity; stop on page 9 (before "Coping with Wicked Problems")
- APS, Tackling Wicked Problems; sections 1-4 only
- Kingdon, chapter 5 – Problems; start with "Problem Definition" on page 109 and read through to the end.
- National Review Online – "A Guide to Basic Differences between Left and Right." (Jan 17, 2017)
- "A Tale of Two Platforms" (July 31, 2016)

4. State of the Cities (Sep 20)

Readings:

- National League of Cities, *State of the Cities 2018*.
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5. Immigration (Sep 27)

Readings:

- Ybarra, Vickie D., Lisa M. Sanchez, and Gabriel R. Sanchez "Anti-immigrant Anxieties in State Policy," *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* Vol 16, Issue 3, pp. 313 – 339.
- Camarota, Steven A. "Deportation vs. the Cost of Letting Illegal Immigrants Stay." Center for Immigration Studies, August, 2017, <https://cis.org/Report/Deportation-vs-Cost-Letting-Illegal-Immigrants-Stay>.
- National Conference of State Legislatures, "Report on State Immigration Laws, 2017" (February 2018); http://www.ncsl.org/documents/immig/2017_Immigration_Report%20FINAL.pdf
- Armus, Teo. "'Please come help'" *Washington Post*, August 17, 2018. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/local/wp/2018/08/17/feature/trump-changed-a-seasonal-worker-program-now-marylands-crab-houses-are-losing-business/>

6. Infrastructure (Oct 4)

Newkirk, "How to Build Hurricane-proof Cities" *The Atlantic*, September 12, 2017.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/09/how-to-build-hurricane-proof-cities/539319/>

~~Zurich, "Rebuilding Infrastructure: The Need for Sustainable and Resilient Solutions"~~

~~Infrastructure from the Ground Up, Government Executive Media Group, July 2018~~

7. Technology (Oct 11)

President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, "Report to the President: Technology and the Future of Cities," February, 2016

8. Employment (Oct 18)

Questions for this week:

- What is employment policy?
- How does employment policy work?
- What are the arguments for and against employment policy?

Readings:

- Center for American Progress, "Top 10 Solutions to Cut Poverty and Grow the Middle Class" <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/poverty/news/2014/09/17/97287/the-top-10-solutions-to-cut-poverty-and-grow-the-middle-class/>
- Bartik,, Timothy J., "The Case for Labor Demand Policies," chapter 1 of *Jobs for the Poor*. Russell Sage Foundation, 2001.
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9. Concentrated poverty and segregation (Oct 25)

Readings:

- Teitz, Michael B. and Chapple, Karen (1998) "The Causes of Inner-City Poverty: Eight Hypotheses in Search of Reality." *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research*, 3:3, p33 – 70.
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10. Community-police relations (Nov 1)

Denvir, Daniel. "1968 and the Invention of the American Police State " CityLab, April 30, 2015. <http://www.citylab.com/crime/2015/04/1968andtheinventionoftheamericanpolicestate/391955/>

Blow, Charles M. "Romanticizing 'Broken Windows' Policing" The New York Times, June 4, 2015.

Brennan Center, "New Crime Data Does Not Show Nationwide Crime Wave," July 26, 2016.

MacDonald, Heather, "The Nationwide Crime Wave Is Building," May 23, 2016.

11. Case study (Nov 8)

Readings

12. Crime and incarceration (Nov 15)

Readings:

- Wendy Still, Barbara Broderick and Steven Raphael. "Building Trust and Legitimacy Within Community Corrections." Harvard Kennedy School, National Institute of Justice. 2017
- National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring Causes and Consequences. Chapter 1 - Introduction. 2014.

13. Protecting low-income tenants (Nov 29)

Readings

- Presidential Commission on Election Administration, "The American Voting Experience: Report and Recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration." January 2014.
- Knee, Jonathan A. "Why For-Profit Education Fails," *The Atlantic*, November, 2016.
- Mattes, Margaret. "The Private Side of Public Higher Education." The Century Foundation, August 7, 2017.

14. TBD / wrap-up (Dec 7)

ASSIGNMENT: Policy analysis (60 points)

You will write a policy analysis comparing alternative responses to a specific problem associated with poverty in a specific city.

Your submissions will be in the form of a series of memos, submitted throughout the semester. The audience is a local decision-maker, such as a city manager, mayor or the council. Each memo should be comprehensive but succinct, covering the most important points that are critical for the decision-maker to know.

Learning objectives for this assignment:

- Apply the policy analysis approach discussed in class and laid out in Bardach.
- Identify and define an urban poverty problem.
- Identify analyze sources of information about the problem.
- Assemble the results of your analysis as evidence regarding the problem and potential solutions.
- Propose alternative policy measures to address the problem.
- Analyze the expected performance of each alternative relative to a set of goals.

Requirements:

- Submit digital copies of your work through Blackboard.
- Document all source material through a standard format (MLS, APA, etc.)
- Include a full bibliography, including web references.
- Unexcused late submission of any assignments will result in a deduction.

Policy Analysis part 1: Propose a specific problem associated with povety in a specific city.

Address each item separately. Submit through Blackboard by **Sunday** at 11:59 pm.

1. Name the city you plan to study. Explain your connection to this city or why you want to learn about this city.
2. Describe the aspect of poverty you plan to study Explain your interest in the problem, and/or why you are interested to learn about it.
3. Write a one-sentence definition of a reasonably specific problem. State which of the following forms the problem definition follows:
 - a) Do we have too much or too little?
 - b) Is it a private problem that we (might) agree should be addressed publicly?
 - c) Is government not performing as we think it should?

4. Explain how you believe the problem could possibly be addressed through policy at the local level, and make a dent in the problem in a reasonable period of time. *No research required.*
5. Explain how you believe the problem has a primary or disproportionate effect on disadvantaged people.
6. Find the material you need for the assignment, such as data, relevant planning documents, and information about policy options.

Policy Analysis part 2: Define the policy problem and assemble evidence. Base your work on Step 1 and Step 2 of Bardach. Address each item separately. Submit through Blackboard by **Sunday** at 11:59 pm. Length 1000-1250 words. **10 points.**

- a. Define the problem in the locality that you have chosen. Address feedback received on your Part 1 submission.

Grading criteria:

- i. Identifies a specific problem associated with disadvantage in a specific city.
- ii. Limits the scope of the problem to something that a single policy could address (even though we do not yet know that that single policy is)
- iii. Does not define the problem in terms of the intended solution.
- iv. States the problem clearly as a deficit or excess, private problem that warrants public action, or government failure.

- b. Explain who is affected by the problem, directly and indirectly, and in what way.

Grading criteria:

- i. Identifies the key entities affected by the problem, including institutions and subpopulations.
- ii. Explains how they are affected.

- c. What is the extent of the problem? Present relevant numeric data.

Grading criteria:

- i. Presents data that are relevant to the problem.
- ii. Presents comprehensible data, sufficient to quantify the problem.

- d. Compare the extent of the problem in your locality to the extent of the problem in the U.S. or some other geographic context. Does the comparison make your city's problem seem more severe? Not as bad? On par?

Grading criteria:

- i. Uses an appropriate geographic unit for comparison.
 - ii. Presents comparable data as in part c, but for the comparison unit.
 - iii. Discusses the key points of comparison, and not every point of comparison.
- e. Describe the *relevant* characteristics of the locality that you have chosen. At a minimum, if you are looking at an education problem, then you should present education characteristics. If it's a public safety problem, you should present public safety characteristics. And so on.

Grading criteria:

- i. Describes characteristics that are relevant to the problem.
- ii. Presents a cohesive discussion of characteristics.

Additional grading criteria:

- Length 1000-1250 words.
- Submitted on time.
- Addresses each part separately without jumbling.

Policy Analysis part 3: Present briefly up to ten of the relevant goals of the locality that you have chosen. Write an introductory / overview paragraph. Cite the source. Submit through Blackboard by Friday, June 13 at 11:59 pm. 10 points.

To complete this task, do an internet search for the locality's comprehensive plan, general plan, or master plan. Look for a plan (or chapter of a plan) that addresses your subject area. For instance, if you are exploring a crime issue, then look for a public safety plan. If your locality does not have a subject area plan, you may use the general plan. Examples will be given in class.

Policy Analysis part 4: Propose three policy options, one of which is maintaining the status quo. Submit through Blackboard by Thursday, July 3 at 11:59 pm.

- a. Re-state the problem, revised as necessary after you have completed this research.
- b. For each of the three policy options, address the following:
 - i. Describe the policy option (approximately 500 words).
 - ii. Report on the actual implementation of the two policy options (other than the status quo) in some other urban locality/ies. This work will involve locating the actual local government

agency responsible for implementing the policy, making contact with someone in the local agency, and reviewing documents related to the policy implementation. Approximately 500 words each.

- iii. When you contact the local government agency responsible for implementing the policy, ask about the lessons learned from their experiences. Has it worked out well or not? Have there been unexpected side effects, and are those effects beneficial or not? What would they do differently, if they could?
- iv. Discuss the three key takeaways from your research of other policy options, as they relate to your locality.
- v. Explain why you think that those takeaways do or do not apply to your locality and whether your locality should follow the lead.

Policy Analysis part 5: Analyze strengths and weakness of each of the policy options. Submit through Blackboard by Friday, July 18 at 11:59 pm.

- a. Identify the strengths of the option in terms of the goals (or outcomes or values) being advanced
- b. Identify the weaknesses of the option in terms of the goals (or outcomes or values) not being advanced, or even being hindered.
- c. Present a matrix or summary table of your analysis.

add a sample matrix

Policy Analysis part 6: Final submission: Include a recommendation.