**Course Description:** This is a basic introduction to policy analysis. The course is designed to introduce you to some analytical tools necessary for policy analysis, explore strategies for making policy analysis relevant to the policy debate, and develop some understanding of how policy analysis fits into the overall policymaking process. As you will see, this class will cover both theory and practical application. Learning theory makes us better practitioners. Most class days will be divided into four sections. First, one or two of you will present a reading on a particular policy area. This will help us better understand not only the content of various policy areas, but also will also allow us to see policy analysis in action. Second, we will discuss people skills for policy analysis. It is difficult to imagine practicing policy analysis without some understanding of people skills. Third, we will talk about the policy tool for the day. At the beginning of the semester, this may be a tool to understand policy in a general sense. Later in the semester, this section of the class will introduce a new method of analyzing data. Finally, each day we will work some on Microsoft Excel. Most people have access to Excel and understanding how to use Excel in policy analysis is key to being an effective analyst in many organizations.

**Required Books:**


**Recommended Book:**


We will also have a number of reserve readings that you will be responsible for. Please note that you are not required to purchase the Miller book, however, if you will be writing about numbers at any point in your career, you will find this book extremely helpful (both in this class and after).

**Academic Honesty:** Ethical behavior is central to the role of the policy analyst in the democratic process. Academic honesty in this class, therefore, is one component of your professional development as a policy analyst, and I regard this as an extremely important matter. The university has administrative procedures and rules regarding academic honesty (listed on pgs. 7-8 of the student handbook), but there are three basic rules should help you. First, do your own
work. Second, if you borrowed an idea from someone else, make certain they receive proper attribution. Third, if you are in doubt, ask me.

**Disability Statement:** If you have any special needs that will affect your ability to perform in this class, please contact Student Support Services at 828-227-7127, located in room 248 of the Killian Annex

**Grading:**

*Exams:* There will be a midterm and a final examination. The midterm will be worth 75 points. The final will be worth 100 points.

*Homework:* Being a good policy analyst requires practice. As a result, you will complete at least five homework assignments throughout the semester. Some of the more technical exercises have correct answers, and your grade will depend on the accuracy of the answer and how you tried to answer the question. Many of the questions, however, will not have a single right answer, and for these questions you will be graded for your effort, logic, and method of grappling with the problem presented. Overall, the exercises will account for 100 points of your final grade.

*Participation:* For this class to work properly both you and I must be in class each week and have full grasp of the material assigned for the week. As a result, 25 points of your total grade will rest on class participation.

*Class Presentation:* Each week one or two of you will be assigned to present a policy analysis reading to the class. You must also turn in a written assessment of this reading. I will present details on this in class.

*Policy Analysis Application Project:* From time to time, you may have a policy question. What are the effects of heavy zoning on migration patterns in your town? Would a bike lane help reduce the number of people who drive cars in Cullowhee? Would a new stadium for the Asheville Tourists be economically feasible? You may not have specific data to bring to bear on this question, but it is likely that others have written about similar topics and their findings might help direct your decision.

For this class, you will need to come up with a specific policy question that could apply to your city, university, organization, or state. You will then review what policy analysts have written about the subject and write a memo about how these findings inform your decision. For instance, pretend you work for the city of Asheville and your boss has asked you to see if it would be economically advantageous for the Tourists to build a new stadium. You would need to find out what has been written about stadiums in general and apply it to the specific needs of Asheville. I encourage you to make this assignment as realistic as possible. This paper should be 7-10 pages long. You will present your findings on the last two days of class.

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<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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**Schedule**: I reserve the right to change any part of this schedule with one week’s notice.

Thursday, January 12- Introduction to Policy Analysis
- What is policy analysis?
- Introduction to Microsoft Excel

Thursday, January 19 Problem Definition
- Policy tool: Problem definition
- People skill: Understanding people skills
- Excel Exercise #2
- Readings Due this week:
  - Bardach, Section 1
  - Mintrom, Chapter 1

Thursday, January 26: Policy Process and Policy Agendas
- Policy tool: Models of the policy process
- People skill: Managing your resources
- Excel Exercise #3
- Readings due this week:
  - Bardach, Section 2
  - Mintrom, Chapter 2
  - Excerpt from Kingdon

Thursday, February 2: Ethics of Policy Analysis; economic rationality and its impact on policy
- Policy tool: Ethics; understanding the implications of the market for democracy
- People skill: Building expert knowledge, interviewing informants
- Excel Exercise #4
- Readings due this week:
  - Bachrach, Section 3
  - NAPA, Chapter 1. Divide up readings of each case study

Thursday, February 9: Policy and Criteria Beyond Efficiency
- Policy tool: Understanding societal values other than efficiency
- People skill:
- Giving presentations
- Excel Exercise #5
- Reading due this week:
  - Mintrom, Chapter 3, 4
  - NAPA, Chapter 4.

Thursday, February 16: Critical Thinking, Research Design and Measurement
- Policy Tool: Applying proper research design
- Reading due for this week:
  - Mintrom, Chapter 5
Thursday, February 23: Midterm Examination

Thursday, March 2: Making Sense of Numbers
- Policy Tool: Presenting data
- People Skill: Working in teams
- Reading due this week:
  - Mintrom, Chapter 6

Thursday, March 9: Spring Holiday

Thursday, March 16: Forecasting
- Policy tool: Forecasting
- People skill: Facilitating Meetings
- Reading due this week:
  - Minstrom, Chapter 7

Thursday, March 23: Ordinary Least Squares Estimation
- Policy tool: OLS Forecasting & OLS estimation
- People Skill: Writing for multiple audiences
- Reading due this week:
  - Mintrom, Chapter 8

Thursday, March 30: Cost-Benefit Analysis
- How do I use Excel to analyze multivariate data?
- Policy tool: Cost Benefit Analysis
- People Skill: Conflict Management
- Reading due this week:
  - Mintrom, Chapter 9

Thursday, April 6: Qualitative Tools for Policy Analysis/A critique of Policy Analysis
- What are the biases implicit in policy analysis
- Wrapping up People Skills for Policy Analysts
- Policy tools: focus groups, and DELPHI
- Reading due this week:
  - Mintrom, Chapter 11

Thursday, April 13: Easter Holiday

Thursday, April 20: Class Presentations

Thursday, April 27: Class Presentations

Thursday, May 3: Final Exam

Other Important Dates
Jan. 13: Drop/Add Closed
Feb. 13: Last day to drop a graduate class with an automatic W
April 24: Last day to withdraw from a course for mental health, medical, legal, or administrative reasons
May 6: Commencement