Grading Scheme A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Project outline, due Day 2 10 p.m. 1000 word limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Project on a policy-related issue of your choice. An in-depth assessment of the issue with recommendations for policy changes to deliver better outcomes. Recommendations should reflect lessons from previous policy failures. All policy domains and all jurisdictions are eligible. Due Date (tbd). 3000 word limit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Class participation including class discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Presentation on policy-related issue. Students will be assigned roles for presentations, such as Opposition Critic.</td>
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Grading Scheme B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Analysis of a public policy issue. Your analysis should cover nature of the problem; why it has persisted despite policy efforts; what should be done differently to achieve more favourable outcomes. Due Day 3 10:00 p.m. 1000 word limit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Analysis of a second public policy issue. Your analysis should cover nature of the problem; why it has persisted despite policy efforts; what should be done differently to achieve more favourable outcomes. Due Day 5 plus (tbd) 10 p.m. 1000 word limit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Class participation including class discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Presentation on policy-related issue. Students will be assigned roles for presentations, such as Opposition Critic.</td>
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</tbody>
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You must select your grading scheme by end of Day 1.

**Late submissions:** 5% will be deducted each day your outline or project is late to a maximum of 2 days and then assignments will not be accepted except in cases of documented, as appropriate, emergency.

**Participation:** Your participation grade will be based on evidence of your preparation, your contributions to small group and plenary discussions in class, and your general participation when not presenting. Grading criteria include work quality, relevance of questions and comments, ability to formulate evidence-based arguments, willingness to challenge accepted ideas, concern for views expressed by others, solicitation of peer ideas and ability to respond constructively to challenges and criticism. The quality, not quantity, of your participation is important so be sure to listen to and engage your peers.

**Learning Outcomes:** There have been persistent failures of public policy to achieve desirable socio-economic outcomes which provide valuable lessons across all realms of public policy and public administration. Examples are numerous but include:
- Governments struggle to craft policies that will raise long-term growth rates.
- They typically run fiscal policy in a pro-cyclical fashion and have a bias toward deficits and debt accumulation.
- After 30 years of low, steady inflation, prices have again taken off.
- Income distribution is unequal.
- Public opinion is focused on crises in access to primary healthcare and affordable housing.
- Greenhouse gas emissions targets are rarely achieved.
- Continued unpreparedness for the predictable public policy issue of our ageing population.
- There is an intergenerational wealth transfer away from the young.

We will examine the common themes behind these and other policy failures. Our policy scope will be international, including Canada at the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal policy levels.

Reflecting the strong oral tradition of public policy, class discussion, debate and student presentations will be encouraged and highly valued. Working “within the box” has led to policy failures. This is the time to “swing for the fences” with fresh ideas on how to improve the well-being of people.

Although MPA 887 will involve the application of principles in both macro- and micro-economics, no further background than that provided by MPA 804/805 will be required or necessary for your success.

**Background reading and progression:**

Background modules will be provided for each subject area covered and will include references to relevant literature. These references should **not**, however, be considered a formal reading list as the richness of our class debate would be impinged if everyone forms their views from the same reference material. As with all public policy matters, your positionality is relevant, and your knowledge and independent research are crucial for your success.

- Approximately one month before the course begins the modules will be loaded to OnQ for each policy subject area.
- Our tentative class schedule is set out below, and the course will be adapted based on student interests and current events.
- Lectures and class discussion will occur each morning.
- Student presentations will occur on the afternoons of Days 4 and 5.

**Tentative Class Schedule**

**Day 1 Introduction, State of the Nation:**

Course outline. Survey of interest amongst our classroom community. Framework(s) for policy analysis. Examples of strategic application of the classic policy tools of allocation, distribution and stabilization and their integration with moral suasion, regulation, taxation and/or public spending.

“State of the Nation” for Canada. An assessment of life in Canada from certain perspectives including happiness, economic, equality/diversity, social/individual, and environmental
considerations. Our assessment will be calibrated against our ideals, our historical record and the achievements in other countries.

We will examine why some countries achieve better outcomes while others struggle persistently.

Day 2 Health Policy; Macroeconomics:

Health Policy. We will examine the juxtaposition of Canadians’ generally favorable view of their health system against the evidence, our focus on healthcare rather than the promotion of health, and our ongoing unpreparedness for population ageing. We will consider the interactions across policy areas and the weight, but disregard, of socio-economic factors in health outcomes.

Macroeconomic policy and global issues. Within your lifetime, the belief that economies would no longer suffer from wild economic swings persisted until the 2008 financial crisis and ensuing recession. Prices have soared of late following 30 years of low, steady inflation. We will consider the potential for bias in policy-implementation towards fiscal deficit, debt, and intergenerational transfers. We will also examine the perpetual deficits in other countries that continue to persist despite checks and balances.

Day 3 Education; Social Policy; and Economic Policy.

Education. We will examine why Canadian post-secondary institutions face ongoing, if not mounting, financial challenges despite their successful record of generating high private and social rates of return. We will look at factors driving academic results in international standard exams of children.

Social. Poverty has been reduced for seniors and children, but the income distribution remains very unequal. Poverty is persistent for certain groups. We will consider the potential role for proposals such as basic income.

Economic. We will probe why audits typically show economic interventions have not generated favourable net economic benefits. We will examine the slow, unsteady transition to “clean growth” in concert with economic development, innovation, business support and labour market factors.

Day 4 Environment & Indigenous Policy.

Environmental Policy. Contemporary environmental policy challenges including climate change, traffic congestion, water use, and waste disposal will help us illustrate policy failures and opportunities, especially as informed by the work of the EcoFiscal Commission and Climate Change Canada.

Indigenous Policy. Socio-economic gaps persist for Indigenous communities, and this will be used as a platform to analyze current efforts to establish a government-to-government relationship with our Indigenous Peoples, including a new fiscal relationship.

Day 5 Common Themes:

We will critically examine why government programs tend to be infrequently subject to review, and the persistent knowledge gap regarding government intervention via the regulatory arm.
The prominent trend away from public to private services will be discussed, as well as the implications for policy and the public.

The changing environment for public policy and the implications for policy reform and the civil service. The shift toward private services, the rise of social media, the partiality of remaining news services will be among the recent developments addressed.

The course will close on the strategic lessons from past policy failures and the upcoming policy opportunities for you, as a current or future policy authority, which offer better outcomes.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see [www.academicintegrity.org](http://www.academicintegrity.org)). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities [www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/report-principles-and-priorities](http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/report-principles-and-priorities)). Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen’s. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment or the failure of a course to the rescinding of a degree.

**Accommodation For Students with Disabilities**

Queen’s University is committed to working with students with disabilities to remove barriers to their academic goals. Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS), students with disabilities, instructors, and faculty staff work together to provide and implement academic accommodations designed to allow students with disabilities equitable access to all course material (including in-class as well as exams). If you are a student currently experiencing barriers to your academics due to disability related reasons, and you would like to understand whether academic accommodations could support the removal of those barriers, please visit the QSAS website ([https://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services](https://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services)) to learn more about academic accommodations.

To start the registration process with QSAS, click the Access Ventus button found on the Ventus student portal: [https://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services/ventus](https://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services/ventus) Ventus is an online portal that connects students, instructors, Queen’s Student Accessibility Services, the Exam’s Office, and other support services in the process to request, assess, and implement academic accommodations. To learn more about Ventus, visit A Visual Guide to Ventus for Students: [https://www.queensu.ca/ventus-support/students/visual-guide-ventus-students](https://www.queensu.ca/ventus-support/students/visual-guide-ventus-students)

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