

**Johns Hopkins University
Institute for Policy Studies – Spring 2008**

**POLICY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION
(195.640.01)**

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Course Outline

This is a time of austerity budgets and unprecedented fiscal deficits, accompanied by skeptical attitudes and expectations surround public expenditures. Therefore, practitioners are under great pressure to implement policies successfully, manage projects efficiently and articulate outcomes coherently if they have any expectations of continuing to receive public and/or private support. Success requires the ability to respond to the political context and the agendas and personalities of a diverse group of key players—public, private and nonprofit. In addition, success will be dependent as well on the ability to effectively articulate well-defined and measurable goals while at the same time managing systems that support operations.

There is an “art” to leading and a “science” to managing. A successful leader/manager combines both sets of skills. Through readings, case studies, field investigations, interchanges with experienced and successful managers and classroom discussion, students will be exposed to both the art and science of policy planning and implementation. They will learn the tools and techniques of strategic planning, implementation and management, including:

1. Guiding principles for successful policy implementation
2. Articulating goals and objectives
3. Selecting strategies, weighing alternatives, and planning for contingencies
4. Preparing budgets, which are the circulatory system of programs, and developing schedules that ensure that plans are realized
5. Using information to monitor progress and make mid course corrections
6. Making cogent and persuasive presentations
7. The art of donor development

Successful policy implementers must fully understand the strategic planning process and appreciate the meaning of “accountability” — how to define success. They must develop assessment tools, establish benchmarks and identify and collect the data elements needed to measure performance. They must understand the “systems” they are dealing with and how to continually improve performance and present findings to the funders through verifiable data and to the public through the media. And, in the 21st century, they must know how to adapt to and use technology to reach their goals.

This course builds on the analytical tools students have already honed. It will help them learn how to apply those tools to effectively implement policies and programs in the public and not-for-profit sectors and through public/ private partnerships. Students who may become funders of nonprofits will have acquired the principles for assessing the management/ implementation capacity of any proposed operations.

The course will be limited to 16 students and will be conducted as a seminar. There is a required reading list that includes academic readings on the implementation field supplemented by specific readings on the field of education policy and high school reform. These readings are important not only for background information but also to enrich the classroom discussions and field interviews.

Working in teams, students will conduct field interviews and prepare PowerPoint classroom presentations based on their findings from their interviews and background readings. The policy context for the course addresses the growing national and state interest in high school reform. School systems are in various stages of implementing change in hundreds of local areas across the country. Students will be divided into teams to conduct investigative case studies in four of the Innovation High Schools that are in various stages of implementation in Baltimore as a result of an initiative spearheaded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and several local foundations. The field investigations will enable students to get a richer understanding of the planning and implementation process of these complex new initiatives. The interface with local colleges, school systems, employers, community based organizations, government agencies, youth and parents as well as the implementation of required education and support components will all be examined as part of the complex mosaic that turns policy into action.

In addition to the team fieldwork and classroom presentation, each student will write two short research papers (approximately 5-7 double spaced pages) choosing from among the following topics:

1. The Impact of the Charter School Movement on Public Education
2. Pros and Cons of Zero Tolerance Policies
3. The Positive and Negative effects of High Stakes Testing
4. Equity Issues in School Funding: who gets hurt, who gets helped
5. Pros and cons of teacher unions
6. Curriculum Innovations eg. project based learning, cognitive tutor, freshman seminars, etc
7. Multiple Pathways Education Movement: Can Dropouts be Re engaged?
8. Out of School Time: an assessment of after school and summer programs
9. Growing emphasis on STEM and the connection to global competitiveness
10. Reform Models e.g. Tough Choices or Tough Times recommendations

At least two class sessions will be devoted to students' sharing their findings from their research papers, with a focus on the implementation implications of each topic.

Students are expected to engage in lively classroom discussions with faculty and invited experts based on the materials presented in the class, their field investigations, the readings and their accrued knowledge.

The final examination will reflect the reality milieu of this course. Students will develop a response that should justify a winning award to a Request for Proposal (RFP) on a topic of the student's choosing. This response should reflect the lessons learned about policy planning and implementation. A "bidders conference" will be held in a class session after the RFP is distributed in order to respond to student questions.

Students will be expected to use technology to carry out the assignments: including using PowerPoint for their team presentations and Excel spreadsheets for their budgets.

- 25% of course grade will be based on the teams' class presentations of observations and lessons learned from the field investigative case studies and background work.
- 25% of course grade will be based on the total score of the 2 individually written research papers
- 15% of grade will be based on the quality of classroom participation
- 35% of grade will be based on the final exam (response to RFP)

Please note that the first five class meetings will be 2 and half hours in length running from 10:00 am - 12:30 pm. On March 6 class will meet from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm in the morning and 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm in the afternoon with Brenda McLaughlin, as guest lecturer. Lunch will be provided. All other class sessions will be the customary 2 hrs in length and will meet from 10:00 am -noon. Class will not meet on March 13, 20 (Spring Break), and 27.

Session 1 / Introduction: (1/31/08) 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

- Purpose of the Course
- Outlining Course Requirements
- Introduction of team concept and field investigations
- Confirm topic choices for research papers (to assure variety) and pick lead presenter
- Discussion: Guiding Principles for Successful Policy Implementation
- Discussion Policy Framework for Education Reform "Tough Choices or Tough Times" (if time permits)

Required reading list for the course:

Moore, Mark H. Creating Public Value, Strategic Management in Government. Chapter 7,"Implementing Strategy: The Techniques of Operational Management"

Toch,Thomas. High Schools on a Human Scale

NCEE Policy Forum. The American High School Crisis and State Policy Solutions

Brand,Betsy (ed) Essentials of High School Reform

Voke and Brand. Finance and Resource Issues in High School Reform

Allen and Steinberg Big Buildings, Small Schools

Report of New Commission on Skills of the American Workforce. Tough Choices or Tough Times

Readings for both sessions on March 6:

National Center for Community Education, The Road to Sustainability
<http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/11700/11646.pdf>

The Finance Project. Sustaining Comprehensive Community Initiatives
<http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/sustaining.pdf>

<http://www.tacs.org/handbook/dirtemplate.asp?pID=35>

Session 2: (2/7/08) 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

The Strategic Planning Process: Part 1

Elements of Strategic Planning: Discussion with interactive exercises

- The Why, How and What of Strategic Planning
- Creating a Shared Vision (exercise)
- Setting Goals and Objectives (exercise)
- Identifying the Student Population
- Resource Mapping
- Identifying the Partners (exercise)
- Developing Strategies within Budget (exercise)

Class discussion and reflections on readings

Confirm research paper assignments; confirm team configurations; decide on school assignments and start scheduling visits; distribute implementation plans to teams

Session 3: (2/14/08) 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Continuing the Strategic Planning Process: Part 2

The Implementation Process

- The RFP Process – (timeline exercise)
- Attributes of good providers
- Evaluating the RFP – (exercise)
- Creating an Accountability Framework:
 - Creating Benchmarks – (exercise)
 - Analyze program data

- Performance review and corrective action if necessary
- Ongoing feedback and monitoring

Discuss template for field visits and confirm field visit schedules

Each team to study copy of Implementation Plans submitted to the School District that will be visited by each team

Start planning for presentations on Research Topics for next two sessions

Session 4: (2/21/08) 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

First Research Paper Due

Student led discussions on five research paper topics ... approx 20 minutes each

Field visits are underway...discussion of any relevant issues

Session 5: (2/28/08) 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Second Research Paper Due

Student led discussion on five research paper topics ... approx 20 minutes each

Field visits are underway

Sessions 6 and 7: (3/6/08) 10:00 am - noon and 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm (lunch provided)

AM Session

Lecture and exercises with Brenda Mc Laughlin, guest lecturer

Practical Guide to Developing Budgets: How to Make the Numbers Work

PM Session

Lecture and exercises with Brenda Mc Laughlin, guest lecturer

How Budgets are evaluated by Grantors

Invited budget officers representing public and private sectors

(Teamwork on Case Study Power point presentations underway)

NO CLASS MEETING – MARCH 13

SPRING BREAK – MARCH 20

NO CLASS MEETING – MARCH 27

Session 8: (4/03/08) 10:00 am - noon

**Exercise in Program Planning (transfer concepts to creating a youth center)
Consider underlying design and programmatic principles**

Teamwork on field case studies and power point presentations being finalized

Session 9: (4/10/08) 10:00 am - noon

Team 1: Presentation of site #1 field study implementation findings - approx. 45 min.

Team 2: Presentation of site #2 field study implementation findings - approx. 45 min.

Class discussion and critique

RFP for final Exam will be distributed in preparation for Bidder's Conference on April 17

Session 10: (4/17/08) 10:00 am - noon

Bidders's conference concerning RFP distributed last week Q&A

Team 3: Presentation of site #3 field study implementation findings

Class discussion and critique

Session 11: (4/24/08) 10:00 am - noon

Team 4: Presentation of site #4 field study implementation findings

Class discussion and critique...beginning discussion of lessons learned from sites about implementation keys to success and obstacles

Session 12: (5/01/08) Last Session 10:00 am - noon

Guest speaker: Joanne Nathans, founder of Job Opportunities Task Force – “The ins and outs of donor development”

Revisit guiding principles discussed at the beginning of course...any changes???

FINAL EXAM (COMPLETED RFP) TO BE SUBMITTED TO ROOM # 520 NO LATER THAN 4:00 P.M. ON THURSDAY MAY 08, 2008.