Instructor: Dr. Penelope M. Earley  
Class Date & Time: Wednesday 4:30 – 7:10 p.m.  
Class Location: Robinson A, 308  
Contact Information:  
   Room 441 Robinson A  
   E-mail: pearley@gmu.edu  
   P: (703) 993-3361  
   F: (703) 993-2013  
Office Hours: By Appointment: MTWR 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on in-depth analysis and study of selected education policy issues. Review of various points of view on the issues is considered. Particular attention will be given to interactions and connections between selected education issues, and the similarities and differences in policy approaches at the K-12 and higher education levels.  
Prerequisite: Admission to the Ph.D. program and completion of EDUC 870 or equivalent doctoral-level policy coursework.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:  

1. Demonstrate a detailed and sophisticated understanding of major policy issues.  
2. Analyze and describe the legal and political forces that influence decision making on these issues.  
3. Understand and explain the intersections of various policy issues (for example, teacher recruitment for general and special education classrooms).  
4. Understand and explain how and why different levels of education may approach these policy issues in a different manner.  
5. Demonstrate ability to describe and analyze the research bases for major policy issues.

RELATIONSHIP TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

There are no specialized standards specific to education policy studies. The conceptual framework for this course is linked to the mission of the Center for Education Policy as outlined in its Charter: (1) Translate education research into policy options and recommendations for a variety of audiences (decision makers, practitioners, and the public); (2) Conduct timely, sound, evidence-based analysis; and (3) Develop interdisciplinary and cross-sector policy networks. The student outcomes (in particular 3, 4, and 5) are linked to this mission as are the analytic assignments.
NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course is taught using lectures and discussions supplemented with outside speakers.

TEXTS AND READINGS


Education Policy Analysis Archives (EPAA), available on-line: [http://www.epaa.asu.edu](http://www.epaa.asu.edu)

*Educational Researcher*, available on-line: [http://www.aera.net](http://www.aera.net)


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Paper 1: Identify and analyze policy implications of a research article in any peer-reviewed education journal on a topic related to this course. See the accompanying grading guidelines for expectations of written work. (5 – 8 pages double spaced) 25 points. **Due: Feb. 16**

Paper 2: Discuss and analyze conceptual and policy connections between any two issues that are the focus of this course. See the accompanying grading guidelines for expectations of written work. (5 – 8 pages double spaced) 25 points. **Due March 02**

Paper 3: Discuss and analyze policy issues related to one of the topics that are the focus of this course as they show themselves at different levels of education (PreK through 16). Include consideration of different or similar ways policy decisions are made at these levels. See the accompanying grading guidelines for expectations of written work. (6 – 10 pages) 25 points. **Due April 06**

Team Activities: Develop bibliography of on-line research (3 points); Prepare policy talking points (3 points); identify reading provisions in NCLB (3 points); design policy advocacy power point (5 points); find position statements (3 points) develop and present policy PSA ( 8 points).

EVALUATION

An evaluation rubric for this class is attached. All written work must be completed on a typewriter or a word processor and must be within the page limits established by the instructor.
Grading Scale:

A = 96-100  A- = 92-95  B+ = 89-91
B = 85-88  B- = 80-84  C = 75-79
F = 74 and below

Point assignments for work:

Paper 1  25 points
Paper 2  25 points
Paper 3  25 points
Team Presentations 25 points

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week-Class  Topic and Readings

January 26--High Stakes Testing
- Defining the terms in K-12 and higher education
- Does Testing Drive Student Achievement?
- Consideration of Debate Over High States Testing: What are the central arguments on each side of this issue?


February 02-- Interactions Between Testing Policy in PreK-16 Settings and Across Disciplines
- Discuss Scrooge Meets Dick and Jane
- Discuss bibliography
- Group discussion question: Should colleges and universities be ranked according to how students perform on a standardized test? Why and Why not?
- Team assignment: Go to the U.S. Department of Education’s Web site and find the testing requirements for special education and limited English proficient students in NCLB. What does NCLB say about programs to help students learn English (hint: NCLB, Title III). Prepare and be prepared to present talking points for a superintendent to brief a school board.

Assignment for February 09: Big Brother and the National Reading Curriculum, Introduction and Part I

February 09-- Literacy and Reading Policy
- Presentation of “talking points”
- Discuss Big Brother and the National Reading Curriculum
- Team assignment: Find reading programs authorized through NCLB
- What Are the Issues? What are policy connections to testing, special populations and scientifically-based research provisions in NCLB?

Assignment: Paper 1 due on February 16; read Big Brother and the National Reading Curriculum, Part II and Conclusion, Spring P. 53-70.
February 16 – Literacy Policy and Undergirding Research
- Discussion of Big Brother and the National Reading Curriculum
- Discussion of student papers
- Why has reading become an ideological battle ground?

Team Assignment due February 23: Prepare two power point presentations (maximum of six slides each). One should support the Bush Administration’s position on reading instruction and one should be a presentation that reflect’s Allington’s point of view.

February 23– Impact of Literacy Policy on the Higher Education Curriculum
- Presentation of power points
- What Reading Methods Should Education Schools Teach and Who Decides?
  Why is this a controversial matter?

Assignment: Read Conflict of Interest, Chapters 1, 2, & 9 and Taking Sides Issue 7 and Issue 16; Paper 2 Due March 02.

March 02 – Children With Special Needs: English Language Instruction for non-English Proficient Children
- Discussion of student papers
- Consideration of Federal Policy (NCLB) and Instruction for non-English Proficient Children
- Team Assignment: Identify six organizations that you expect would have a position statement on either instruction for limited English proficient children or some aspect of IDEA. What are their positions on these issues? Post this information on Blackboard

Assignment: Taking Sides, Issue 14 and Issue 17.

March 09 – Special Education
- Discussion of IDEA Reauthorization and New Provisions
- Speaker: Dr. Mark Goor, Associate Dean Graduate School of Education and Past President Council of Exceptional Children Teacher Education Division

March 23– Policy Interactions Related to the Identification of, and Services for Children with Special Needs
- What Are Implications of Data Regarding Over Identification of Certain Children for Special Education Services?
- Does NCLB help or aggravate this situation?
- What Are Policy Options


March 30– Evidence and Educational Research
- What is the Role of Decision Makers in Deciding Research Issues and Methodologies?

Assignment: Paper 3 Due April 06
April 06—Using and Generating Research: Policy Actions in the PreK-12 and Higher Education Institutions

- Discussion of student papers
- What is the Role of Educational Research in PreK-12 and Higher Education Settings?
- What are Implications For Setting Policy?

**Assignment: Taking Sides, Issues 1 and 2; Conflict of Interest, Chapter 11**

April 13—No class

April 20—Connecting the Dots

- Using PSAs for policy advocacy

**Team Assignment: Identify a policy issue and develop a PSA for it (presentation on May 04)**

April 27 – Impediments to Cross Discipline and Cross Level Policy

- If There are Conceptual and Policy Connections Across Education Disciplines and Levels, Why is Education Policy Fragmented? What are Possible Solutions?

May 04 – Wrap Up

- Presentation of PSAs

**Important Information for all students**

The College of Education and Human Development expects all students to abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [www.gse.gmu.edu](http://www.gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must know and follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for the full Honor Code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [http://mail.gmu.edu](http://mail.gmu.edu) and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
- Students with disabilities to seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/students/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/students/drc) or call 703-003-2474 to access the DRC.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade/Points</th>
<th>Quality of Written Work</th>
<th>Completeness of Work</th>
<th>Timeliness</th>
<th>Team Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 96 – 100</td>
<td>Exceptional quality and insight; a rare &amp; valuable contribution to the field.</td>
<td>100% complete</td>
<td>100% on time</td>
<td>Outstanding; facilitates and promotes conversation focused on the topic; questions &amp; comments reveal thoughtful reaction. Good team participant</td>
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<td>A- 92 – 95</td>
<td>Convincingly on target; demonstrates evidence of understanding and application; clear and concise writing; the reader is not distracted by grammar and/or spelling and citation errors.</td>
<td>Accurate &amp; seamless writing; virtually a complete product</td>
<td>Almost always on time; rare but forgivable tardiness (such as serious personal or family illness). Instructor is notified in advance that a paper may be late.</td>
<td>Well above average doctoral student; actively helps move group toward goal</td>
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<td>B+ 89 –91</td>
<td>Competent; provides credible evidence of understanding and application; some lapses in organization, citations and/or writing clarity.</td>
<td>Moderate shortcomings; minor elements missing that distract the instructor's ability to see the product as a whole.</td>
<td>Assignments late more than once or without prior conversation with instructor; not necessarily chronic.</td>
<td>Reliable and steady worker; questions and comments reveal some thought and reflection.</td>
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<td>B 85 – 88</td>
<td>Evidence of understanding presented but incomplete; writing indicates gaps in logic; grammar and/or spelling errors distract the reader. Weak or insufficient citations.</td>
<td>Evidence of effort but one or more significant and important points are missed or not addressed.</td>
<td>More than half the assignments are late, but none are excessively late.</td>
<td>Doesn’t contribute often, but generally reveals some thought and reflection. Follows rather than leads group activities.</td>
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<td>B- 80 – 84</td>
<td>Barely passable for graduate credit; only enough to get by; little evidence of understanding; assignments lack clarity and organization; little evidence of proof reading. Citations absent or inaccurate.</td>
<td>Barely sufficient; work is the least that could be done to justify graduate credit.</td>
<td>Excessively or repeatedly late.</td>
<td>Few meaningful contributions to class discussions. Little evidence of participation.</td>
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<td>C 79 and below</td>
<td>Undergraduate level and quality; unsophisticated; assignments show little or not connection to course content or concepts.</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence of understanding and application; important elements missing or difficult to find.</td>
<td>Excessively or repeatedly late.</td>
<td>Weak or minimal participation; passive; often sidetracks group.</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>Difficult to recognize as the assigned task.</td>
<td>Missed or not submitted. Incompletes not made up.</td>
<td>No constructive participation; destructive; demeaning toward other points of view.</td>
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