Public Policy and Child Development

Psych 592-DL5 Online

MW 4:30 – 5:45PM

Instructor: Jameela Conway-Turner, PhD

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Office Hours: Fridays 9 to 10:30am or by appt.

Brief Overview of the course: The course will address both science policy and social policy related to developmental  science. ***Science Policy***: includes an overview of the funding sources for developmental science, including Congressional oversight and appropriations for research, and an overview of the major federal agencies funding developmental science. ***Social Policy***: The includes an overview of the federal legislative process, the key differences between federal and state policymaking mechanisms, history and the scholarly literature on bringing research to policy, and translation of research for policy audiences. The format of the course will include reading and web archive assignments, brief lectures, class discussions, guest speakers, oral presentations, and writing projects. Topics and legislation related to child development will be emphasized.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Understand the historical and political context for child policy in the United States.
2. Examine value assumptions and ethical issues involved in policies related to children

and families especially children from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds.

1. Understand the landscape of federal funding for developmental science.
2. Understand the processes associated with policy development in the U.S. and intersections with research ‐ from defining the problem to implementing the policy to policy evaluation.
3. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills including translating research for nonacademic audiences.

**Assignments:**

**Attendance and Participation (25 points):** The course is discussion based. Without participation (and attendance), this course does not work. Therefore, students are expected to be in every class.

**Policy Brief and Presentation (75 points)** Students will choose a research paper or project that they have completed. This includes a research project that has research questions, analyses and results. Students will be expected to use that topic to develop a policy brief and a presentation. The policy brief will be worth a total of 50 points (25 points for the rough draft and 25 points for the final draft). In the policy brief, students will be expected to explain the background of the problem and provide recommendations to policymakers. In the presentation (25 points), students will be expected to explain the results of the study to their stakeholders.

Course grades will be based on class participation (25 points), the first draft of the policy brief (25 points), the final draft of the policy brief (25 points) and the final presentation (25 points).

Grade Calculation

Grades will simply be calculated by the amount of total points earned in the course; since it is out of 100 points, your calculations will be easy. For example, if you get 80 points in the class, you have an 80%.

Grade Breakdown

A+ 100+% B+ 89 – 87% C+ 79 – 77% D 69 – 60%

A 100 – 93% B 86 – 83% C 76 – 73% F 59% and below

A- 92 – 90% B- 82 – 80% C- 72 – 70%

**The Honor Code**

Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor System and Code. (http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm).Students are encouraged to study together as much as possible throughout the course, however, no assistance, sharing of information, or discussion of exam items or answers between students may take place. For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to GMU procedures. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student’s. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

**Miscellaneous**

The deadlines for adding and dropping classes are as follows:

Last day to add classes: Monday February 1st

Final Drop Deadline: Friday February 12th

If you are a student with disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 709-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling & Psychological Services (3129 Student Union Building I, http://caps.gmu.edu/) at 993-2380for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything.

**Draft Schedule (subject to change):**

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| Date & Topic | What’s Due |
| Monday, Jan 25 Introduction to course;  |  |
| Wednesday, Jan 27Overview of current issues in child development & public policy |  |
| Monday, Feb 1Overview of current issues in child development & public policy  |  |
| Wednesday, Feb 3Overview of the federal government  |  |
| Monday, Feb 8Federal funding for research; overview of the federal legislative process  |  |
| Wednesday, Feb 10Communicating Research  |  |
| Monday, Feb 15No Class  |  |
| Wednesday, Feb 17Policy Brief Workshop |  |
| Monday, Feb 22Policy Brief Workshop |  |
| Wednesday, Feb 24No Class  | **First Draft of Policy Brief Due at the end of the class period** |
| Monday, Mar 1Career opportunities at intersection of research andPolicy GUEST SPEAKER TBD |  |
| Wednesday, Mar 3Policy Brief Returned & Workshop |  |
| Monday, Mar 8Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Adolescent Development & Juvenile Justice  |  |
| Wednesday, Mar 10Guest Speaker Career opportunities – Allison Bock, Program Evaluation Specialist, Virginia Beach City Public Schools Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Adolescent Development & Juvenile Justice  |  |
| Monday, Mar 15Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Early Education Policy; Elementary and Secondary Education Policy | **Final Draft of the Policy Brief Due** |
| Wednesday, Mar 17Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Early Education Policy; Elementary and Secondary Education Policy |  |
| Monday, Mar 22Communicating through Powerpoint Presentation |  |
| Wednesday, Mar 24Communicating through Powerpoint Presentation |  |
| Monday, Mar 29Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Paid Family Leave |  |
| Wednesday, Mar 31Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Paid Family Leave |  |
| Monday, Apr 5Presentation Workshop |  |
| Wednesday, Apr 7Presentation Workshop |  |  |
| Monday, Apr 12Presentations | **All Presentations Due** |
| Wednesday, Apr 14Presentations |  |
| Wednesday, Apr 19Presentations |  |
| Monday, Apr 21 Presentations |  |
| Wednesday, April 26 Presentations |  |
| Monday, April 28PresentationsLAST DAY OF CLASS  |  |

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| Date & Readings/Video  |  |
| Monday, Jan 25 No readings/videos |  |
| Wednesday, Jan 27 – Current issues in Child Development Read ahead of time: Corporal Punishment in U.S. Public Schools <https://www.srcd.org/research/corporal-punishment-us-public-schools>Video to watch in class: Becoming an Antiracist Society: Setting a Developmental Research Agenda <https://www.srcd.org/event/becoming-antiracist-society-setting-developmental-research-agenda> |
| Monday, Feb 1 - Current issues in Child DevelopmentNo readings/videos  |
| Wednesday, Feb 3 – Overview of the Federal Government Videos to watch in class: Executive Branch (President): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWR2p9j9hWo>Congressional Branch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hltv8-nzcUc> |
| Monday, Feb 8 – Federal Funding for Research; Legislative Process No readings/videos None  |  |
| Wednesday, Feb 10 – Communicating Research Read ahead of time: SRCD Social Policy Report – Research Practice Partnerships: Building Two Way Streets of Engagement <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED581655.pdf>Resource for Later: Findings from a National Study on Research Use Among School and District Leaders (posted on Blackboard)Watch in class: Supporting Black Students’ Excellence: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsp9zkYZFqw&t=7s> |
| Monday, Feb 15 - Policy Brief WorkshopNo readings/videos  |  |
| Wednesday, Feb 17 - Policy Brief WorkshopNo readings/videos |  |
| Monday, Feb 22No readings/videos | **First Draft of Policy Brief Due at the end of the class period**  |
| Wednesday, Feb 24No readings/videos |  |
| Monday, Mar 1 Career opportunities at intersection of research and PolicyNo readings/videos  |
| Wednesday, Mar 3 - Policy Brief Returned & WorkshopNo readings/videos  |
| Monday, Mar 8Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Adolescent Development Videos to watch in class: Ted Talk: Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUa0bIqZ0XU> |
| Wednesday, Mar 10Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Adolescent Development Webinar to watch before class: Framing Adolescent Development <https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/presentation/framing-adolescent-development/>  |
| Monday, Mar 15 – Elementary and Secondary Education Act Video before class: What does the US Department of Education do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTadUHrLmhs>To watch in class: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4okt6u6OEkg>  |
| Wednesday, Mar 17 Elementary and Secondary Education ActNo videos/readings  |
| Monday, Mar 22Communicating through Powerpoint Presentation |  |
| Wednesday, Mar 24Communicating through Powerpoint Presentation |  |
| Monday, Mar 29Topics at the intersection of research and policy: Paid Family LeaveTo read before class: Policy Recommendation – Paid Family Leave <https://www.newamerica.org/in-depth/care-report/policy-recommendation-paid-family-leave/> |
| Wednesday, Mar 31Topics at the intersection of research and policy: English Language Learners To read before class: Policy Recommendation: Dual Language Learners <https://www.newamerica.org/in-depth/care-report/policy-recommendations-dual-language-learners/>  |
| Monday, Apr 5No videos/readings |  |
| Wednesday, Apr 7No videos/readings |  |  |
| Monday, Apr 12No videos/readings |  |
| Wednesday, Apr 14No videos/readings |  |
| Wednesday, Apr 19No videos/readings |  |
| Monday, Apr 21 No videos/readings |  |
| Wednesday, April 26 No videos/readings |  |
| Monday, April 28No videos/readings  |  |