

POL220 • Public Problem Analysis

School of Governance & Public Policy • Undergraduate • 6 ECTS

Overview

Turn messy public issues into analyzable problems: stakeholder mapping, constraints, and testable hypotheses. Students define measurable outcomes, build simple models and theories of change, and learn to communicate uncertainty and tradeoffs.

LOGISTICS

Credits: 6 ECTS

Level: Undergraduate

School: School of Governance & Public Policy

Prerequisites: None listed

Tags: policy, evaluation, civic

Meeting time: Weekly lecture + stakeholder lab

Instruction mode: From messy reality to testable hypotheses and measurable outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES

You will be able to:

- Frame public problems with constraints, stakeholders, and measurable goals
- Design simple measurement plans and explain what they can/can't prove
- Write concise analysis briefs suitable for decision-makers
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ASSESSMENT

Components

- Coursework: 60%
- Final project: 40%

Assignments are brief-driven: you will submit problem frames, measurement plans, and short memos. Strong work is concrete: what you will measure, who is affected, and what trade-offs exist.

WEEKLY PLAN

Schedule

Week 1: Week 1

- Problem framing: scope, stakeholders, and constraints

Week 2: Week 2

- Theory of change: assumptions and causal pathways

Week 3: Week 3

- Measurement: indicators, baselines, and data quality

Week 4: Week 4

- Trade-offs: equity, feasibility, and political constraints

Extended outline

- Problem framing: scope, stakeholders, and constraints
- Theory of change: assumptions and causal pathways
- Measurement: indicators, baselines, and data quality
- Trade-offs: equity, feasibility, and political constraints
- Writing briefs: clarity, structure, and recommendations
- Final: an analysis pack for a real public problem

POLICIES & RESOURCES

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- Ethics: consider impacts and unintended consequences.
 - Evidence: separate facts from interpretation.
 - Academic integrity: cite sources and data.

Suggested resources

- Brief template (context, options, recommendation)
- Indicator checklist
- Stakeholder map worksheet