

# Public Policy

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Michael M. Bechtel

Email: [m.bechtel@uni-koeln.de](mailto:m.bechtel@uni-koeln.de)

Office hours: after class and by appointment

Webpage: [www.mbechtel.com](http://www.mbechtel.com)

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Paul Michel ([michel@wiso.uni-koeln.de](mailto:michel@wiso.uni-koeln.de))

## 1. Description

Humans live in a world of scarce, exploitable resources: clean air, potable water, food, medical supplies, money, time, and many other goods that humans depend on are limited. In addition, many of these resources do not respect national borders or, alternatively, may be adversely affected by the behavior of actors in other countries (e.g., pollution). This poses important public policy problems that challenge traditional notions of national policy autonomy. We examine the fields of economic and environmental policymaking to gain insights into the conditions under which public policy can successfully govern collective resources. Our substantive focus will be on democracy, elections, globalization, climate change, and economic crises.

## 2. Prerequisites

Students should have taken a first course in comparative politics, international economics, public economics, international law, public law, or political economy and should have basic research design and methods skills.

## 3. Requirements and Coursework

This is an interactive course to facilitate learning and the development of transferable skills. The final grade is computed as follows:

- Exam: up to 100 points
- Bonus points:
  - Pre-Survey and Post-Survey bonus: 0.25 points each
  - Course evaluation survey(s):
    - 0.5 bonus points if 80% of all enrolled students participate in all surveys.
    - 0.75 bonus points if 90% of all enrolled students participate in all surveys.
    - 1 bonus point if 100% of all enrolled students participate in all surveys.
  - Student presentation: up to 5 points

Grade	Point Total
1,0	95-100
1,3	90-94
1,7	85-89
2,0	80-84
2,3	75-79
2,7	70-74
3,0	65-69
3,3	60-64

3,7	55-59
4,0	50-54
5,0	< 50

Final Exam: There will be an electronic in-person exam at the end of the semester. The exam covers the mandatory readings and the material discussed in class. Students will have 60 minutes to complete the exam. The exam date is July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 5:30pm. Students must register for the exam on Klips in order to be eligible to receive ECTS for this course.

Pre- and Post-Surveys: We administer a mini-survey before the first session and a second mini-survey at the end of our final session to enhance engagement with the substantive content of the course, to learn more about students' backgrounds, and to identify their substantive interests. This information is important for improving learning experience.

The Pre-Survey can be accessed at: <https://survey.uni-koeln.de/index.php/443477?lang=en>. The link to the Post-Survey will be made available at the end of the semester.

Student Presentations: A group of students (2-3 students) can present one article (marked \* below) during the tutorial sessions. The presentation should be 15 minutes long and

- inform the audience about the article's key motivation and contribution
- briefly explain the theoretical argument and the main predictions
- summarize the research design
- highlight the key finding(s)
- identify ways in which one could improve the article
- offer two discussion questions
- identify one other presentation/reading to which your presentation/reading is related

Students can sign up to present an article during the tutorial session by indicating their choice in this survey: [https://unikoelnwiso.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6s2Q3LYgYf5Zqe](https://unikoelnwiso.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6s2Q3LYgYf5Zqe).

The allocation follows a first-come, first-serve principle. The deadline for submitting your paper preferences is April 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### Course evaluation survey

To encourage students to participate in the centralized course evaluation survey for this class, each student will receive bonus points conditional on the survey participation rate.

#### **4. Time and Room**

Estimated enrollment: 40

Lecture: Mondays 10am-1.30pm (seminar building, S21)

Tutorials:

Group 1: Wednesdays 2pm-3.30pm

Group 2: Wednesdays 4pm-5.30pm

Both tutorials will take place in seminar building, S25.

#### **5. Aims of the Course**

The specific aims of this course are as follows: Students...

- should have a basic understanding of theories of public policy.
- can apply theories in pre-structured contexts (e.g., case studies) in a solution-oriented way.

- are familiar with widely used research methods and can critically engage with research designs.
- improve their command of the English language relevant to the study of public policy.
- develop a critical understanding of the impact of policy choices regarding environmental, economic, political, social, and ethical criteria.

## 6. Key Skills

The course seeks to develop or enhance the following key skills:

- Communication: writing clearly and to the point, writing to deadlines, presenting ideas and arguments orally
- Working with others: making/challenging contributions, listening to others, exchanging interpretations, respectful discussions
- Improving learning and performance: discriminating reading, accepting and responding to criticism, developing own opinions
- Information technology: word processing, library searches, use of the internet for research
- Problem-solving and networked thinking: conceptualization of issues, identification and evaluation of research designs, analysis and synthesis of evidence and argumentation, evaluation of the credibility of evidence, assessing the validity of conclusions
- Research design and research logic: experimental reasoning, observational research designs, regression analysis, statistical inference

## 7. Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating, fabrication of data and records, and other types of dishonesty and misconduct constitute breaches of academic integrity. For violations such as cheating on an exam, the grade penalty is failure of the course.

## 8. Diversity and Inclusiveness

The best learning environment—whether in the classroom, studio, laboratory, or fieldwork site—is one in which all members feel respected while being productively challenged. The course is dedicated to fostering an inclusive atmosphere, in which all participants can contribute, explore, and challenge their own ideas as well as those of others. All interactions in class will be civil, respectful, and supportive of an inclusive learning environment for all students. These rules are reciprocal, i.e., students are also expected to interact with instructors and teaching assistants in a civilized and respectful manner. Students are encouraged to speak to the instructor about any concerns they may have about classroom participation and classroom dynamics. Every participant has an active responsibility to foster a climate of intellectual stimulation, openness, and respect for diverse perspectives, questions, personal backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.

## 9. Resources for Students

The University has several institutions offering support for students in various potential areas (e.g., general study guidance, administration, discrimination, sexualized violence, and bullying). See for an overview: <https://wiso.uni-koeln.de/en/studies/service-wiso-faculty/central-guidance-services>.

The WiSo Student Service Point (WiSSPo) serves as a first point of contact for questions about studying at the WiSo Faculty and bundles services and advice in one place. This also includes questions about examination matters. See: <https://wiso.uni-koeln.de/en/studies/service-wiso-faculty>.

## 10. Textbooks

Goodin, Robert/Moran, Michael/Rein, Martin 2008. The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy. Oxford University Press.

Hinich, Melvin J./Munger, Michael C. (1997). Analytical Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Morton, Rebecca B. (1999). Methods and Models: A Guide to the Empirical Analysis of Formal Models in Political Science. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shepsle, Kenneth/Boncheck, Mark S. (1997). *Analyzing Politics. Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Recommended Methods Texts:

Angrist, Joshua D., and Jörn-Steffen Pischke (2009). *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Angrist, Joshua D., and Jörn-Steffen Pischke (2015). *Mastering Metrics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Cunningham, Scott. 2021. *Causal Inference: The Mixtape*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. [freely available at: <https://mixtape.scunning.com/>]

Fahrmeir, Ludwig, Thomas Kneib, Stefan Lang, and Brian Marx. 2013. *Regression. Models, Methods and Applications*. Heidelberg: Springer.

Pearl, Judea, and Dana Mackenzie. (2018). *The Book of Why: The New Science of Cause and Effect*. Basic Books.

**11.Schedule and Reading List**

See readings below.

Date	Lecture	Tutorial
April 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Public Policy, Research Design, and Data Analytics</li> </ul>	
April 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Globalization</li> <li>• Democracy</li> </ul>	
April 22		Experimental and Quasi-experimental Research Designs
April 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voting Behavior</li> <li>• International Bargaining</li> </ul>	
April 29		Regression and Statistical Inference
May 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Finance and Economic Openness</li> <li>• Economic Crises</li> </ul>	
May 6		Exercises
May 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade</li> <li>• Immigration</li> </ul>	
May 27		Exercises
Jun 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Organizations</li> <li>• Climate Politics</li> </ul>	
Jun 24		Exercises
July 1		Exercises

July 22	Exam preparation
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**\* Marks mandatory readings**

PART I – THEORY AND FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS

1. Introduction

Berger, Suzanne. 2000. Globalization and Politics, in: *Annual Review of Political Science* 3: 43-62.

Weber, Max. 1905/1949. “Objectivity” in *Social Science and Social Policy*, in: Shils, Edward A. and Henry A. Finch (eds.). *Max Weber on the Methodology of the Social Sciences*. Glencoe, Illinois.

2. Globalization

Dreher, Axel, Noel Gaston, and Pim Martens. 2008. *Measuring Globalisation – Gauging its Consequences*. Springer: New York.

\* Ladewig, Jeffrey W. 2006. Domestic Influences on International Trade Policy: Factor Mobility in the United States, 1963 to 1992, in: *International Organization* 60 (1): 69-103.

\* Milner, Helen. 1999. The Political Economy of International Trade, in: *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 91-114.

3. Democracy

Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2001. A Theory of Political Transitions. *American Economic Review* 91 (4): 938-963.

Boix, Carles (2011). Democracy, Development, and the International System, in: *American Political Science Review* 105 (4): 809-828.

Bonica, Adam, Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2013. Why Hasn’t Democracy Slowed Rising Inequality?, in: *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 27 (3): 103-124.

\* Freeman, John R. and Dennis P. Quinn. 2012. The Economic Origins of Democracy Reconsidered, in: *American Political Science Review* 106 (1): 58-80.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy, in: *Journal of Political Economy* 65 (2): 135-150.

\* Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1959. Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy, in: *American Political Science Review* 53 (1): 69-105.

4. Voting

Bartels, Larry M. 2000. Partisanship and Voting Behavior, 1952-1996, in: *American Journal of Political Science* 44(1): 35-50.

\* Bartels, Larry M. 2005. Homer Gets a Tax Cut: Inequality and Public Policy in the American Mind, in: *Perspectives on Politics* 3(1): 1-31.

Healy, Andrew and Neil Malhotra. 2013. Retrospective Voting Reconsidered, in: *Annual Review of Political Science* 16(1): 285-306.

Margalit, Yotam 2011. Costly Jobs: Trade-related Layoffs, Government Compensation, and Voting in U.S. Elections, in: *American Political Science Review* 105(1): 166-188.

\* Duch, Raymond M. and Randy Stevenson. 2010. The Global Economy, Competency, and the Economic Vote. *Journal of Politics*, 72(1): 105-123.

## 5. International Bargaining

Bechtel, Michael M. and Johannes Urpelainen. 2015. All Policies Are Glocal: International Environmental Policy Making with Strategic Subnational Governments, in: *British Journal of Political Science* 45 (3): 559-582.

Dai, Xinyuan. 2006. The Conditional Nature of Democratic Compliance, in: *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50 (5): 690-713.

\* Fearon, James D. 1998. Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation, in: *International Organization* 52 (2): 269-305.

\* Putnam, Robert D. 1988. Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games, in: *International Organization* 42 (3): 427-460.

## PART II – DEMOCRACY, ECONOMIC POLICY, AND FINANCIAL CRISES

### 6. International Finance

\* Snowberg, Erik, Justin Wolfers, and Eric Zitzewitz. 2007. Partisan Impacts on the Economy: Evidence from Prediction Markets and Close Elections, in: *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122 (2): 807-829.

\* Sattler, Thomas. 2013. Do Markets Punish Left Governments?, in: *Journal of Politics* 75 (2): 343-356.

Oatley, Thomas. 1999. How Constraining is Capital Mobility? The Partisan Hypothesis in an Open Economy, in: *American Journal of Political Science* 43 (4): 1003-1027.

### 7. Economic Openness

Garrett, Geoffrey. 1995. Capital Mobility, Trade, and the Domestic Politics of Economic Policy, in: *International Organization* 49 (4): 657-687.

\* Rodrik, Dani. 1998. Why Do More Open Economies Have Bigger Governments?, in: *Journal of Political Economy* 106 (5): 997-1032.

Garrett, Geoffrey and Deborah Mitchell. 2001. Globalization, Government Spending and Taxation in the OECD, in: *European Journal of Political Research* 39 (2): 145-178.

\* Hays, Jude C., Sean D. Ehrlich, and Clint Peinhardt. 2005. Government Spending and Public Support for Trade in the OECD: An Empirical Test of the Embedded Liberalism Thesis, in: *International Organization* 59 (2): 473-494.

Iversen, Torben and Thomas R. Cusack. 2000. The Causes of Welfare State Expansion: Deindustrialization or Globalization?, in: *World Politics* 52 (3): 313-349.

## 8. Economic Crises

Arias, Eric and David Stasavage. 2019. How Large Are the Political Costs of Fiscal Austerity?, in: *Journal of Politics* 81 (4): 1167-1550.

Alt, James, David Dreyer Lassen, and Joachim Wehner. 2014. It Isn't Just about Greece: Domestic Politics, Transparency and Fiscal Gimmickry in Europe. *British Journal of Political Science* 44 (4): 707-716.

Bansak, Kirk, Michael Bechtel, and Yotam Margalit. 2021. Why Austerity? The Mass Politics of a Contested Policy, in: *American Political Science Review* 115 (2): 486-505.

\*Barnes, Lucy and Timothy Hicks. 2018. Making Austerity Popular: The Media and Mass Attitudes toward Fiscal Policy, in: *American Journal of Political Science* 62 (2): 340-354.

Bechtel, Michael M., Jens Hainmueller, and Yotam Margalit. 2014. Preferences for International Redistribution. The Divide Over the Eurozone Bailouts, in: *American Journal of Political Science* 58 (4): 835-856.

\*Born, Benjamin, Müller, Gernot, and Johannes Pfeiffer. 2020. Does Austerity Pay Off?, in: *Review of Economics and Statistics* 102 (2): 323-338.

Rüdiger, Wolfgang and Georgios Karyotis. 2013. Who Protests in Greece? Mass Opposition to Austerity. *British Journal of Political Science* 44 (3): 487-513.

Hübscher, Evelyne and Thomas Sattler. 2017. Fiscal Consolidation under Electoral Risk, in: *European Journal of Political Research* 57(1): 151-168.

## PART III – TRADE, IMMIGRATION, AND CLIMATE POLICY

### 9. Trade

Dutt, Pushan and Devashish Mitra. 2005. Political Ideology and Endogenous Trade Policy: An Empirical Investigation. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 87(1), 59–72.

\*Owen, Erica and Noel Johnston. 2017. Occupation and the Political Economy of Trade: Job Routineness, Offshorability and Protectionist Sentiment, in: *International Organization* 71(4): 665-699.

\*Scheve, Kenneth F. and Matthew J. Slaughter. 2001. What Determines Individual Trade-Policy Preferences?, in: *Journal of International Economics* 54 (2): 267-292.

### 10. Immigration

\* Fitzgerald, Jennifer, David Leblang, and Jessica C. Teets. 2014. Defying the Law of Gravity: The Political Economy of International Migration, in: *World Politics* 66 (3): 406-445.

\* Hainmueller, Jens and Michael J. Hiscox. 2010. Attitudes toward Highly Skilled and Low-skilled Immigration: Evidence from a Survey Experiment, in: *American Political Science Review* 104 (1): 61-84.

Malhotra, Neil, Yotam Margalit, and Cecilia Hyunjung Mo. 2013. Economic Explanations for Opposition to Immigration: Distinguishing between Prevalence and Conditional Impact, in: *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(2), 391-410.

Ward, Dalston. 2019. Public Attitudes toward Young Immigrant Men, in: *American Political Science Review* 113(1), 264–269.

#### 11. International Organizations

\*Baccini, Leonardo and Johannes Urpelainen. 2012. Strategic Side Payments: Preferential Trading Agreements, Economic Reform, and Foreign Aid, in: *Journal of Politics* 74 (4): 932-949.

Bechtel, Michael M. and Thomas Sattler. 2015. What Is Litigation in the World Trade Organization Worth?, in: *International Organization* 69 (2): 375-403.

\*Gabel, Matt, Clifford J. Carruba, Caitlin Ainsley, and Donald M. Beaudette. 2015. Of Courts and Commerce, in: *Journal of Politics* 72 (4): 1125-1137.

Heermann, Max, Koos, Sebastian, and Dirk Leuffen. 2023. Who Deserves European Solidarity? How Recipient Characteristics Shaped Public Support for International Medical and Financial Aid during COVID-19, in: *British Journal of Political Science* 53 (2): 629-651.

#### 12. Climate Politics

Aldy, Joseph E., Krupnick, Alan J., Newell, Richard G., Parry, Ian W. H., and Willam A. Pizer. 2010. Designing Climate Mitigation Policy, in: *Journal of Economic Literature* 48 (4): 903-934.

Bergquist, Parrish and Christopher Warshaw. 2018. Does Global Warming Increase Public Concern about Climate Change, in: *Journal of Politics* 81 (2): 686-691.

Bechtel, Michael M., Kenneth F. Scheve, and Elisabeth van Lieshout. 2020. Constant Carbon Pricing Increases Support for Climate Action Compared to Ramping Up Costs over Time, in: *Nature Climate Change* 10: 1004-1009.

Cao, Xun, Helen V. Milner, Aseem Prakash, and Hugh Ward. 2013. Research Frontiers in Comparative and International Environmental Politics, in: *Comparative Political Studies* 45(9): 1075-1103.

\* Egan, Patrick J. and Megan Mullin. 2012. Turning Personal Experience into Political Attitudes: The Effect of Local Weather on American's Perceptions about Global Warming, in: *Journal of Politics* 74 (3): 796-809.

Keohane, Robert O. 2015. The Global Politics of Climate Change: Challenge for Political Science, in: *PS: Political Science and Politics* 48 (1): 19-26.

\* Tingley, Dustin and Mike Tomz. 2014. Conditional Cooperation and Climate Change, in: *Comparative Political Studies* 74 (3): 344-368.