Politics and Policy

Second year module

Lecturer: **Dr Philip Whiteman (/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/staff/profiles/whiteman-philip.aspx)**

This module is interested in studying the 'how' in Lasswell's well-known definition of politics as being ‘who gets what, when, how’. Policy can be understood as the product or output of politics. Contemporary examples of (public) policy-making include the Labour party’s decision to cut spending on Higher Education; their decision to bail out banks; the decision to spend around £100 million per annum on elite sport. From education policy, fiscal policy and environmental policy to sport and health policy – all are the result of politics.

The module introduces students to ways of understanding how and why such policy is developed by both the traditional institutions of government and more widely, in the era of governance, the wide range of actors influencing the policy decision making process. Indeed, the shift from ‘big’ government to ‘new’ governance by and through networks and partnerships is a key theme throughout the module.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module the student should be able to:

- Examine and assess the ways in which public policy is formulated and implemented;
- Understand the contribution and limitations of the literature on policy making;
- Demonstrate how policy is the outcome of politics and political decisions
- Comprehend the policy making and implementation process
- Develop student’s capacity to present and discuss policy ideas both orally and written form.

Assessment

- Term One/Two: Presentation (10%)
- Term Two: 1,500 words assessed essay (40%)
- Term Three: 2 hour examination (50%)

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