



Early Childhood Policy in Institutions of Higher Education

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Created originally as a prototypical syllabus by the Early Childhood Policy in Institutions of Higher Education (ECPIHE) initiative, this document has been modified for use by *Early Childhood and Family Policy Graduate Certificate Program* offered through Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (GP IDEA). This document supports ECPIHE's foundational intent to create and support a cadre of scholars who address early childhood policy. Moreover, it acknowledges ECPIHE's purposeful creation of comprehensive and adaptive materials that are designed to be modified to reflect the instructional goals and needs of diverse contexts and users. For more information about ECPIHE and/or to learn about additional coursework related to the initiative, please visit <https://ecpolicy.org>.

Faculty in eight institutions collaboratively modified the course syllabi developed by ECPIHE to create a 12-credit graduate certificate program entitled **Early Childhood and Family Policy**. The collaboration is facilitated through GP IDEA. Participating institutions include: Iowa State University, Michigan State University, Texas Tech University, University of Arizona, University of Kentucky, University of Mississippi, University of Missouri, and University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Note: Course names and numbers can be different across institutions.

COURSE SYLLABUS III

ECFP: POLICY RESEARCH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

3 credits, 8-week course, online

***** Note: This is not a methods course.***

This course assumes that you already have a solid background in research.

Course III of IV
Course Semester

Instructor Name
Instructor Title
Instructor Office
Instructor Phone
Instructor Email
Office Hours

Course Prerequisite: Course I or Instructor Permission

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This course provides an interdisciplinary perspective on early childhood education and care (ECEC) policy, focusing on the systematic study, analysis, and interpretation of policy. The course is designed to help you understand the role that research plays throughout the policy process, learn the main tools used in policy analysis, and to explore

different theoretical frames that can be used to interpret and influence current ECEC policy discourse. The purpose of the course is to equip you to critically structure a policy problem, as well as to examine and analyze the design, implementation, and outcomes of various policies. Any given policy (or set of policies) will engender conflicting evidence and even competing meta-narratives about what it is intended to accomplish. For example, universal pre-K can be seen as an equity tool *and* as an attempt to “school-ify” early learning.

Effective policy researchers are conscious of the analytic strategies they use, why they use them, and how they differ from alternative strategies that could be used to examine the same issue. To this end, the course will guide you in understanding and effectively using theories and analytic approaches offered by multiple disciplines: political science, sociology, economics, organizational studies, and others. The course will take an applied approach, using examples of ECEC policy in the United States to compare and contrast. By the end of the course, you will be able to recognize and analyze different theoretical approaches, use policy tools to analyze ECEC policies and, importantly, to define and demonstrate their own, personalized situatedness in the broad field of policy analysis.

The course will be useful for those interested in becoming policy designers, advocates, public managers/administrators, policy researchers and/or evaluators, and policy analysts. It will provide both theoretical and analytic grounding for students interested in local, state, and federal ECEC policy in the United States and around the world.

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION AND CONTENT

Policy research and analysis are key components in each stage of the policy cycle (agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, policy evaluation, policy termination and policy change). Theory takes a prominent role in this course, as it provides the lens through which to understand the central questions, logics, and values that underpin how policy is understood and supported by analysts and researchers. Throughout the course, theories and policy tools will be applied to real-world examples, providing concrete opportunities to examine different, sometimes competing, analytic approaches and the contexts in which they are applied.

To anchor our ability to compare/contrast theories and approaches, we will use a simplified policy analysis framework throughout the course to guide class discussions and to organize ideas (see course assignments for additional detail). The framework may ultimately also be useful for you to develop and refine your own, personalized situatedness in the broad field of policy analysis. This framework is guided by six key questions:

1. What is the problem that begs for a solution? What are the underlying assumptions behind this problem?
2. What indicators demonstrate the problem exists?
3. What is the rationale for government/policy intervention to address the problem?
4. Who are the key stakeholders related to the problem and the solution?
5. Who are the primary opponents to solving the problem this way? What alternative rationales/solutions might they recommend?
6. What evidence or measures of success would “prove” that the problem has been affected in the way the policy designers planned?

The course is organized into three primary clusters of classes, with explicit examination and application of ECEC policy integrated throughout:

Unit I: Foundations for ECEC Policy Analysis (Week 1)

I.1. Policy Analysis: Skillsets and Approaches & Theoretical and Scientific Bases for ECEC Policy

Unit II: Policy Analysis Throughout the Policy Cycle (Weeks 2 through 4)

- II.1. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Design
- II.2. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Policy Formulation (Assembling Evidence and Survey Research)
- II.3. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Evaluation & Implementation

Unit III: ECEC Policy Analysis—Theory and Its Application (Weeks 5 through 7)

- III.1. How Do We Address Inequality? Sociology and Critical Theories & How Do We Engage Teachers, Families, and Communities? Social Capital and Cognitive Theories
- III.2. How Do We Efficiently Allocate Resources? Economic Theory & How Do We Coordinate Programs and Build Infrastructure? Institutional and Organizational Theories
- III.3. How Do We Improve the Complex Interplay of Public and Private Organizations? Systems and Complexity Theories & Putting the Diverse Perspectives Together: Compare/Contrast

During the final class session (Week 8), you will present your analytic paper to your classmates synchronously.

COURSE GOALS

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

1. Identify and define basic concepts and terminology of policy analysis. (Session I.1., Session II.1., Session II.2., and Session II.3.)
2. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches to policy analysis. (Session II.1.)
3. Articulate understanding that ECEC policy is not value-neutral but is influenced by and interpreted through different theoretical frames that reflect different disciplinary and values-based perspectives. However, policy analysis can be value-neutral. (Session III.1., Session III.2., and Session III.3.)
4. Compare and contrast different theoretical frames and demonstrate understanding of how theory and policy analysis contribute to policy decisions at different stages of the policy cycle. (Session III.1., Session III.2., and Session III.3.)
5. Learn and identify key policy analysis skills to address analytic approaches to current ECEC policies. (Session I.1., Session II.1., Session II.2., and Session II.3.)
6. Recognize and produce effective policy writing and analysis. (Course Assignments: Policy Brief and Final Policy Memorandum)
7. Define and demonstrate their own, personalized situatedness in the broad field of policy research and analysis. (Course Assignments: Policy Brief, Survey Project, Final Policy Memorandum, and Policy Briefing/Presentation)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignment (Described in Detail Below)	Due Date	Points (Percentage of Grade)
Class Participation	XXXX	10 (10%)
Collaborative Reading Group	XXXX	10 (10%)
Policy Brief	XXXX	15 (15%)
Survey Project	XXXX	25 (25%)
Final Policy Memorandum	XXXX	25 (25%)
Policy Briefing/Presentation	XXXX	15 (15%)

All written work should be submitted through the course learning management system (e.g. Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) to the instructor by 11:59 PM on the indicated dates. All papers should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Papers must follow APA style, 7th edition. Please review the course policy for late submissions.

To be effective in public policy, one must exhibit a range of skills that include respectful engagement, intentional preparation for shared dialogue, the ability to critically consider competing ideas and values, and strong written and oral presentation skills. The course requirements reflect these expectations.

ATTENDANCE AND RESPECTFUL ENGAGEMENT (10%)

As this is a graduate-level course and a community of learners, your attendance and participation in class discussions and activities are vital. We will discuss challenging and sometimes controversial issues in this class, and learning requires both risk and support. The instructor and students share responsibility for fostering a respectful learning environment. Class participation is taken seriously in this course. This means having things to say (and questions to ask) that are interesting, original, and respectful to other students. It also means listening to others and building upon their ideas.

COLLABORATIVE READING GROUP (10%)

This is a reading-intensive course and being prepared for class requires intentional time not only to read the assigned texts, but also to analyze *across* texts. Although we may not explicitly cover every reading in class, each text forms an important piece of learning for the course. During the first week of class, you will form reading groups (3-4 students per group) based on interests and experiences to jigsaw the readings each week. You are expected to spend no less than 90 minutes each week in your reading group via a synchronous or asynchronous format, discussing key ideas and generating thoughtful questions for class discussion.

Your grade for this portion of the class will include self-assessment. At the end of each week, you will “grade” your participation in engagement along three variables: a) completion of readings prior to group time; b) intellectual engagement with the materials; and c) leadership of discussion of ideas during reading group time. You will keep a chart of your engagement throughout the 8 weeks, and the self-assessment will be your reading group grade along with the comparative policy analysis framework described below.

As part of collaborative preparation for class and to organize multiple perspectives and theoretical frames, each student will incrementally, week by week, populate a **comparative policy analysis framework**. The framework will provide a means to compare/contrast how different theoretical bases influence the definition of policy problems, how implementation is examined, and how “success” is measured/evaluated. The sample below is provided as a suggested example only. You may create your own table or framework, but it must contain key variables that distinguish one theoretical perspective from the others. ***The completed framework will be submitted to the instructor via the course learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) by [specific deadline].***

Theoretical Frame	How are each of the following questions answered?						What current ECEC policy(ies) “fit” best with this frame?
	How is the problem defined?	What indicators demonstrate existence of the problem?	Rationale for government involvement	Who are key stakeholders?	Who are key opponents?	What evidence would “prove impact”?	
Developmental							
Political							
Economic							
Institutional/ Organizational							
Cognitive							
Social Capital							

POLICY BRIEF (15%)

A key consideration in policy analysis is identifying and structuring the problem related to a policy issue so that solutions can be crafted. You will prepare a 1-page (double-spaced, 12-pt. font, 1-inch margins) brief addressed to a client. Unresolved public problems are frequently posed as dilemmas or conflict situations. They also appear as questions and puzzles that emerge in the aftermath of public policy actions. Underlying policy issues are frequently obscured or confused by the debates and discussion about what should be done about the policy problem. In the wake of the current ECE events in the United States, numerous policy issues have come to public's attention. This includes:

- Should [your state] provide early childhood education for all [state] preschool children (universal preschool)?
- Should the government keep early daycare and preschool opened during a pandemic/crisis situation?
- Should all states implement a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS)?

Problem structuring helps to unravel and unpack the underlying policy issue related to the questions posed so that effective solutions can be crafted. You will form teams of three and prepare a one-page, single-spaced policy brief that addresses the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- Why is this a problem?
- What are the legal, historical, political, or economic contours of the problem? (Specifically address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.)
- What are some of the latent opportunities that present themselves by this problem?

More detail will be provided in class and through the course learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, etc.). The policy brief will be due via the course learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) by [specific deadline].

SURVEY PROJECT (25%)

You will have options of either working independently or with your reading group on a survey research project that addresses a particular problem (the problem stated in the policy brief) and design a survey that will help you answer a research question or questions. You will develop a short survey and write a 6- to 8-page paper (double-spaced, 12pt. font, 1-inch margins) that explains the research problem, lists the research question(s) you hope to answer, delineates your sample design, describes your survey instrument (including ways you plan to evaluate it in prior to data collection), reports your plan of data analysis, and reports how the survey will answer your question(s).

FINAL POLICY MEMORANDUM (25%)

This is your opportunity to explore in depth an ECEC policy issue of your choosing (the same issue you started developing in your policy brief). The final project for the course is a policy analysis in the form of a policy memorandum to a client. A key consideration in policy analysis is identifying and structuring the problem related to a policy issue so that solutions can be crafted. **Expected length is 15-pages, including a 1-paragraph executive summary and a policy decision matrix and excluding references, endnotes, charts, and figures.** For your chosen policy, the paper is expected to answer the six questions spelled out in the policy analysis framework used in the course:

1. What is the problem that begs for a solution? What are the underlying assumptions behind this problem?;
2. What indicators demonstrate the problem exists?;
3. What is the rationale for government/policy intervention to address the problem?;
4. Who are the key stakeholders related to the problem and the solution? (Specifically address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.);
5. Who are the primary opponents to solving the problem this way? What alternative rationales/solutions might they recommend?; and
6. What evidence or measures of success would “prove” that the problem has been affected in the way the policy designers planned?

The paper should incorporate at least two different theoretical perspectives. In this way, you should be aware of, and refute (or defend), different ways your chosen issue is considered.

This paper should be no longer than 15-pages; a paper that is less than 10-pages is unlikely to have adequately analyzed the issues. ***The paper is due via the course learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) by [specific deadline].***

POLICY BRIEFING/PRESENTATION (15%)—SYNCHRONOUS

Each student will be asked to present their final policy paper. This presentation will take the form of a policy briefing to a state-level, cross-agency commission (à la an early childhood advisory council). The briefing should include both an oral and a written component. The written component can include: a PowerPoint presentation, a one-page handout, or some other documentation that is appropriate for a policy audience. The oral component should cover the major issues addressed in the full paper. The amount of time allocated to each presentation will depend on the number of students in the class, but you should expect no more than 15 minutes. ***Presentations will take place live during this final course session as it will be held synchronously in a way that accommodates your schedules and time zones, and you will attend via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or another online platform. The instructor will share a login link and password with you at least one week before this final course session occurs. This final course session will occur on XXXX at XXXX.***

COURSE GRADING

- Attendance and Respectful Engagement: 10%
- Collaborative Reading Group Participation: 10%
- Policy Brief: 15%
- Survey Project: 25%
- Final Policy Memorandum: 25%
- Policy Briefing/Presentation: 15%

Your grade will be based on the following scale:

A	93-100%	A-	90-92%		
B+	87-89%	B	83-86%	B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%	C	73-76%	C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%	D	65-66%	F	Below 65%

REQUIRED TEXTS

There are no required textbooks for the course; instead, required readings are presented for class sessions, as indicated below. **Two to four readings will be selected as required by the instructor per session.** Recommended readings are indicated for some sessions. Readings should be read before the class session occurs. Most readings are available online.

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

Topic (Dates)	Readings and Assignments
WEEK 1 Session I.1. Policy Analysis: Skillsets and Approaches &	Review the course syllabus. <u>Readings:</u>

<p>Theoretical and Scientific Bases for ECEC Policy (XXXX)</p>	<p>Bardach, E. (2011). Introduction. In <i>A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving</i> (4th ed., pp. xv-xx). Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.</p> <p>Birkland, T. A. (2016). Science and theory in the study of public policy. In <i>An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making</i> (4th ed., pp. 361-389). New York, NY: Routledge.</p> <p>Lindblom, C. E., & Woodhouse, E. J. (1993). Making the most of analysis. In <i>The policy-making process</i> (3rd ed., pp. 126-138). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice.</p> <p>Mintrom, M. (2012). What policy analysts do. In <i>Contemporary policy analysis</i> (pp. 15-25). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Moss, P. (2016). Where am I? Position and perspective in researching early childhood education. In A. Farrell, S. L. Kagan, & E. K. M. Tisdall (Eds.), <i>The SAGE handbook of early childhood research</i> (pp. 89-102). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.</p> <p>Musso, J., Biller, R., & Myrtle, R. (2000). Tradecraft: Professional writing as problem solving. <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i>, 19(4).</p> <p>National Research Council. (2001). What does the science of learning contribute to early childhood pedagogy? In B. T. Bowman, M. S. Donovan, & M. S. Burns (Eds.), <i>Eager to learn: Educating our preschoolers</i> (pp. 37-58). Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Retrieved from https://www.nap.edu/read/9745/chapter/4</p> <p>National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2007). <i>The science of early childhood development: Closing the gap between what we know and what we do</i>. Cambridge, MA: Center on the Developing Child. Retrieved from https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/the-science-of-early-childhood-development-closing-the-gap-between-what-we-know-and-what-we-do/</p> <p>Phillips, D. A., Lipsey, M. W., Dodge, K. A., Haskins, R., Bassok, D., Burchinal, M. R., ... Weiland, C. (2017). <i>Puzzling it out: The current state of scientific knowledge on pre kindergarten effects - A consensus statement</i>. Washington, DC: Brookings. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/consensus-statement_final.pdf</p> <p>Kingdon, J. W. (2003). How does an idea's time come? In <i>Agendas, alternatives, and public policies</i> (2nd ed., pp. 1-20). New York, NY: Longman.</p> <p>Conaway, C. L. (2013). The problem with briefs, in brief. <i>Education Finance and Policy</i>, 8(3), 287-299.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u> You will form reading groups with the instructor's help (3-4 students per group). You will discuss the readings with their reading groups and will begin to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework. Additional details about this Framework are provided on page 4 of this syllabus.</p>
<p>WEEK 2 Session II.1. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process:</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u> Readings on Theory:</p>

Design (XXXX)	<p>Bardach, E. (2011). Part I: The eightfold path: Step one: Define the problem. In <i>A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving</i> (4th ed., pp. 1-11). Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.</p> <p>Birkland, T. A. (2016). Policy design and policy tools. In <i>An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making</i> (4th ed., pp. 299-330). New York, NY: Routledge.</p> <p>DeLeon, P. (1999). The stages approach to the policy process: What has it done? Where is it going? In P. A. Sabatier (Ed.), <i>Theories of the policy process</i> (pp. 19-32). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.</p> <p>Sabatier, P. A. (1999). The need for better theories. In P. A. Sabatier (Ed.), <i>Theories of the policy process</i> (pp. 3-18). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.</p> <p>Stone, D. 1989. Causal stories and the formation of policy agendas. <i>Political Science Quarterly</i>, 104(2): 281-300.</p> <p>Readings on ECEC Policy:</p> <p>Fuller, B. (2007). Why universal preschool now? Framing the problem. In <i>Standardized childhood: The political and cultural struggle over early education</i> (pp. 1-31). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.</p> <p>Helburn, S. W., & Bergmann, B. R. (2002). The design: What should a new child care system look like? In <i>America's child care problem: The way out</i> (pp. 33-54). New York, NY: Palgrave.</p> <p>Rigby, E., Tarrant, K., & Neuman, M. J. (2007). Alternative policy designs and the socio political construction of childcare. <i>Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood</i>, 8(2), 98- 108.</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u></p> <p>You will discuss the readings with their reading groups and will continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework. Additional details about this Framework are provided on page 4 of this syllabus.</p>
<p>WEEK 3</p> <p>Session II.2.</p> <p>Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Policy Formulation (Assembling Evidence and Survey Research) (XXXX)</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>Bardach, E. (2011). Part I: The eightfold path: Step two: Assemble some evidence. In <i>A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving</i> (4th ed., pp. 11-16). Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.</p> <p>Bardach, E. (2011). Part II: Assembling Evidence. In <i>A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving</i> (4th ed., pp. 79-108). Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.</p> <p>Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). Chapter 2: Reducing people's reluctance to respond to surveys. In <i>Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method</i> (4th ed., pp. 19-55). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.</p> <p>Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). Chapters 4 & 5: The fundamentals of writing questions & How to write open- and close-ended questions. In <i>Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method</i> (4th ed., pp. 94-168). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.</p>

	<p>Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). Chapters 6-10. In <i>Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method</i> (4th ed., pp. 169-397). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.</p> <p>Presser, S., M. P. Couper, et al. (2004). Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questions. <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 68(1): 109-130.</p> <p>Schaeffer, N. C. and S. Presser (2003). The Science of Asking Questions. <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i>, 29: 65-88.</p> <p>Saperstein, A., Kizer, J. M., & Penner, A. M. (2016). Making the most of multiple measures: Disentangling the effects of different dimensions of race in survey research. <i>American Behavioral Scientist</i>, 60(4), 519-537.</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u> You will discuss the readings with their reading groups and will continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework. Additional details about this Framework are provided on page 4 of this syllabus.</p> <p><i>Survey Project:</i> You will review the Survey Project description in the syllabus (on page 5). <i>The instructor will explain the project, give additional details, and guide you in creating your groups.</i> You will begin working on this project with their Reading Group members or independently. The instructor will hold meetings periodically throughout the next few weeks to answer questions and assist anyone with this assignment.</p>
<p>WEEK 4 Session II.3. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Implementation & Evaluation (XXXX)</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u> Readings on Theory: Bardach, E. (2011). Part I: The eightfold path: Step Four: Select the criteria. In <i>A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving</i> (4th ed., pp. 31-47). Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.</p> <p>Birkland, T. A. (2016). Policy implementation, failure, and learning. In <i>An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making</i> (4th ed., pp. 331-359). New York, NY: Routledge.</p> <p>Weatherley, R., & Lipsky, M. (1977). Street-level bureaucrats and institutional innovation: Implementing special-education reform. <i>Harvard Educational Review</i>, 47(2), 171-197.</p> <p>Readings on ECEC Policy: Britto, P. R., Singh, M., Dua, T., Kaur, R., & Yousafzai, A. K. (2018). What implementation evidence matters: Scaling-up nurturing interventions that promote early childhood development. <i>Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences</i>, 1419(1), 5-16. doi:10.1111/nyas.13720</p> <p>Burchinal, M. R., & Forestieri, N. E. (2017). What does it mean to be evidence-based? In E. Votruba-Drzal & E. Dearing (Eds.), <i>The Wiley handbook of early childhood development programs, practices, and policies</i> (pp. 118-134). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.</p> <p>Franks, R. P., & Schroeder, J. (2013). Implementation science: What do we know and where do we go from here? In T. Halle, A. Metz, & I. Martinez-Beck (Eds.), <i>Applying implementation science in early childhood programs and systems</i> (pp. 5-19). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.</p>

	<p>Goldstein, L. S. (2008). Kindergarten teachers making "street-level" education policy in the wake of No Child Left Behind. <i>Early Education and Development</i>, 19(3), 448-478.</p> <p>Henig, J. R. (2008). The evolving relationship between researchers and public policy. In F. M. Hess (Ed.), <i>When research matters: How scholarship influences education policy</i> (pp. 41-62). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.</p> <p>National Forum on Early Childhood Program Evaluation. (2007). <i>Early childhood program evaluations: A decision-maker's guide</i>. Cambridge, MA: Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. Retrieved from https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/early-childhood-program-evaluations-a-decision-makers-guide/</p> <p>Weiss, C. H. (1999). The interface between evaluation and public policy. <i>Evaluation</i>, 5(4), 468- 486.</p> <p>Zubrick, S. R. (2016). Longitudinal research: Applications for the design, conduct and dissemination of early childhood research. In A. Farrell, S. L. Kagan, & E. K. M. Tisdall (Eds.), <i>The SAGE handbook of early childhood research</i> (pp. 201-222). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u> You will discuss the readings with their reading groups and will continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework. Additional details about this Framework are provided on page 4 of this syllabus.</p> <p><i>Policy Brief: The 1-page policy brief is due via the course learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) by [specific deadline]. See pages 4 and 5 of this syllabus for additional information.</i></p> <p><i>Survey Project:</i> You will continue to work on your survey project.</p>
<p>WEEK 5 Session III.1. How Do We Address Inequality? Sociology and Critical Theories & How Do We Engage Teachers, Families, and Communities? Social Capital and Cognitive Theories (XXXX)</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u> Anderson, J., Moffatt, L., McTavish, M., & Shapiro, J. (2013). Rethinking language education in early childhood: Sociocultural perspectives. In O. N. Saracho & B. Spodek (Eds.), <i>Handbook of research on the education of young children</i> (3rd ed., pp. 117-134). New York, NY: Routledge.</p> <p>Bloch, M., N., & Kim, K. (2015). A cultural history of “readiness” in early childhood care and education: Are there still culturally relevant, ethical, and imaginative spaces for learning open for young children and their families? In J. M. Iorio & W. Parnell (Eds.), <i>Rethinking readiness in early childhood education</i> (pp. 1-18). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.</p> <p>Fallace, T. (2015). The savage origins of child-centered pedagogy, 1871-1913. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i>, 52(1), 73-103.</p> <p>Merolla, D. M., & Jackson, O. (2019). Structural racism as the fundamental cause of the academic achievement gap. <i>Sociology Compass</i>, 13(6). 1-13. doi:10.1111/soc4.12696</p> <p>Sadovnik, A. R. (2007). Theory and research in the sociology of education. In A. R. Sadovnik (Ed.), <i>Sociology of education: A critical reader</i> (2nd ed., pp. 3-22). New York, NY: Routledge.</p>

	<p>Souto-Manning, M., & Rabadi-Raol, A. (2018). (Re)centering quality in early childhood education: Toward intersectional justice for minoritized children. <i>Review of Research in Education</i>, 42(1), 203-225. doi:10.3102/009173X18759550</p> <p>Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. <i>Organization Science</i>, 16(4), 409-421.</p> <p>Bridwell-Mitchell, E. N., & Cooc, N. (2016). The ties that bind: How social capital is forged and forfeited in teacher communities. <i>Educational Researcher</i>, 45(1), 7-17. doi:10.3102/0013189X16632191</p> <p>Brown, C. P., Englehardt, J., Barry, D. P., & Ku, D. H. (2019). Examining how stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels made sense of the changed kindergarten. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i>, 56(3), 822-867. doi:10.3102/0002831218804152</p> <p>Delaney, K. K. (2015). Dissonance for understanding: Exploring a new theoretical lens for understanding teacher identity formation in borderlands of practice. <i>Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood</i>, 16(4), 374-389. doi:10.1177/1463949115616326</p> <p>Douglass, A. (2016). Resilience in change: Positive perspectives on the dynamics of change in early childhood systems. <i>Journal of Early Childhood Research</i>, 14(2), 211-225.</p> <p>Timmons, K. (2018). Educator expectations in full-day Kindergarten: Comparing the factors that contribute to the formation of early childhood educator and teacher expectations. <i>Early Childhood Education Journal</i>, 46(6), 613-628. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-018-0891-0</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u> You will discuss the readings with their reading groups and will continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework. Additional details about this Framework are provided on page 4 of this syllabus.</p> <p><u>Survey Project:</u> You will continue to work on your survey project.</p>
<p>WEEK 6 Session III.2. How Do We Efficiently Allocate Resources? Economic Theory & How Do We Coordinate Programs and Build Infrastructure? Institutional and Organizational Theories (XXXX)</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u> Economic Theory and ECEC: Barnett, W. S., & Nores, M. (2018). Costs and benefits of early childhood education and care. In L. Miller, C. Cameron, C. Dalli, & N. Barbour (Eds.), <i>The SAGE Handbook of Early Childhood Policy</i> (pp. 485-503). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE reference.</p> <p>Kilburn, M. R., & Karoly, L. A. (2008). <i>The economics of early childhood policy: What the dismal science has to say about investing in children</i>. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved from https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2008/RAND_OP227.pdf</p> <p>Peters, H. E., & Bristow, B. (2006). Early childhood professional development programs: Accounting for spillover effects and market interventions. In M. Zaslow & I. Martinez-Beck (Eds.), <i>Critical issues in early childhood professional development</i> (pp. 339-350). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.</p>

	<p>Reynolds, A. J., Temple, J. A., White, B. A. B., Ou, S.-R., & Robertson, D. L. (2011). Age 26 cost-benefit analysis of the Child-Parent Center early education program. <i>Child Development</i>, 82(1), 379-404.</p> <p>Schweinhart, L. J., Montie, J., Xiang, Z., Barnett, W. S., Belfield, C. R., & Nores, M. (2005). <i>Lifetime effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool study through age 40</i>. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press. Retrieved from http://nieer.org/wpcontent/uploads/2014/09/specialsummary_rev2011_02_2.pdf</p> <p>Background on Theoretical Perspective:</p> <p>Scott, W. R., & Davis, G. F. (2007). The subject is organizations; the verb is organizing. In <i>Organizations and organizing: Rational, natural, and open system perspectives</i> (pp. 1-34). London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.</p> <p>Boxenbaum, E., & Jonsson, S. (2008). Isomorphism, diffusion and decoupling. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, R. Suddaby, & Sahlin, K. (Eds.), <i>The SAGE handbook of organizational institutionalism</i> (pp. 78-98). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.</p> <p>ECEC Policy:</p> <p>Colaner, A. C. (2016). Education versus family: Institutional logics in the early care and education field. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i>, 53(3), 673-707. doi:10.3102/0002831216646868</p> <p>Gamoran, A., Secada, W. G., & Marrett, C. B. (2007). The organizational context of teaching and learning: Changing theoretical perspectives. In A. R. Sadovnik (Ed.), <i>Sociology of education: A critical reader</i> (2nd ed., pp. 153-175). New York, NY: Routledge.</p> <p>Goffin, S. G., & Washington, V. (2007). Calling the question. In <i>Ready or not: Leadership choices in early care and education</i> (pp. 6-18). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.</p> <p>Graue, M. E., Ryan, S., Nocera, A., Northey, K., & Wilinski, B. (2017). Pulling preK into a K-12 orbit: The evolution of preK in the age of standards. <i>Early Years</i>, 37(1), 108-122. doi:10.1080/09575146.2016.1220925</p> <p>McCabe, L. A., & Sipple, J. W. (2011). Colliding worlds: Practical and political tensions of prekindergarten implementation in public schools. <i>Educational Policy</i>, 25(1), 1-26.</p> <p>Tarrant, K., & Huerta, L. A. (2015). Substantive or symbolic stars: Quality rating and improvement systems through a new institutional lens. <i>Early Childhood Research Quarterly</i>, 30(1), 327-338. doi:10.1016/j.ecresq.2014.04.002</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u></p> <p>You will discuss the readings with their reading groups and will continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework. Additional details about this Framework are provided on page 4 of this syllabus.</p> <p><u>Survey Project:</u> You will continue to work on your survey project.</p>
<p>WEEK 7 Session III.3. How Do We Improve the Complex Interplay of Public and Private</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>Systems and Complexity Theories and ECEC:</p> <p>Kagan, S. L., Araujo, M. C., Jaimovich, A., & Aguayo, Y. C. (2016). Understanding systems theory and thinking: Early childhood education in Latin America and the Caribbean. In A. Farrell, S. L. Kagan, & E. K. M. Tisdall (Eds.), <i>The SAGE handbook of early childhood research</i> (pp. 163-184). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.</p>

<p>Organizations? Systems and Complexity Theories & Putting the Diverse Perspectives Together: Compare/Contrast (XXXX)</p>	<p>Coffman, J. (2012). Evaluating system-building efforts. In S. L. Kagan & K. Kauerz (Eds.), <i>Early childhood systems: Transforming early learning</i> (pp. 199-215). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.</p> <p>Kagan, S. L., Gomez, R. E., & Roth, J. L. (2018). Creating a new era of usable knowledge: Enhancing early childhood development through systems research. In L. Miller, C. Cameron, C. Dalli, & N. Barbour (Eds.), <i>SAGE Handbook of Early Childhood Policy</i> (pp. 566-583). New York, NY: SAGE.</p> <p>Schaack, D., Tarrant, K., Boller, K., & Tout, K. (2012). Quality rating and improvement systems: Frameworks for early care and education systems change. In S. L. Kagan & K. Kauerz (Eds.), <i>Early childhood systems: Transforming early learning</i> (pp. 71-86). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.</p> <p>Weiland, C., McCormick, M., Mattera, S., Maier, M., & Morris, P. (2018). Preschool curricula and professional development features for getting to high-quality implementation at scale: A comparative review across five trials. <i>AERA Open</i>, 4(1), 1-16. doi:10.1177/2332858418757735</p> <p>Compare/Contrast: Mintrom, M. (2012). Doing ethical policy analysis. In <i>Contemporary policy analysis</i> (pp. 95- 108). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Peeters, J., & Peleman, B. (2018). The competent system at the intersection of research, policymaking, and practice. In L. Miller, C. Cameron, C. Dalli, & N. Barbour (Eds.), <i>The SAGE Handbook of Early Childhood Policy</i> (pp. 522-536). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE reference.</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u> You will discuss the readings with their reading groups and will continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework. Additional details about this Framework are provided on page 4 of this syllabus. <i>This Framework will be submitted via the course learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) by [specific deadline].</i></p> <p><i>Survey Project: The survey project will be submitted via the course learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) by [specific deadline].</i> See page 5 of this syllabus for additional information.</p>
<p>WEEK 8 Final Course Session: Policy Briefing/Presentation (XXXX)</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u> There are no assigned readings for this class session.</p> <p><u>Assignment:</u> <i>Policy Briefing/Presentation:</i> Preparation of the policy briefing should happen prior to this final course session. Policy briefings/presentations will take place during this class session. Further details can be found on pages 4-6 of this syllabus. <i>Final Policy Memorandum papers are due via the course learning management system (e.g., Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) by [specific deadline].</i></p>

COURSE TOPICS

UNIT I: FOUNDATIONS FOR ECEC POLICY ANALYSIS

Session I.1. Policy Analysis: Skillsets and Approaches & Theoretical and Scientific Bases for ECEC Policy

THEMES: The first class session grounds the entire course, providing overview of the distinct functions performed by policy analysts/researchers and the skillsets that make them effective. We will discuss the basic elements of the policy cycle (agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation, policy evaluation, policy termination and policy change), the importance of studying and understanding theory, and key questions that underlie public policy decisions. We will discuss the importance and value of using theory and organizing frameworks to help policy researchers and analysts understand (and communicate to others) complex relationships and interrelationships in policy. A simple policy analysis framework will be introduced to organize our thinking throughout the course.

As prelude to our discussion of research, analysis, and theory, we will look back at examples of theories and research that have been used to inform ECEC policy. We will also consider agenda-setting and the process by which some issues achieve prominence in public policy discourse. During this session we will also discuss features of good policy writing – a focus that will extend throughout the remainder of the course. This background knowledge is essential for all policy students and will also be useful for successful completion of assignments for this course.

GOALS:

- To describe and identify what policy research is and what policy analysts do, and to examine the interaction of the political process with policy analysis
- To describe and identify why theory is used to analyze policy
- To recognize and articulate that multi-disciplinary theoretical approaches can be applied to the same policy issue
- To identify and understand concepts from theories of learning and development
- To articulate that developmental science and theories provide the overarching context for the focus on ECEC policies and programs
- To identify and understand why some policies are adopted while other policy ideas go unexamined
- To become aware of and describe features of effective policy writing

UNIT II: POLICY ANALYSIS THROUGHOUT THE POLICY CYCLE

Session II.1. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Design

THEMES: This class presents an introduction to different theories of the policy process. It then focuses on policy design and the choices faced by policymakers. We will discuss how competing “measures of success” exist in today’s ECEC landscape (e.g., access, quality, efficiency, equity, security, liberty) and how the choice of policy tools is value-laden. We will also consider the utility of additional theories to understand how policy analysts examine the fundamental questions of who gets what, why, when, and how.

GOALS:

- To identify concepts from political and policy-making theories
- To describe the types of data and research methods that contribute to the design stage of the policy cycle
- To identify that the goal of supporting child development/learning needs to be considered alongside other priorities, opportunities, and goals in the current political context

Session II.2. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Policy Formulation (Assembling Evidence and Survey Research)

GOALS:

- To identify different sources of data
- To learn and describe how to gather data to forecast policy outcomes of potential policies
- To explain that sometimes primary data collection is needed to answer research questions of interest
- To learn and describe how to conduct survey research in ECE
- To identify how to write questions that focus on ECE

- To identify methods for testing and evaluating survey questions
- To learn and describe how to create a questionnaire

Session II.3. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Implementation and Evaluation

THEMES: Implementing policy is much more complex than simply executing previously adopted decisions. Policy researchers and analysts must confront the messy question of how to capture and understand the way a policy is implemented in “the real world.” Policy analysts examine how people translate policy into reality within classrooms, ECEC programs, public schools, communities, organizations, states, and systems. During the class session, we will examine how “policy” implementation can differ from “program” implementation, with policies often requiring efforts from a diffuse network of organizations and communities.

The second half of this session will provide an introduction to the design and conduct of rigorous, useful evaluations of ECEC policies and programs. We will discuss recent writing about policy evaluation, and a more extensive literature on program evaluation—again, noting the key distinctions between “policies” and “programs.” We will examine fundamental tensions and issues residing in the act of evaluation and examine how evaluation designs can take account of these matters, while seeking to develop policy-relevant evidence through strong research designs.

GOALS:

- To recognize and identify that policy implementation is a complex endeavor related to the combined effect of policy instruments, actors, activities, resources, and context
- To identify that current efforts to study policy implementation are different from traditional constructs of fidelity and limited variation
- To describe the types of data and research methods that contribute to the implementation stage of the policy cycle
- To recognize and identify the differences between studies of implementation and current trends to employ implementation science methods
- To describe evaluation criteria and identify alternatives
- To recognize and describe the complexity of measuring child outcomes in ECEC policy research
- To identify the difference between technical evaluations and evaluation as policy learning
- To describe how the structure (or lack thereof) of the ECEC system influences the conclusions that can be drawn by evaluations (e.g., silo-ed administrative data)
- To identify the types of data and research methods that contribute to the evaluation stage of the policy cycle

UNIT III: ECEC POLICY ANALYSIS—THEORY AND ITS APPLICATION

Session III.1. How Do We Address Inequality? Sociology and Critical Theories & How Do We Engage Teachers, Families, and Communities? Social Capital and Cognitive Theories

THEMES: This session launches the third cluster of classes in the course, focusing on different disciplines and theoretical approaches to policy research and analysis. We begin with perspectives that aim to address issues of inequality and inequities. Policy analysis from sociological perspectives examines the extent to which society’s various needs are met, paying particular attention to determinants of inequality and social processes related to race, class, and gender. Post-modern, critical theories extend these analyses further, problematizing the social processes themselves and examining systemic inequities.

Another sub-field of organizational and institutional studies focuses on the socially constructed aspects of organizations—relationships and stakeholders’ social learning and cognitive capacity. Social capital theories and cognitive sense-making theories take center stage during the second portion of this class session. We will focus on how the behavior and performance of organizations can be largely explained by decisions of actors within those organizations.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from sociological, post-modern, social capital and, and cognitive theories

- To problematize basic popular constructs in ECEC (e.g., readiness, quality, child centered pedagogy)
- To apply the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework to sociological, critical, social capital, and cognitive theories
- To understand and articulate how social capital and cognitive theories relate to key issues in ECEC, such as teacher identities, professional learning communities, and kindergarten

Session III.2. How Do We Efficiently Allocate Resources? Economic Theory & How Do We Coordinate Programs and Build Infrastructure? Institutional and Organizational Theories

THEMES: This week we examine economic theory and its application to ECEC policy. Economic theories elevate the importance of preferences, information, costs, and incentives. A small number of economic studies of ECEC programs have been widely popularized and used to bolster the case for investing in pre-K and other early learning interventions. These, and other, examples will be discussed.

We will also examine organization theory. Organization theory is a broad topic, with a long history and multiple perspectives. Historically, organization theory has been used to study bureaucracies and to understand the structural, organizational, and management capacities needed to ensure institutions perform well. This week, we explore some of the basic tenets of institutional and organizational theories and apply them to consider why ECEC organizations (and the people in them) do what they do and how policymakers might use that knowledge to improve practice.

GOALS:

- To identify concepts from economic theories
- To apply the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework to economic, organizational, and institutional theories
- To describe how economic theory relates to key issues in ECEC, such as access and quality of services
- To identify and understand concepts from organizational and institutional theories
- To understand and describe the influence of an organization's structure, management, and underlying logics on its performance
- To understand and identify how institutional and organizational theories relate to key issues in ECEC, such as tensions in the mixed-delivery system and the creation of new bureaucracies (e.g., QRIS)

Session III.3. How Do We Improve the Complex Interplay of Public and Private Organizations? Systems and Complexity Theories & Putting the Diverse Perspectives Together: Compare/Contrast

THEMES: Within the early childhood field, there is growing interest in systems and complexity theories, both which recognize that pieces/parts of the field cannot be considered in isolation, but must be considered in interconnected and interdependent ways. These theories call for increased interdisciplinary work, focusing on both the structure and the functions of systems.

In the second half of this session, we will revisit current trends in ECEC policy research—identifying both promising directions and gaps in understanding. We will also compare and contrast different perspectives and approaches.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from systems theories
- To apply the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework to systems theories
- To understand how systems and complexity theories relates to key issues in ECEC, such as governance and the establishment of sub-systems

Final Course Session—Student Presentations

THEMES: During the last week of class, you will present your final paper (see assignment description on page 6 of this syllabus for full details).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

(To be modified according to university/college policies and procedures.)

Accommodations for students with disabilities

The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities.

Incompletes

The grade of Incomplete will be assigned only when the course attendance requirement has been met but, for reasons satisfactory to the instructor, the granting of a final grade has been postponed because certain course assignments are outstanding. If the outstanding assignments are completed within one calendar year from the date of the close of term in which the grade of Incomplete was received and a final grade submitted, the final grade will be recorded on the permanent transcript, replacing the grade of Incomplete, with a transcript notation indicating the date that the grade of Incomplete was replaced by a final grade. If the outstanding work is not completed within one calendar year from the date of the close of term in which the grade of Incomplete was received, the grade will remain as a permanent Incomplete on the transcript. In such instances, if the course is a required course or part of an approved program of study, students will be required to re-enroll in the course including repayment of all tuition and fee charges for the new registration and satisfactorily complete all course requirements. If the required course is not offered in subsequent terms, the student should speak with the faculty advisor or Program Coordinator about their options for fulfilling the degree requirement.

Doctoral students with six or more credits with grades of Incomplete included on their program of study will not be allowed to sit for the certification exam.

Course Communication

All official communications from the College—e.g., information on graduation, announcements of closing due to severe storm, flu epidemic, transportation disruption, etc.—will be sent to the student's email account, students are responsible for either reading email there, or, for utilizing the mail forwarding option to forward mail from their account to an email address which they will monitor.

Religious Observances

It is the policy of the University to respect its members' observance of their major religious holidays. Students should notify instructors at the beginning of the semester about their wishes to observe holidays on days when classes are scheduled. Where academic scheduling conflicts prove unavoidable, no student will be penalized for absence due to religious reasons, and alternative means will be sought for satisfying the academic requirements involved. If a suitable arrangement cannot be worked out between the student and the instructor, students and instructors should consult the appropriate department chair or director. If an additional appeal is needed, it may be taken to the Provost.

Academic Dishonesty

Students who intentionally submit work either not their own or without clear attribution to the original source, fabricate data or other information, engage in cheating, or misrepresentation of academic records may be subject to charges. Sanctions may include dismissal from the college for violation of University principles of academic and professional integrity fundamental to the purpose of the College.