APPAM

Undergraduate & Master
Student Seminar: Paths in
Policy & How to Get There
#2023APPAM

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3:10 PM: Policy Panel
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Undergraduate & Masters Student Seminar: Paths in Policy and How to Get There

APPAM   November 10th , 2023

Tim Smeeding

Extinguished Professor of Public Affairs and Economics

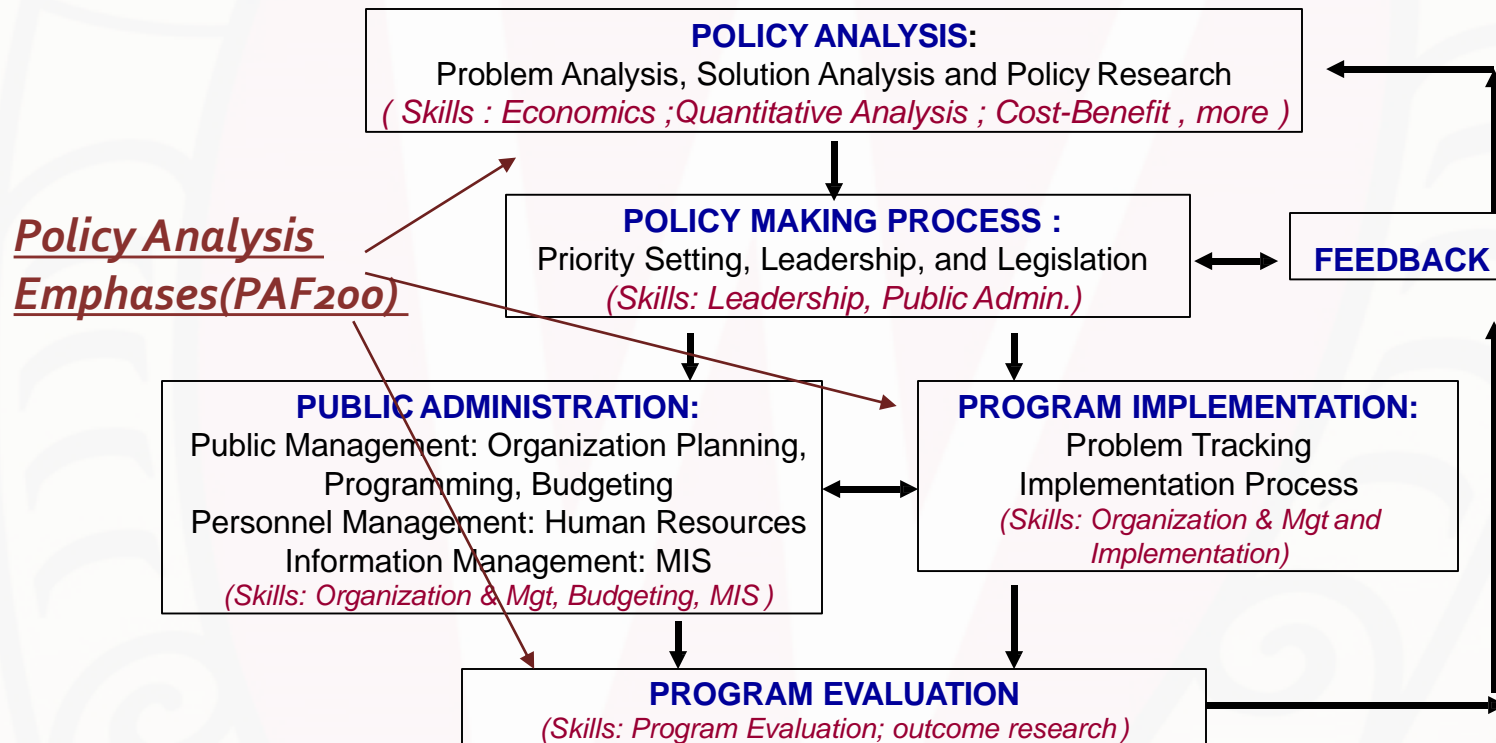# The charge and some responses

1. What got you interested in policy?
2. What path did you take ? (next slide)
3. What is a typical day in the life of someone in your position ?
4. Opinion on the degree(s) needed to be successful in the field (MPX vs PhD)
5. What skills do you feel are most valuable in your work?— know the policy process and how the skills work; think like a public policy analyst

Who am I ? A *policy economist* (vs. a traditional academic economist)

Academic	Policy
Long deadlines	Short deadlines
Self motivate	Good in teams
Being novel	Being right
Direction of effect	Magnitude of effect
Convince economists	Convince noneconomists
Find a question you can answer well	Answer the question as well as you can
Become an expert on one issue	Apply your tools to many issues
Find the optimal	Optimize within constraints

Source: Rachel Glennester, "Two kinds of economists"

The Policy Process or Policy Cycle
(as taught in schools of public affairs)

POLICY ANALYSIS:
Problem Analysis, Solution Analysis and Policy Research
(Skills : Economics ;Quantitative Analysis ; Cost-Benefit , more)

Policy Analysis Emphases(PAF200)

POLICY MAKING PROCESS :
Priority Setting, Leadership, and Legislation
(Skills: Leadership, Public Admin.)

FEEDBACK

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION:
Public Management: Organization Planning,
Programming, Budgeting
Personnel Management: Human Resources
Information Management: MIS
(Skills: Organization & Mgt, Budgeting, MIS)

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION:
Problem Tracking
Implementation Process
(Skills: Organization & Mgt and Implementation)

PROGRAM EVALUATION
(Skills: Program Evaluation; outcome research)

Public Policy Analysis —a way to think

-what is the <u>problem to be addressed</u> ?

-what are the <u>goals for policies and programs</u> ?

-what are the <u>alternate solutions, the ways to reach goals</u>?

-what does <u>the evidence</u> say about potential solutions ?

-what are the <u>outcomes of different policies</u> ?

(tradeoffs noted here : inexact results, cost, timing, more)

-make a <u>recommendation</u> : "do x": spend, tax, regulate/ deregulate , license, provide, subsidize;

or "do nothing";

 or keep "status quo" -- keep policy as is

Resume Preparation

Jill Berk

APPAM 2023 Fall Conference

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What I look for

/ **Education**

/ **Technical skills**

/ **Policy area knowledge and/or relevant practitioner experience**

/ **Organization, collaboration, and leadership**

/ **Attention to detail**

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Technical skills

/ **Varies by job opening – look to job posting to see what skills to feature**

/ **Common things to consider:**
- Research skills – literature reviews, qualitative data collection, data analysis
- Programming and data visualization
- Meeting facilitation
- Project management
- Writing for different audiences

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Where possible, provide evidence

/ **List of skills may help with automated screening but is not particularly compelling**

/ **Demonstrate your application of the skills in your descriptions of prior experience**

/ **Consider all forms of experience – employment, course projects, volunteer roles, extracurricular activities, etc**

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Relevant work experience

Employment Case Aide/Case Manager
- Managed up to 20 cases (approx. 45 individuals) in federally funded Matching Grant Program (MG)
- Supported refugee clients in finding successful job placements and achieving economic self sufficiency
- Scheduled and conducted intake assessments; tracked MG enrollment metrics
- Organized delivery of core maintenance assistance for clients including stipends, rent, utilities, and public benefits
- Coordinated cases across internal teams and with other nonprofits, local benefits offices, and more
- Interviewed, trained, and supported employment team interns; supervised one intern

/ **What I see in this work experience description**
- Relevant practitioner experience
- Specific details about job responsibilities
- Evidence of organizational skills, collaboration, and leadership

/ **Where it could have gone further**
- Mentioning public benefit programs by name – HR may be screening for references to SNAP or other programs

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Relevant experience from coursework

Graduate Capstone Consultant,
- Analyze 20 years of the　　　　　　survey data using Stata; develop a schematic map of issues and trends
- Interview　　stakeholders to assess context and use of the survey in advocacy efforts; analyze individual and collective feedback and use data to inform reports and recommendations
- Conduct literature reviews of survey methods and policy areas relevant to low-income New Yorkers since 2002
- Analyze UHT impact and share recommendations for improving　　　s ability to use the survey to understand and assist low-income New Yorkers in a final report and presentation
- Create data visualizations using Stata and Tableau to showcase UHT data for the public and for　　　stakeholders

/ **What I see in this coursework description**
- Application of programming and data visualization skills to messy, real-world data
- Social policy knowledge
- Research skills applied to a client project

/ **Where it could have gone further**
- Highlighted leadership of a team of students
- Discussed collaboration with the client

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Experience does not need to be in policy to be relevant

Brand Ambassador Team Manager,

-            , a medium-sized firm, is one of the top rated roofing, windows, and siding replacement firms in the PNW, generating over $10M net business each year since its founding in 2011.
- Managed and supervised team members that generated leads for the sales force year-round.
- Trained and motivated over 30 new hires to build relationships and gain the confidence of clients, pitch the product, overcome objections, and maintain a positive mentality.
- Managed and distributed marketing territories in the Vancouver and Portland metro areas
- Personally generated approximately $2.3M net business by establishing relationships with clients, ensuring customer satisfaction, and demonstrating superb oral communication and attention to detail.
- Regularly exceeded team goals by exceeding lead/sales quotas

/ **Demonstrates effective collaboration, management, and leadership**

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Pulling it all together

/ **Keep it short – maximum of two pages**
- Don't cram too much in – use reasonable fonts and margins

/ **Have others review**

/ **Be open to customizing for different jobs**
- Make sure that coursework highlights are best aligned with job postings
- Look for places to reference job requirements in your descriptions of prior experience

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APPAM Resources:

- Student Membership
- Complimentary Webinars
- Mentor Program
- APPAM Communities
- Career Connections Job Listings
- Awards
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Future Conferences
- Degrees & Pathways Flyer
- Public Policy Camps

Questions? Info@appam.org