

PPL 890: POLICY WORKSHOP

Spring Semester, 2025 | Michigan State University
Thursdays: 6:00 p.m. to 8:50 p.m., 114 Bessey

Dr. Sarah Reckhow; Email: reckhow@msu.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:30 to 2:30 in 312 South Kedzie Hall

Individual Meetings (as noted on the course schedule) schedule at: <https://reckhow-3.youcanbook.me/>

Overview and Objectives

Congratulations on reaching your final semester in the MPP program! At the program's conclusion, we offer PPL 890, a course that builds on the program's core curriculum to provide an opportunity for students to integrate the knowledge and skills gained in the program and apply theory to practice on a topic of the student's choosing. This course, coupled with PPL 891, The Art of Policymaking, serves as an important bridge between the classroom and the practice of policymaking and policy analysis.

The aims of this course are: (1) to facilitate the *application* of the knowledge and skills that students have acquired to a real-world policy, issue, need, situation, or decision, and (2) to further develop and hone the student's abilities to *communicate* policy-relevant knowledge to diverse audiences.

Structure, Requirements, and Grading

By the end of the semester, each student will present their final policy research in two separate but related forms: in writing, as a 5-page policy brief; and visually and verbally, through a presentation at the capstone forum.

To fulfill these requirements, students are expected to incorporate ideas and approaches that were introduced in the program's curriculum, conduct a suitable level of research on an appropriate topic, design and implement a sound analysis, and communicate the project's results. This is a continuation of work begun in PPL 891: The Art of Policymaking.

Course Resources and D2L

There will be few, if any, required readings for this class. Instead, there are a variety of helpful resources on the course D2L page. Everyone will have questions and need resources at different points in the semester and in your projects. These resources are curated to provide guidance between class meetings, so please be sure to check D2L first when you have questions.

Evaluation and Grading

Student evaluation and grading is based on combined performance on milestone assignments, the final policy brief, the final presentation, and overall contribution to the seminar. Late assignments will be accepted only at the discretion of the instructor and will not receive full credit. The final grade for the class is Pass/No Grade.

A Pass in this course will be achieved only if you obtain a final course grade of at least 85%.

Assignments: 30% of Grade.

The goal of these assignments is to help you develop your policy brief and poster. [Note: Early in the semester, you will be responsible for submitting a longer writing assignment. Writing is learning. Although the policy brief is only 5 pages long and the presentation will include a minimal amount of text, longer-form writing is an important step on the path to crisp, succinct policy analysis.] The deadlines for these assignments are as follows:

- Assignment 1: due Friday, February 7 – Analysis and Write Up
- Assignment 2: due Friday, February 28 – Revised Analysis and Write Up
- Assignment 3: due Friday, March 21 – First Draft of Presentation
- Assignment 4: due Friday, April 4 – Penultimate Draft of Presentation

The assignments will be graded on timeliness, meeting the assignment requirements, incorporation of feedback, and progress from the previous assignment. Assignment requirements may be individualized at the discretion of the instructor based on the needs of individual projects.

Policy Brief: 25% of Grade.

Final written policy briefs should not exceed 5 pages. Assignment guidelines are posted to D2L. Final drafts are due no later than 5 p.m., Monday, April 28.

Presentation: 25% of Grade

You will present your work at the capstone forum event the week of April 14. As this is a presentation of your work to the public, you must receive approval from me to present. A final version of your presentation, with recorded voiceover, is due Friday, April 11. I will review that submission and either approve what you have for presentation or ask you to make revisions by a specific date and time. If, for some reason, you are not prepared to present by your scheduled presentation time and you do not receive approval, I may work out an alternative assignment so you have an opportunity to pass the course.

Contribution to the Seminar: 15% of Grade.

Your contributions to the seminar will be assessed with respect to: (1) attendance, involvement in, and contribution to full-class meetings and discussions; (2) participation in, and feedback given during, small group and peer-review exercises; this includes professional and appropriate interactions with peers and instructors; (3) attendance and participation in MPP Program events; and (4) participation in individual meetings with the instructor.

Course Meetings

This course does not meet every week as a group. Please see the course schedule that follows for the dates we will meet. Much of the work will occur individually, in small groups, or in consultation with me. As a general rule of thumb, if you are not committing the time to your capstone that you would a regular 3-credit class, you will fall behind.

- Class Meetings are mandatory, full-class meetings.
- Individual Consultations are mandatory, one-on-one meetings with me during designated weeks, which you can schedule at <https://reckhow-3.youcanbook.me/>

Professionalism, Attendance, and Deadlines

This course is different from any other course in the program. It is part of the transition (for the majority of you) to your full-time career, and therefore, it's expected that you will use this opportunity to practice professional behavior. This means coming to class and small group sessions prepared to engage, responding to email promptly, meeting deadlines, communicating with your instructors and committee members, and offering feedback and comments in a tactful, respectful, constructive manner. I may end up serving as a professional reference for people who have taken this course, and demonstrating these kinds of skills in this course helps me give you a great reference with specific examples of what you can add to a workplace.

For my part, I will do my best to minimize changes and surprises. Due to the fluctuating circumstances of surrounding this course and the capstone event this spring, I'll be continually working on opportunities for you to share your work and make professional connections, so there may be times I ask you for information or a response on short notice. In light of the relatively few full class meetings, email is an important component of this course. Please stay on top of your email inbox and respond to emails promptly.

Academic Integrity

The Spartan Code of Honor states, "As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the **highest ethical standard**. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that **honor is worth more than grades**. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do." In addition, Article 2.III.B.2 of the Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." The Master of Public Policy Program adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. All work you submit must be your own original work, completed solely by you, unless otherwise explicitly permitted by the instructor. **The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, DALL-E, etc.) is not permitted in this class**; therefore, any use of AI tools for work in this class may be considered a violation of Michigan State University's policy on academic

integrity, the Spartan Code of Honor Academic Pledge and Student Rights and Responsibilities, since the work is not your own. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact me if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the [Academic Integrity](#) webpage.)

Land Acknowledgement

Understanding our history helps us understand and more equitably remake interactions, policies, systems, and power. The history of our University and the space we occupy is no exception, as our physical space, and the land in land grant, have a deep legacy.

Michigan State University occupies the ancestral, traditional and contemporary lands of the Anishinaabeg – Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi peoples. In particular, the university resides on land ceded in the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw. We recognize Michigan's 12 federally recognized Native Nations, historic Indigenous communities in Michigan, Indigenous individuals and communities who live here now, and those who were forcibly removed from their homelands. In offering this land acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty, history and experiences.

Course Schedule

WEEK	WHAT	WHERE	DATE	TIME	OBJECTIVES
1	Class Meeting	Bessey 114	Thursday, 1/16	6 pm	Course overview
2	Group Check-In (this is like an accountability group)		Week of 1/20		- Individual work on analysis - Check-in at least once with your group
3	Group Check-In		Week of 1/27		- Individual work on analysis - Check-in at least once with your group
4	Assignment Due	D2L	Friday, 2/7	11:59 pm	DUE: Analysis and Write-up
5	Peer Review & Individual Meetings		Week of 2/10		- Peer Review in Groups - Individual meetings
6	Class Meeting	Bessey 114	Thursday, 2/20	6 pm	- Extending your analysis - Visual communication
7	Group Check-In		Week of 2/24		Check in at least once with your group
	Assignment Due	D2L	Friday, 2/28	11:59 pm	DUE: Revision of Analysis
8	SPRING BREAK		Week of 3/3		
9	Class Meeting	Bessey 114	Thursday, 3/13		- Presenting your work - Developing Recommendations
10	Individual Meetings		Week of 3/17		Individual Meetings
	Assignment Due	D2L	Friday, 3/21	11:59 pm	DUE: Presentation Draft
11	Peer Review		Week of 3/24		- Hold one practice presentation session with your group - Peer Review in Groups
12	Group Check-in		Week of 3/31		Check in at least once with your group
	Assignment Due	D2L	Friday, 4/4	11:59 pm	DUE: Penultimate Presentation Draft
13	Practice Presentations	Bessey 114	Thursday, 4/10	6 pm	Practice presentations
	Assignment Due	D2L	Friday, 4/11	11:59 pm	DUE: Final presentation, with recorded voiceover
14	Capstone Presentations	TBD	Week of 4/14	TBD	Presentations to the public
15	Class Meeting	Bessey 114	Thursday, 4/17	6 pm	- Presentation debrief - Questions about policy briefs, etc.
16	Assignment Due	D2L	Monday, 4/28	5 pm	DUE: Policy Brief
16	Graduate Commencement	Breslin	Friday, 5/2	9 am	

* Portions of this schedule may change to accommodate public presentations of your work.