

# PUP 3002: Current Controversies in Public Policy

3 Credit Hours

*This course expires 16 weeks from the date of your enrollment.*

## ABOUT THE COURSE

**Instructor:** Dr. Mike Scicchitano  
Office: 304 Anderson Hall  
Email: [mscicc@ufl.edu](mailto:mscicc@ufl.edu)  
Phone: 352 846-2874

**Course Website:** [elearning.ufl.edu](http://elearning.ufl.edu)

### Course Communications

If you have any questions about the course please e-mail Dr. Mike at [mscicc@ufl.edu](mailto:mscicc@ufl.edu). I will respond to your inquiries within 24 hours on work days and within 48 hours on weekends. If you need a prompt response, call me directly. I welcome hearing from students so do not hesitate to email or call.

### Required Textbook

Issues for Debate in American Public Policy 17th Ed. CQ Press. ISBN: 9781506347158

### Course Description

We cannot escape the effect that public policy has on our lives. The air we breathe, the cars we drive, the food we eat and pretty much everything that we do is affected by the policies of the federal, state or local governments. Unfortunately, the quality of debate about public policy in political campaigns, on television news shows, from the “pundits” on Fox and MSNBC as well as in many newspapers or on the web is not very good. Most of the things we read in newspapers and magazines, see on television or see on the web does not demonstrate a very sophisticated understanding of how policy is made, paid for, implemented or an understanding how we determine if a program has achieved its goals.

The combination of the importance of public policy and the low level of debate means that we don't have a very informed discussion of the policies that affect our lives. The lack of a very informed debate means that, all too frequently it seems lately, have policies that are not very effective, are expensive and may lead to negative consequences.

This course will provide you with information to help you better understand how policies are made, paid for and implemented. The course presents a framework to understand the

formation, adoption, budgeting, implementation and evaluation of public policy. This framework provides a basis for detailed discussions and debates about current policy issues. The class is offered on online. All of the instructional material including lectures, slides, most of the reading materials, quizzes and exams will be on line with the exception of the book used for the debates.

### **Course Goals and/or Objectives**

By the end of this course, students will be:

- able to explain how policy is made, funded and implemented;
- able to discuss current policy issues using these key policy concepts;
- prepared to enter a graduate program that will prepare you for a career of public service.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Performance Policy**

This Flexible Learning course has been developed with the same rigorous standards of content as a campus course. Expectations for your performance as a Flexible Learning student are as high as they would be if you were taking this course in a classroom.

### **Participation Policy**

Students are required to participate in all course activities and submit all assignments posted on the website.

### **Assignment Policy**

**The course expires 16 weeks after your enrollment.** Complete **all parts** of all modules in the order they are presented on the course website; do not skip modules.

### **Course Technology**

Students must use their Gatorlink email account for this course. Students are recommended to check their email account DAILY for the duration of the course. Access to and on-going use of a computer with Internet access is required for all students. Competency in the basic use of a computer is required. At times, computers crash and Internet connections fail. It is in your best interest NOT to wait until the last minute to complete assignments.

For help with e-Learning, contact the Help Desk at <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu> or (352) 392-HELP - select option 2.

## Online Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations provided in the course modules (med-term and end-of-term evaluations).

## Course Deadline and Extension Policy

Students are allowed *16 weeks, from their date of enrollment*, to complete and submit their coursework. If the student has not submitted at least 50% of their coursework and have an extenuating circumstance preventing them from submitting the coursework, a failing grade of “E”, “E0” or “E1” will be issued and recorded to the UF Registrar.

If the student has made sufficient academic progress, which is defined as completing and submitting at least 50% of the coursework and have an extenuating circumstance, the student may petition the instructor for a course extension before the course expires. Each course extension request will be administratively evaluated. Instructors are not required to allow extensions. If a student does receive an extension, an incomplete grade of an “I” will be assigned as an interim grade. When the course is completed, the instructor will initiate the change of grade. After that, the “I” grade will be changed to the student’s final course grade on their transcript.

## Course Cancels and Course Drops:

### A Course Cancel

A tuition refund may be granted after a student submits a written request within 30 days of enrollment to the Flexible Learning Office. This request must be in writing by [learn@dce.ufl.edu](mailto:learn@dce.ufl.edu) or sent by fax, 352-392-6950. Refunds will be the amount of tuition, less \$25.00 per course. If a credit card was used, the refund will be credited a back to the card. **No refunds are granted after 30 days.**

### Dropping a Course

To drop a course, you need to email the Flexible Learning office at [learn@dce.ufl.edu](mailto:learn@dce.ufl.edu) with a request to drop within 14 weeks of the date of enrollment. In addition to their own request by email, *UF* students must have advisor approval to drop a flexible learning course. An advisor can email [learn@dce.ufl.edu](mailto:learn@dce.ufl.edu) with the student’s name, the course that they want to drop, and confirmation of permission to do so. It is the student's responsibility to verify that all drop requests have been received by the Flexible Learning office within the allotted time. The course grade will appear as "W" on a UF transcript.

Students with disabilities who need to drop a course due to disability-related reasons are permitted to petition for additional drops. Find more information by contacting the [Disability Resource Center](#).

## How to Request a UF Transcript

The student can view their grades by logging into [MyUFL](#) with their Gatorlink login and by selecting Student Admin. To receive an official transcript, the student must complete a [transcript request form through the Registrar](#). The University of Florida assures the confidentiality of all your educational records in accordance with State University System Rules, State Statutes, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Grades are not given over the telephone.

## GRADING POLICIES

Assignment	Total Points	Percent of Grade
Quizzes (12; 5 T/F questions; 4 points each)	240	24%
Debates (12; 10 points each)	120	12%
Assignments (10; 10 points each)	100	10%
Midterm Exam (40 MC questions, 5 points each)	200	20%
Final Exam (40 MC questions, 5 points each)	200	20%
Course Project	140	14%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Quizzes:** A quiz will be given for each lesson. Each quiz will be timed and have five questions. Students will have one minute per question.

**Debate Participation:** Each student will be required to complete a “debate” essay each week. Each chapter of the *Issues for Debate in American Public Policy* book examines a policy issues. At the end of the chapter an intriguing question related to that policy issues is asked and then “Yes” and “No” positions in response to the question are presented. You must select either the “Yes” or “No” position and defend your position. Detailed instructions for your defense of your position are presented in the course.

**Lesson Assignments:** Students will be given 10 assignments with each assignment counting for 10 points for a total of 100 points

**Midterm Examination:** A midterm will be administered that will cover the material in the first six lessons of the course (Lessons 1-6). The midterm will be multiple choice. You are permitted to take detailed printed notes to the midterm exam.

**Final Examination:** A final examination will be administered for the final six lessons (Lessons 7-12). The final examination will not be cumulative and will not cover the material included in the midterm examination. The final exam will be multiple choice. You are permitted to take detailed printed notes to the final exam.

**Course Project:** 14 Percent of final grade. Students will be given a final paper assignment that will draw upon material that was discussed in the class by applying course concepts to a policy of interest to them.

For more information about the current UF grading policies for assignments and grade points go to the [UF Grades and Grading Policies web page](#).

### Grading Scale

Score (Points)	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
930-1000	93 or above	A	4.00
900-929	90-92.9	A-	3.67
870-899	87-89.9	B+	3.33
Score (Points)	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
840-869	84-86.9	B	3.00
800-839	80-83.9	B-	2.67
770-799	77-79.9	C+	2.33
740-769	74-76.9	C	2.00
700-739	70-73.9	C-	1.67
670-699	67-69.9	D+	1.33
640-669	64-66.9	D	1.00
600-639	60-63.9	D-	0.67
0-599	59.9 or below	E	0.00

## UF POLICIES

### University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must

be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**The Flexible Learning office should be notified of any special accommodations required by the student when they begin their course.**

### **University Policy on Academic Misconduct**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." [The Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### **Netiquette**

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. Please read the [Netiquette Guide for Online Courses](#).

## **GETTING HELP**

### **Technical Help**

If you have **issues with course lectures**, go to [Mediasite Help Desk](#).

**For other technical issues**, please contact the UF Help Desk:

- Location: HUB 132
- Email: [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)
- Phone: (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- Website: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues **MUST** be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You **MUST** e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

## Questions about Flexible Learning

If you have any questions about the course, please contact the instructor. If you have administrative concerns (e.g., paying for the course, receiving the textbook, etc.), please contact the Flexible Learning Office.

### UF Flex Learning Office Contact Information

**Email:** [learn@dce.ufl.edu](mailto:learn@dce.ufl.edu)

**Phone:** (352) 294-3896

**Fax:** (352) 392-6950

**Website:** <http://flexible.dce.ufl.edu/>

## Other Resources

**Other resources** are available at the [UF Distance Learning website](#) for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please [email the Distance Learning office](#) or visit the [UF Distance Learning website](#) to submit a complaint.

**Disclaimer:** This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.