

AP/ECON 3469 (cross-listed as AP/PPAS 3480) 3.0 M
Political Economy of Public Policy

Start date: January 7, 2025 Note: no class on February 18 due to Reading Week
Time: Tuesdays 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM
Location: In person: Keele campus, room TBA (Please note lectures will not be recorded.)

Notes:

- Students who require accommodation in a course need to be registered with Student Accessibility Services. The Letter of Accommodation should be provided to the course director as soon as possible. More information at: <https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>
The York University [Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#) applies along with [relevant guidelines, procedures and definitions](#).

Office Hours: In person or via Zoom - **by appointment only**

Office: 123 McLaughlin College

- **Send an email to request an appointment;** please do not leave phone messages.
- Please ring the bell to the SPPA corridor on the main office side (119 MC), advance email notice is required if you intend to stop by.

E-mail: akimakov@yorku.ca

Course website: eClass

Mail: SPPA Office, 119 McLaughlin College

Course Websites hosted on York's "eClass" are accessible to students during the first week of the term. It takes two business days from the time of your enrolment to access your course website. Course materials begin to be released on the course website during the first week. To log in to your eClass course visit the [York U eClass Portal](#) and login with your Student Passport York Account. If you are creating and participating in Zoom meetings you may also go directly to the [York U Zoom Portal](#).

For IT support, students may contact University Information Technology Client Services via askit@yorku.ca or (416) 736-5800. Please also visit [Getting Help - UIT webpages](#).

Zoom is a free video conferencing software app that allows us to engage virtually for video, presentations, group work and chat rooms. More detail about these systems will be shared at the beginning of the course. Students shall note the following:

- Zoom is hosted on servers in the U.S. This includes recordings done through Zoom.
- If you have privacy concerns about your data, provide only your first name or a nickname when you join a session, but make sure to inform the course director accordingly.
- The system is configured in a way that all participants are automatically notified when a session is being recorded. In other words, a session cannot be recorded without you knowing about it.

You can find links to resources for students about online learning and eClass at: <https://going-digital.laps.yorku.ca/student-resources/>

Course Description:

Examines how and why real-world public policies often differ from optimal policies prescribed by neoclassical economic theory. Incorporates various models of political representation to different frameworks for studying issues in the areas of fiscal, monetary and trade policies as well as special topics in government regulation.

Prerequisites: AP/ECON 1000 3.00 and AP/ECON 1010 3.00 or equivalents. Course credit exclusions: None. PRIOR TO FALL 2009: Course credit exclusions: AK/ECON 3460 3.00, AK/POLS 3480 3.00, AK/PPAS 3480 3.00.

This course is both interdisciplinary and applied in nature, and its purpose is to prepare you for policy analyst jobs in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

Expected learning outcomes:

Upon completing this course, students should be able to:

- Explain why certain policies get approved and why action on other issues of public concern is lacking.
- Differentiate between normative and positive examinations of public policy.
- Analyze the interaction of competing interests at all levels of government (local, provincial/state, national and international) across different jurisdictions around the world and time periods.
- Integrate concepts and tools of economic theory with various political decision-making structures.
- Articulate policy research questions from a positive perspective, search the literature and compile a relevant bibliography.
- Communicate research findings in both oral and written format clearly and effectively.

Evaluation:

Take-home test 1: 20% (on **February 11** via eClass)

Take-home test 2: 20% (on **March 18** via eClass)

Essay: 45%

- Research proposal and bibliography 15% (due on **February 14 or earlier** via eClass)
- Final paper 30% (due on **April 8** via eClass)

Research presentation: 10% (**in person in class on March 25 or April 1 or earlier**, schedule through eClass)

Class participation and peer to peer feedback on research: 5%

Important to note:

- The weights of the grade components will not be changed under any circumstances.
- Late submissions will carry a 5% point penalty per day.
- If you do not make a research presentation by the April 1 deadline, you will receive 0% for this grade component. Presentations need to be scheduled with at least one week advance notice.
- Academic integrity is a fundamental and important value of York University. To maintain a fair and honest learning environment, students in this course are responsible for understanding and upholding academic integrity in all of their academic activities. To better understand expectations, familiarize yourself with the [Senate Policy on Academic Conduct](#). To learn more about how to demonstrate academic integrity in your courses and to access related resources and support, visit the [Academic Integrity website](#).

- The grading scheme for the course conforms to the standard system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.).
- Last date to drop the course without receiving a grade is March 14, 2025.
- Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from the course and receive a “W” or “Withdrawn” notation on the transcript) is: March 15 - April 4, 2025 See policy at: <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/withdrawn-from-course-w-policy-and-guidelines/>
- Course add/drop deadlines:

**Winter
(Term W)**

Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	January 20
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	January 31
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	March 14
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of “W” on transcript – see note below)	March 15 - April 4

Research proposal, paper and class presentation on the same topic of your choice:

- The proposal should be ½-1 page long. In addition to that you need to provide min. 10 scholarly references based on your literature search on the subject matter.
- Expected length of research paper: 6-8 pages (excluding reference list), font 12, single or 1 ½ line spacing
- Expected length of presentation: 5 slides (excluding title slide and references), 8 min.

The objective of these components is to encourage student interest in public policy issues while serving as a demonstration of the applicability of the theoretical tools. The assignments further aim to improve students’ writing and presentation skills. See the eClass course website under Assignments for more detailed guidelines for these grade components. You can also utilize SPARK – Student Papers and Academic Research Kit at: <https://spark.library.yorku.ca/> and the Writing Centre at: <https://writing-centre.writ.laps.yorku.ca/>

It is advisable that you seek timely guidance and feedback on your ongoing research efforts throughout the course. The class presentation aims to provide an opportunity for feedback on your research in progress for the final research paper.

Learning and Grading:

For the tests students will be responsible for the material presented at the lectures and in the required readings. For the tests and research paper you should be able to understand and interpret models and concepts in the context of real-world experience and empirical evidence.

Private Third-Party Tutoring Companies, Academic Honesty and Support Resources

Many private, third-party tutoring companies advertise their services to YorkU students. One way you can help eliminate these advertisements is by changing your eClass profile settings to private (see instructions below). Some of these private companies claim to be affiliated with, or recognized and supported by, York University. Some also claim to help you by providing you with quiz and test answers, suggesting that this practice is safe and permitted by York. These

claims are **not** true. York University has not officially recognized or endorsed any third-party tutoring service. When you are provided with quiz, test and exam answers, you run the risk of violating the **University's Academic Conduct Policy**. Students have been caught using these services to cheat and gain unfair advantage over honest students. The cheating students and "tutors" have received academic dishonesty punishments ranging from failing courses, to being expelled, to losing their YorkU degrees.

Officially supported resources to help students learn course material will be provided by YorkU officials, such as your professors and your department. These services are offered at no cost to you as a student. If you require help with any of your numeracy-related courses that involve math, statistics or Excel, drop in online to meet with one of our peer tutors at the **Student Numeracy Assistance Centre at Keele (SNACK)**. If you are ever unsure of whether a resource is allowable or endorsed by YorkU, please feel free to email the Department of Economics at lapsecon@yorku.ca and they would be happy let you know.

To hide your email address in eClass: Step 1: Click your name on the top-right of the eClass website, then click "Profile" on the drop-down menu; Step 2: Under "User details" click "Edit profile"; Step 3: From the "Email display" drop-down menu choose "Hide my email address from non-privileged users"; Step 4: Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the "Update profile" button.

Required Readings:

Available free of charge on eClass or via York Libraries

Outline:

Week 1 (January 7)

Introduction to Political Economy, Positive v. Normative Public Policy Analysis

Week 2 (January 14)

Role and Size of Government

Week 3 (January 21)

Public and Private Goods under Government Mandate

Week 4 (January 28)

Voting Rules and their Impact on Law and Policy

Week 5 (February 4)

Interest Groups, Collective Action Problems and Regulatory Capture

Week 6 (February 11)

Take-home test #1 online (no lecture or presentations)

Research proposal due via eClass no later than Friday, February 14

No class on Tuesday, February 18 (Reading Week)

Week 7 (February 25)

Fiscal Policy

Week 8 (March 4)

Monetary and Exchange Rate Policy and International Policy Coordination

Week 9 (March 11)

Politics and Redistribution - Special Topics in Social Policy: Health, Education, and Retirement

Week 10 (March 18)

Take-home test #2 online (no lecture or presentations)

Weeks 11 and 12 (March 25 and April 1)

Students' presentations of their research in progress

Final research papers due on April 8 via eClass