

Introduction & Curriculum

**Open Policy Course in Public Policy for
Advocates and Activists - 2010**

Conducted by

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Open Policy Course in Public Policy for Advocates and Activists - 2010

The Open Policy Course in public policy is the inaugural class on public policy conducted by John Stapleton. John taught policy at the Maytree Public Policy Training Institute, the Non Profit course at the Schulich School of Business and delivered a policy development lecture series for the Metcalf Foundation. John spent 28 years as a public servant in Ontario, half of it in policy development.

Hello! I am now going out on my own. I will conduct a 26 part course in Toronto starting January 15, 2010.

What is it?

A policy course for neophytes, a refresher for the experienced, and a confirmation for the seasoned that gets right down to everything you need to know to engage policy in Ontario at all levels.

When will it be held?

The course will start on January 2010 and will run half-days every Friday (or agreed upon dates) for 13 weeks in the winter and spring followed by 13 weeks in the Fall of 2010. See suggested dates below

Where will it be conducted?

The policy course will take place at the meeting room on the first floor of Woodgreen.

WoodGreen Community Services is located at 815 Danforth Ave, just west of Jones Avenue, equidistant between the Pape and Donlands subway station. Local on-street parking and Green P parking is available. Do not park directly in front of the building during business hours. This is a bus-loading zone. Reception is on the first floor.

Google Maps:

http://maps.google.ca/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=815+Danforth+ave&sl=43.679745,-79.340791&sspn=0.008613,0.014892&ie=UTF8&hq=&hnear=815+Danforth+Ave,+Toronto,+Toronto+Division,+Ontario&ll=43.680629,-79.340472&spn=0.008551,0.014892&t=h&z=16&iwloc=A

Google Street View:

<http://maps.google.ca/maps?hl=en&ie=UTF8&hq=&hnear=815+Danforth+Ave,+Toronto,+Toronto+Division,+Ontario&ll=43.679713,-79.340923&spn=0,359.985108&t=h&z=16&layer=c&cbll=43.679745,-79.340791&panoid=JNB7ogcWb6RBUJbnFS4QuQ&cbp=12,167.78,,0,-7.06>

How many students?

The inaugural class will be capped at (approximately) 22 persons

What is the tuition?

\$500. for all 26 modules (less than 20 dollars per module!) - to be paid by (or at) the first class on January 15, 2010

What do I get for my money?

- 26 lecture/ seminars
- all course materials
- one on one critique of a policy/advocacy paper written by the participant
- guest lecturers to be determined

What are the downsides?

Inaugural courses always have creaks and groans - the second year will be more polished .

Why this, why now?

I thought that the 350 or so PowerPoint slides I prepared would be useable for years in courses. Now I have the course material, I can teach it - but have no course to teach.

Many people have approached me to reprise various courses - which I do from time to time.

What biases will I be exposed to?

Most of my examples will come from government, social security, public policy, legal issues and the economy. Although I try to cover the arts and the economy as well as health issues, my expertise lies in the areas in which I have experience.

Will I get a diploma or recognition?

The course is not accredited in any way. Recognition will come slowly through alumni who do well.

Are there ways I can help?

This course especially in the first year will be a classic work in progress. Students will be invited to participate in improvements. For example, a module may be too long or too short. We will take our time to get it right.

What if I don't attend? Can I get my money back?

If the course is not started, money will be refunded. If one starts the course and cannot continue, other arrangements will be made.

Are there scholarships available?

Not yet!

The 26 Modules

1. Introduction to Public Policy

- What policy is and is not
- Small 'p' vs. big 'P' policy
- Coors 'Policy' (from their policy commercial)
- Insurance Policies
- Why taking policy is NOT just a better articulation of your own opinion
- The best ever policy 'songs' (*No Money Down, Against the Wind & the Boxer*)

Key Reading: Sherri Torjman, [What is Policy?](#)

2. My role in policy as an advocate (now that we know what policy is)

- Is policy development right for me?
- Am I heretic if I do policy?
- Are policy and activism opposed to each other?
- Why not leave policy to other people?

3. Policy Boot Camp!

- Developing strategies for campaigns in which you have no interest (aggravating but necessary)
- How knowing 'almost nothing' can help
- How passion helps and hinders policy making
- Why don't decision-makers get it?

4. Good and Bad Policy-making

- What is good and bad policy?
- Does anyone set out to make bad policy?
- Why do governments make bad policy?
- Is bad policy avoidable?
- Getting the research right.

5. Policy-making at the federal government level

- What happens in Ottawa anyways?
- Throne speeches
- Cabinet submissions and Cabinet

Key Reading: Breaking the Bargain, Ruling from the Centre , Daniel Savoie

6. Policy-making at the Provincial Level

- Another Westminster model.... what does that mean?
- Throne Speeches
- Cabinet Submissions and Cabinet again but a different view from the meat in the sandwich between federal and municipal and the highest % of GDP expenditures - we will discuss!

7. Policy at the Municipal Level

- Not a Westminster model
- Conducting senior management meetings in Public - does that make a difference?
- The most frustrating level of government?
- Closest to the people and least able to effect change?

8. Policy Analysis and Policy Development

- Is this the difference between studying and building (or something else)?
- Thinking about options - least to most
- From nothing to something
- Ask for the stars and you'll get the moon? (or nothing)
- Getting things right or does anyone care in the age of spin?

9. Writing good Policy

- The hardest skill of all?
- A lost art?
- It doesn't matter.....?
- Ok then - how do you do it?

10. Advanced Framing and reframing (and reframing again.....)

- No this is not about taking your poster to a gallery
- It's about placing in context to connect with the public
- Making what is old new again
- Playing against the tide of prejudice
- Appealing to values of people that are unlikely to change just because you came along to save the world.....

Key Reading: John Kenneth Galbraith: The Affluent Society

11. Stakeholders and why they matter

- Why we ignore people who are against us
- Why this is unwise
- Why there is no point in converting them
- Why connecting with them is everything
- What others think of stakeholders
- How they are used and the perils that lie within....
- Common mistakes.....

12. The Important role of important people (and rock stars)

- Why we want them to champion our causes...
- The 'l'Oreal' question: Are they worth it?
- How they get to where they get and why we care
- The market share of the stars
- A dream endorsement now what?

13. The Media

- The Spice Girls' question: what you and the media 'really really want'!
- Lots of specifics about media - the nuts and bolts that most people ignore
- How to do it right - very hard
- How to do it wrong - very easy
- Thinking through the news release

14. Public Servants (not the political ones)

- What is the civil service?
- How are they different?
- Do you want to know them?
- Learning their culture
- What they think about you!

15. Political Staff

- Who are considered to be political staff
- Who they work for
- How they are different from civil servants
- What they think of the bureaucracy
- What everyone else thinks of them

16. Funders and Philanthropies

- Who are the funders and what do they want?
- How are they different from government and the private sector?
- Why they turned down your great idea
- Where they fit in the grand scheme of things

17. Finding and Explaining Bread Mold on a Yak!

- Why good ideas don't bubble to the surface
- Why whole societies and cultures reject discoveries that actually work
- Why we fail to discover that which stares us in the face
- What we can do about it

18. The History of almost anything

- Why does history matter and when is it useful?
- Was Santayana right? Those that do not learn the lessons of history are bound to repeat them
- What are our biases and prejudices about the past?
- and does everyone share them?

19. Branding and Naming things

- Does it really matter what we call ourselves?
- Do titles of papers and books really matter?
- Is Malcolm Gladwell on to something with three bestsellers with five title words in total (The, Tipping, Point, Blink,Outliers)?
- Do we need to see ourselves in every title? We explore why the answer is yes.....

Key Reading: Any one chapter of all three of Gladwell's books

20. Making Policy a habit

- Michael Covey said the most important word in the 7 habits of highly successful people is 'habit'
- Should policy thinking be a habit for advocates?
- Does it mean they have gone to the dark side?
- Is policy essentially a conservative discipline?

Key Reading: Michael Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People
(the part about habits)

21. Policy and Timing.... Is there a policy time of year?

- You will be surprised by the real answer.....
- You probably won't like it (it might be when you want to take a vacation)
- Why policy timing matters

22. Finding Mr. 'Goodpolicy'

- Finding the **good** of every strategy and why some strategies do not have a 'good'
- Why it's just not good enough to be right or just and why it takes more than that
- Why policy 'currency' counts

Key Reading: When Prophecy Fails

23. How we know when we got it right?

- 'Success has many fathers but failure is an orphan'
- Being precise: Who killed the last tree? (why 'no one' is the right answer)
- I'm on TV and in the papers - my issue is everywhere - did I win?
- Sustaining the campaign once we've arrived

24. Starting the Vertical Conversation...

- Who talks to whom?
- Why can't we get everyone into a room?
- Why most conversations are too horizontal
- How do I cultivate the people I never talk to?
- Why is it important?
- Does anyone else do it?
- What would success look like?
- Why should I care?

25. Switching Gears: The nuts and bolts of evaluation and implementation

- Why is implementable policy important?
- Isn't that the job of government and others?
- Is an examination 'a happy recollection of work well done?'
- or something else?
- Is consultation intended to elicit "a favourable opinion on a course already decided?"
- Is evaluation inconvenient when we like a policy and a necessity when we don't?

26. Taking Stock: Where have we come?

- A retrospective on a curriculum
- Next steps
- Other ideas
- Alumni ideas
- Helping others

Dates: The 26 Modules

Module	Date: 2010
Part One	
1. Introduction to Public Policy	January 15
2. My role in policy as an advocate (now that we know what policy is)	January 22
3. Policy Boot Camp!	January 29
4. Good and Bad Policy-making	February 5
5. Policy-making at the federal government level	February 12
6. Policy-making at the Provincial Level	February 19
7. Policy at the Municipal Level	February 26
8. Policy Analysis and Policy Development	March 5
9. Writing good Policy	March 12
10. Advanced Framing and reframing (and reframing again.....)	March 26
11. Stakeholders and why they matter	March 26
12. The Important role of important people (and rock stars)	April 9
13. The Media	April 16

Module	Date: 2010
Part Two	
14. Public Servants (not the political ones)	September 10
15. Political Staff	September 17
16. Funders and Philanthropies	September 24
17. Finding and Explaining Bread Mold on a Yak!	October 1
18. The History of almost anything	October 8
19. Branding and Naming things	October 15
20. Making Policy a habit	October 22
21. Policy and Timing.... Is there a policy time of year?	October 29
22. Finding Mr. 'Goodpolicy'	November 5
23. How we know when we got it right?	November 12
24. Starting the Vertical Conversation...	November 19
25. Switching Gears: The nuts and bolts of evaluation and implementation	November 26
26. Taking Stock: Where have we come?	December 3