

**The Pennsylvania State University  
Departments of Political Science and Sociology**

**PLSC/SOC 497  
Research Fellowship in Political Science/Sociology  
Professors Frank Baumgartner and John McCarthy  
Spring 2004  
Tuesdays, 2:30-5:30PM, 205 Ferguson**

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This course will focus on developing research skills in political science and sociology. Students will become involved in hands-on individualized research projects dealing with changes in public policy and the development and growth of interest groups and social movement organizations (SMOs). Readings will focus on articles from the recent professional literature on the growth of interest groups and SMOs as well as on theories and indicators of policy change over time. Using data from the Policy Agendas Project ([www.policyagendas.org](http://www.policyagendas.org)), and supplementing these with new sources on social movements and newspaper coverage, each student will learn to develop an individual research project linking a social movement, professional or business community of their choice with developments in public policy over the past 50 years.

This class will be run as a seminar, with extensive class participation and with each student developing an individual research project during the term. During the weeks when there are readings, these should all be done in detail before class. In five of the weeks, a short (one page, single-spaced) paper discussing the measurements used in one of the assigned readings is due in class). Each week, class discussion will be structured in the following manner: 1) we will review the assignments due from the previous week's readings if appropriate; 2) we will discuss the new readings in detail (each student's paper will allow full participation); and 3) we will go over the new assignments for the following week. Assignments are all structured in such a manner as to walk each student through the necessary skills and steps so that their final project will be both feasible and professional. We hope you can use your final presentation (or a paper drawn from it) as a writing sample for graduate school or for other similar purposes.

We'll spend some time most weeks discussing various research methodology issues, such as how one knows whether a given social indicator is valid and reliable. We'll focus on indicators of public policy and concerning the development of social movements and interest groups. You'll gain an understanding of some on-going research projects here on campus. You'll each write an original presentation making use of your own research.

Since each student will be researching a different topic, but using similar methodologies during the term, there is a premium upon students helping one another. Class discussions will provide a time to explain your own research projects as well as to get feedback from others. By the same token, helping other students in their research projects, through constructive criticisms and suggestions is an integral part of the class. Accordingly, when one student makes a presentation to the class, the other students should be ready to give feedback and help. This is not a class in which to sit quietly.

Grades will be calculated in the following manner:

10%	Two points each for 5 short measurement / critique papers (Graded Pass/Fail)
20%	Class Participation (Note: 20 % is the equivalent of two full letter grades)
30%	Combined grades on three short assignments
40%	Final Presentation
100%	Total

There are no required textbooks for purchase. The course web site, available through Baumgartner's home page (<http://polisci.la.psu.edu/faculty/Baumgartner/welcome.htm#teach>) will contain links to all the relevant articles, web sites, and data sources. Any papers not available on the web site will be distributed in class.

### **Weekly class assignments, readings, and discussion topics**

#### **Week 1, January 13, 2004: Introduction and Course Overview**

1. General overview of the course
2. Organizations as Collective Actors, Policy Agendas and Mediation: Alternative Models.
3. Presentation of Two Power Point Presentations from 2002-2003.
4. Measurement issues

#### **Week 2, January 20: Studying Media Attention Cycles**

1. Discussion of using media archives for creating time-series of media attention to policy issues. What produces media attention cycles?
2. Readings:
  - Hilgartner, Stephen and Charles L. Bosk. 1988. "The Rise and Fall of Social Problems—A Public Arenas Model." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 53-78.
  - Woolley, J. T. 2000. "Using Media-Based Data in Studies of Politics." *American Journal of Political Science* 44: 156-173.
3. Assignment (due in week 3):
  - Create an annual time series of media attention to some issue of your choice using the Electronic *New York Times* Historical Archive.

#### **Week 3, January 27: Studying Policy Agendas**

1. Review experiences in creating media attention time series.
2. Overview of Policy Agendas Project and Mapping changes in Government Attention.

3. Readings:
  - Jones, Bryan D., and Frank R. Baumgartner. 1991. "Agenda Dynamics and Policy Subsystems." *Journal of Politics* 53, 4 (November): 1044-74.
  - Baumgartner, Frank R., Bryan D. Jones, and John Wilkerson. 2002. "Studying Policy Dynamics." Chapter 2 (pp. 29-49) in *Policy Dynamics*. Ed. Bryan D. Jones and Frank R. Baumgartner. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
  - Assignment before class: Read the general overview, Level 1 information, and do the analysis tool tutorial on-line at: [www.policyagendas.org](http://www.policyagendas.org)
4. Assignment (due in week 4):
  - Use Policy Agendas Web-Site to create a time-series of government attention to some issue of your choice. Most efficiently this should be the same issue chosen for creating the media attention time-series. Then revise the media attention time-series to correspond as closely as possible to the government attention time-series. Come to class in week 4 with both series graphed and with your and codebook data saved.

#### **Week 4, February 3: Associations, Social Movement Organizations and Interest Groups**

1. Review experiences in creating policy agenda time series and convergence with media attention time-series.
2. Studying Populations of Organizations over time.
3. Readings:
  - Singh, Jitendra V. and Charles J. Lumsden. 1990. "Theory and Research in Organizational Ecology." *Annual Review of Sociology* 16: 161-195.
  - McCarthy, John D., and Erik Johnson. 2003. "The Sequencing of Transnational and National Social Movement Mobilization: The Organizational Mobilization of the Global and U.S. Environmental Movements." Forthcoming in *Transnational Processes and Social Movements*. Edited by Donatella Della Porta and Sidney Tarrow).
  - Assignment (due in class): write a one-page paper reviewing the measurements of key variables and the sources of the data used in the Johnson and McCarthy paper.
4. Assignment (due in week 5):
  - Create an annual time series of founding and density for a sub-set of organizations using the Associations Unlimited on-line listing of national level U.S. associations. Try to have these time series converge with the media attention and government attention time-series you have already created. Come to class with your dataset, a graph or graphs, and a codebook description of what you did.

#### **Week 5, February 10: The Founding of Social Movement Organizations/Interest Groups.**

1. Review experiences in creating annual time series of founding and density for populations of associations.
2. Readings:
  - McCammon, Holly J. 2000. "Stirring Up Suffrage Sentiment: The Formation of the State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866-1914." *Social Forces* 80: 449-480.
  - Minkoff, Debra C. 1995. "Interorganizational Influences on the Founding of African-American Organizations, 1955-1985." *Sociological Forum* 10: 51-79.

- Assignment (due in class): write a one-page paper on one of these two articles reviewing the measurement of key variables and the sources of the data.
3. Assignment (due in week 6):
- Give a one-page description of your plans for your term paper project. Outline the topic, the data sources, and the measures. Attach relevant graphs if possible.

### **Week 6, February 17: The Survival of Social Movement Organizations**

1. Review of term paper projects in class
2. Readings:
  - Edwards, Bob, and Sam Marullo. 1995. "Organizational Mortality in a Declining Social Movement: The Demise of Peace Movement Organizations in the End of the Cold War Era." *American Sociological Review* 60: 908-927.
  - Hannan, Michael. 1988. "The Ecology of Organizational Mortality: American Labor Unions, 1836-1985." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 25-52.
  - Assignment (due in class): write a one-page paper on one of these two articles reviewing the measurement of key variables and the sources of the data.

### **Week 7, February 24: The Policy Impact of SMOs and Protest**

1. Readings:
  - McAdam, Doug and Yang Su. 2002. "The War at Home: Anti-War Protests and Congressional Voting, 1965 to 1973." *American Sociological Review* 67: 722-746.
  - Soule, Sarah A., Doug McAdam, John McCarthy and Yang Su. 1999. "Protest Events: Cause or Consequence of State Action? The U. S. Women's Movement and Federal Congressional Activities, 1956-1979." *Mobilization* 2: 239-255.
  - Assignment: (due in class): write a one-page paper on one of these two articles reviewing the measurement of key variables and the sources of the data.
2. Assignment (due in week 8):
  - Hand in your bibliography and list of key variables (with data sources) for your term paper project.

### **Week 8, March 2: The Co-Evolution of Government and Groups.**

1. Readings:
  - Beth L. Leech, Frank R. Baumgartner, Timothy La Pira, and Nicholas A. Semanko. 2004. "Drawing Lobbyists to Washington: Government Activity and the Demand for Advocacy." Under review or hopefully forthcoming by this time, *Political Research Quarterly*. Available on course web site.
  - Baumgartner, Frank R. and Christine Mahoney. 2004. Social Movements, the Rise of New Issues, and the Public Agenda. In *Routing the Opposition: Social Movements, Public Policy, and Democracy* eds. David S. Meyer, Valerie Jenness, and Helen Ingram), forthcoming, University of Minnesota Press. (Available at course web site.)
  - Assignment (due in class): Compare the development of government interest in the policy area you are focusing on with the development of the associated interest-group

- or SMO system. Bring relevant charts and figures to class and be prepared to show and discuss.
2. Assignment: Make an individual meeting with Baumgartner, McCarthy, or both to discuss your term paper before March 19.

**(Week of March 9, Spring Break)**

**Week 9, March 16: How Group Mobilization affects the Policy Process**

1. Readings  
[Http://lobby.la.psu.edu](http://lobby.la.psu.edu)
  - Read the introductory material (more is available in the documentation section)
  - Read through the index of issues
  - Read 5 case overviews of your choice
  - Read through the full set of links for one or two cases
  - Choose those cases most closely related to your issue-area
2. Assignment:  
Come to class prepared to discuss:
  - Who was involved in the different issues?
  - Were important relevant actors absent? How can you say who “should” be involved?
  - Could you characterize the issue as being dominated by business, labor, environmentalists, citizen’s groups, or any other set of actors?
  - What were the most prominent arguments / issue-definitions used? Where did these seem to come from?
  - Consider where the relevant set of policy participants come from, and how different arguments are made by different types of actors. How much did social movements affect these randomly chosen policy debates?

**Week 10, March 23:** First Student Presentations.

**Week 11, March 30:** First Student Presentations.

**Week 12, April 6:** First Student Presentations.

**Week 13, April 13:** Final Student Presentations.

**Week 14, April 20:** Final Student Presentations.

**Week 15, April 27:** Final Student Presentations.

Final Power Point Presentation due by email attachment by today.