



Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives

By Michael E. Kraft, Scott R. Furlong

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Public policy textbooks need to give students a thorough explanation of the policy process, but why do so many relegate policy analysis to a single, final chapter—or not cover it at all? In the third edition of their innovative text, Kraft and Furlong take a decidedly different tack. They introduce and integrate an evaluative approach to policy throughout their text, encouraging critical and creative thinking on issues ranging from economic policy and the financial bailout to homeland security and natural disasters.

Public Policy starts with the basics and concisely reviews institutions, policy actors, and major theoretical models. The authors then discuss the nature of policy analysis and its practice, and show students how to employ evaluative criteria in six substantive policy areas. At its core, *Public Policy* guides students through policy alternatives, arming them with analytic tools for understanding how the motivations of policy actors—both within and outside of government—influence a complex, yet comprehensible, policy agenda. Professors will appreciate its authoritative, balanced approach, and its accessibility will engage students and keep them reading.

Important features for enhanced readability include:

- **Working with Sources** and **Steps to Analysis** feature boxes that help students apply evaluative criteria;
- **Policy scenario** chapter openers;
- End-of-chapter discussion questions, suggested readings and websites, and keyword lists;
- A wealth of tables, figures, charts, and photos; and
- A helpful keyword glossary in the appendix.

In addition to updating throughout all chapters to account for recent events, issues, and policy debates through the end of the Bush presidency, the third edition includes expanded and new coverage of:

- the mortgage crisis, financial bailout, and ensuing recession;
- the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq;
- the use of private contractors for military support and operations;
- homeland security and its implications for civil liberties;
- national energy policy and high gasoline prices, including proposals for increased offshore drilling;
- climate change issues and politics;
- the government's capacity to handle natural disasters, such as Hurricanes Katrina, Gustav, and Ike; and
- immigration controversies, including construction of fencing along the U.S.-Mexican border.

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Editorial Review

Review

I have enjoyed using all editions of Kraft and Furlong's *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives* in my policy classes. It is by far the best textbook on the American public policy making process and on the history and politics of all the major domestic policies in the U.S. The authors combine academic knowledge about policy making with an impressive expertise about domestic policies. My students have found Kraft and Furlong's book to be engaging timely, and highly readable

(James A. Thurber)

Public Policy's emphasis on policy analysis is unique and encourages students to begin thinking as analysts. In a subtle way, it shifts the burden of evaluation to students and encourages them to become more active in the course. I also found the accompanying web site very helpful, most notably the online exercises which require the students to get involved in the issues in ways that a standard lecture format do not allow

(Robert Duffy)

Kraft and Furlong's *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives* is the core text in my introductory public policy course. It is written in language that is cogent and concise, and helps to establish a common universe of discourse among students with varied backgrounds in policy. One of its major strengths is the emphasis on critical thinking; the list of web sites in each chapter gives students sources for current and reliable information

(Cheryl Leggon)

About the Author

Michael E. Kraft is professor of political science and public affairs and Herbert Fisk Johnson Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. He is the author of, among other works, *Environmental Policy and Politics*, 5th Edition. In addition, he is coeditor of *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century*, 7th Edition, with Norman J. Vig; *Business and Environmental Policy*, with Sheldon Kamieniecki; and *Toward Sustainable Communities: Transition and Transformations in Environmental Policy*, 2nd Edition, with Daniel A. Mazmanian. He has taught courses in environmental policy and politics, public policy analysis, and Congress for over thirty years.

Scott R. Furlong is the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and professor of political science and public affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. He has published extensively in the areas of regulatory policy, rulemaking, and the role of interest group participation in the executive branch. His articles have appeared in such journals as the *Journal of Public Administration, Research and Theory*, *Public Administration Review*, *Administration Policy Quarterly*, and *Policy Studies Journal*. He has taught classes in public policy, regulatory policy, and American government for over fourteen years.

Users Review

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