BUSINESS C782
Health Policy Analysis
Fall 2025 Course Outline

Health Policy and Management
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University

CO-INSTRUCTORS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Section 1: Mondays 17:30 – 20:30

Dr. Puspita Hossain	**Jenn Green, PhD(c)**
Health Policy,	*Health Policy and Management, DeGroote*
Faculty of Health Sciences	*School of Business*
Co-Instructor	Co-Instructor

Email: hossap1@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours:
- In office: Mon 16:00-17:00 (location posted on A2L)
- By appointment, Zoom only: Book an online appointment
Telephone: Available on A2L

Email: blatchj@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours:
- In office: Thurs 16:30 - 17:30 (location posted on A2L)
- By appointment, Zoom only: Book an online appointment
Telephone: Available on A2L

Class location: Location shared on D2L

When required and determined by the co-instructors, the class may be held online on Zoom and we will use a standing meeting link (posted on D2L)

Course website: https://avenue.cllmcmaster.ca/d2l/home/709414

Course prerequisites: N/A   **Course antirequisites:** BUSINESS C721

McMaster University | DeGroote School of Business

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the field of health policy analysis, with particular emphasis on clinical, administrative, and government policy. This course teaches relevant concepts and methods that will provide students with basic skills required to:

i. conduct health policy research for the purposes of informing or explaining health policy development; and
ii. be critical consumers of health policy research and media coverage of health policy issues.

Students will explore the following questions and concepts throughout the course:

- What is policy, policy analysis, and health policy analysis?
- What are the different stages of the policy process (i.e., agenda setting, policy development, policy implementation and policy evaluation)?
- What are the major influences or determinants of policy (i.e., interests, institutions and ideas)?

The field of health policy analysis draws upon numerous disciplines. As such, course readings will be drawn from political science, sociology, biomedical sciences, business and policy studies.

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	Yes	IT skills:	Yes	Global view:	Yes
Avenue:	Yes	Ethics:	Yes	Numeracy:	Yes	Written skills:	Yes
Participation:	Yes	Innovation:	Yes	Group work:	No	Oral skills:	Yes
Evidence-based:	Yes	Experiential:	Yes	Final Exam:	No	Guest speaker(s):	Yes

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to complete the following key tasks:

➢ Demonstrate an understanding of the role of policy and policy analysis in healthcare

➢ Describe and apply the stages and nature of the policy development process

➢ Adeptly understand and conduct applied analysis of current policy issues based on the significant factors which impact policy development and outcomes

➢ Identify key ideas, interest, and institutions that affect health policy development

➢ Understand how issues make it onto the policy agenda

- ➢ Explain why some policy solution success while others fail

- ➢ Develop recruitment scripts, letters of information and consent and interview guides and conduct key informant interviews for primary data collection to support their policy analysis

- ➢ Communicate effectively in the policy environment

- ➢ Anticipate stakeholder interests and design an appropriate consultation strategy

- ➢ Draft a conference abstract and develop a policy brief to be presented as a poster presentation and present at a networking event

- ➢ Conduct a mini policy analysis

- ➢ Prepare a policy analysis journal article for submission to a peer reviewed journal

---

COURSE FORMAT

We will be meeting weekly in person, with the back up use of Zoom when required. A 3-hour class block will set aside each week (Monday, 5:30 to 8:30 pm EDT/EST) for discussion of course material and assignments. Formal lectures will not be given; instead, the objectives of each weekly session will be to work through course material through student-led and interactive discussion to clarify key concepts, to probe the material more deeply, and to apply it to current health policy topics and problems. Avenue to Learn (A2L) will be used as the web platform to support course-related communication. Course material will be uploaded on to A2L throughout the term.

There is a standing Zoom web conference space for the class, to be used as a back-up to in-person classes when needed and as determined by the co-instructors.

Required technology

In order to participate in the course online, you will require access to:
- Zoom web conferencing service as a back up to in-person classes - McMaster University provides licenses to all students: https://uts.mcmaster.ca/services/computers-printers-and-software/zoom/
- Your Avenue to Learn account to access course content and submit course assignments: https://uts.mcmaster.ca/services/teaching-and-learning/avenue-to-learn/

Please ensure you have set up your accounts, downloaded any required applications, and tested your connection and ability to participate as expected prior to Week 2.

COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

As a PhD level seminar course, there is no single, definitive health policy text. Because the course draws on concepts from the fields of public policy analysis and political science but applies them to the health system, a combination of chapters from several key texts and published journal articles will be assigned. The main texts that we will be drawing on are [Prices for paperbacks provided]:

1. Pal, L. A. (2014). Beyond policy analysis: public issue management in turbulent times (5th edition) - A very thorough and up-to-date general policy analysis text with a number of references to Canadian health policy issues throughout [$150]
2. Stone, D. A. (2012). Policy paradox: the art of political decision making (3rd edition) [$82]
3. Weible, C. M., & Sabatier, P. A. (Eds.). (2018). Theories of the policy process (4th edition)** [$65]
4. Kingdon, J. W., & Thurber, J. A. (2011). Agendas, alternatives, and public policies (Updated 2nd ed.) [$70]

You are not required to buy these books but you may want to invest in them for your Health Policy library. The starred texts [**] are available online through the McMaster University Libraries and the others are available as physical copies through the McMaster University Libraries. All are for purchase as used or new copies via online bookstores. PDFs of assigned chapters from these books will be available in the weekly course folders on Avenue to Learn.

A draft week-by-week list of the required and optional course materials and readings will be posted on Avenue to Learn. This list is subject to change as readings may be changed or added, and will be updated via an updated materials/readings on A2L for that week, as changes are made. Most materials will be posted to access on A2L and others are available via the University Libraries.

There are required readings each week, as well as recommended readings and applications in some cases. You are not expected to read everything on the list; the required readings are **highly** recommended, and it's also recommended that you read at least one application article each week to see the theories being put into practice. You are free to explore other readings according to your interests.

Additional course resources

To apply course content, we will be making routine use of the Canadian and, to a lesser extent, the international news media coverage of health policy issues. It would be helpful for you to choose and follow a major national newspaper as much as possible throughout the course (e.g., The Globe and Mail). André Picard is a well-known Canadian public health journalist who writes for The Globe and Mail; following his articles and BlueSky account is recommended. To keep current on Canadian health policy research and practice developments you will also find the Canadian journal *Healthcare Policy* of interest.

Health Policy journals
You are encouraged to familiarize yourself and, where relevant, draw on articles from the following health policy journals (listed in alphabetical order):

Evidence and Policy
Health Affairs
Healthcare Policy (Canadian)
Health Economics, Policy and Law Health Policy
Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law
Journal of Health Services and Policy Research
Milbank Quarterly
Social Science and Medicine

Other academic resources
- Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research: http://www.cahspr.ca
- Canadian Institute for Health Information: www.cihi.ca
- Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis: www.chepa.org
- Seminar series held ~ bimonthly: https://chepa.mcmaster.ca/news-events/seminars-events/
- Health Canada: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/search/a-z/a.html
- McMaster Health Forum: https://www.mcmasterforum.org/
- Paul Cairney - Politics and Public Policy: https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/
- University of Ottawa Centre for Health, Law, Policy and Ethics: https://www.ottawahealthlaw.ca

Canadian media and 'think tank' resources
- Canada Health Watch: https://canadahealthwatch.ca/
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives: https://www.policyalternatives.ca/
- National Collaborating Centres for Public Health (Determinants of health, Environmental health, Healthy public policy, Indigenous health, Infectious diseases, Methods and tools): https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/public-health-practice/national-collaborating-centres-public-health.html
- Public Policy Forum: https://ppforum.ca/
- The Conversation: https://theconversation.com/ca/health
- The Walrus: https://thewalrus.ca/?s=Health

International resources
- Health Policy Watch: https://healthpolicy-watch.news/
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC): https://idrc-crdi.ca/en
- Policy Commons: https://policycommons.net/
- The Global Health Observatory (WHO): https://www.who.int/data/gho/publications
- Pan American Health Organization (PAHO): https://www.paho.org/en/publications
- Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Center: https://www.commonwealthfund.org/international-health-policy-center/system-features

- Chatham House: https://www.chathamhouse.org/

Note: both Factiva and Nexis Uni (below) can be accessed through the McMaster University Libraries (www.library.mcmaster.ca): From the top ribbon select Collections, then Electronic Databases, and enter the database name (in case you have trouble with the links below):
- Factiva (searchable electronic newspaper database): http://global.factiva.com/sb/default.aspx?NAPC=S&fcpil=en
- Nexis Uni (searchable electronic newspaper database): https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/bisacademicresearchhome?crid=5f512f5a-c699-4267-a46b-3b53f3fbfe02&pdmfid=1516831&pdisurlapi=true

Examples of health policy analysis papers

Students often find it difficult to wrap their heads around the idea of what a health policy analysis actually looks like. To help with this, listed below are several published articles that are good examples of health policy analysis papers. Some of these have been assigned for reading in specific sessions of the course and related courses. In addition, we encourage you to visit the Health Reform Observatory/Observatoire des Réformes de Santé – an open access, peer-reviewed, online journal presenting the best evidence available on reforms related to the governance, financing and delivery of health care in Canada's provinces and territories: (https://mulpress.mcmaster.ca/hro-ors).

Note: articles below with an asterisk (*) beside them are more fully developed versions of final papers for this course or thesis articles published by graduates of McMaster's HRM, HM or HP PhD programs. Copy and paste links into your browser if they do not open within this document.

*Antonipillai V, Abelson J, Wahoush O, Baumann A, and Schwartz L. Policy agenda-setting and causal stories: Examining how organized interests redefined the problem of refugee health policy in Canada. *Healthcare Policy*, 2020:15(3)116-131. https://www-longwoods-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/content/26126/healthcare-policy/policy-agenda-setting-and-causal-stories-examining-how-organized-interests-redefined-the-problem-of

*Bullock H and Abelson J. A fresh approach to reform? The development and implementation of Ontario's mental health and addictions strategy. *Healthcare Policy*, February 2019; 14(3):29-42. https://www.longwoods.com/content/25794/healthcare-policy/a-fresh-approach-to-reform-a-policy-analysis-of-the-development-and-implementation-of-ontario-s-m

*Duncan L, Boyle M, Abelson J and Waddell C. Measuring Children's Mental Health in Ontario: Policy Issues and Prospects for Change. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 27(2): April 2018. http://libaccess.mcmaster.ca/login?url=https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5896522/

*Denburg, A. Institutional Knots: A Comparative Analysis of Cord Blood Policy in Canada and the United States. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law.* Vol 41(1) February 2016: 73-99. doi

10.1215/03616878-3445619. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details/03616878/v41i0001/73_ikacaoicatus.xml

*Embrett M and Randall, G. Social determinants of health and health equity policy research: Exploring the use, misuse and nonuse of policy analysis theory. *Social Science and Medicine* 2014; 108:147-155. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277953614001658?via%3Dihub

Giacomini M, Hurley J, Gold I, Smith P, Abelson J. The policy analysis of 'values talk': lessons from Canadian health reform. *Health Policy* 2003; 67:15-24. https://journals-scholarsportal-info.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/details?uri=/01688510/v67i0001/15_tpaotlfchr.xml

Heenan M and Mulvale G. What factors impact implementation of Critical Incident Disclosure in Ontario Hospitals: A Multiple-Case Study. *Healthcare Policy*. 2021. 16(3): 76-88. https://www.longwoods.com/content/26431/healthcare-policy/what-factors-impact-implementation-of-critical-incident-disclosure-in-ontario-hospitals-a-multiple-

Hurley J, Guindon GE, Rynard V, Morgan S. Publicly Funded Medical Savings Accounts: Expenditure and Distributional Impacts in Ontario, Canada. *Health Economics*. 2008 October;17(10):1129-1151. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/hec.1310

Hutchison B, Abelson J, Lavis J. Primary Care in Canada: So much innovation, so little change. *Health Affairs*, 2001; 20(3):116-131. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/11764776_Primary_Care_In_Canada_So_Much_Innovation_So_Little_Change_Policymakers_in_pursuit_of_a_big_bang_may_have_missed_crucial_opportunities_to_improve_primary_care_in_Canada

Morgan S, Coombes M Income-Based Drug Coverage in British Columbia: Towards an Understanding of the Policy. *Healthcare Policy*. 2006 November;2(2):92-108 http://libaccess.mcmaster.ca/login?url=http://www.longwoods.com/content/18544

*Moat, K and Abelson J. Analyzing the influence of institutions on health policy development in Uganda: A case study of the decision to abolish user fees. *African Health Sciences,* December 2011, 11(4): 578-586. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3362968/pdf/AFHS1104-0578.pdf

*Mulvale G, Abelson J and Goering P. Mental health service delivery in Ontario, Canada: how do policy legacies shape prospects for reform? *Health Economics*, Policy and Law 2007; 2(4); 363-89. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18634639/

*Shearer J, Dion M and Lavis J. Exchanging and using research evidence in health policy networks: a statistical network analysis. *Implementation Science*; 2014. http://www.implementationscience.com/content/9/1/126

*Shearer J, Abelson J, Kouyaté B and Lavis J. Why do policies change? Institutions, interests, ideas and networks in three cases of policy reform. *Health Policy and Planning*, 2016, 1-12. http://heapol.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2016/05/27/heapol.czw052.abstract

Smith N, Mitton C, Davidson A and Williams I. A politics of priority setting: Ideas, interests and institutions in healthcare resource allocation. *Public Policy and Administration* 2014; 29(4): 331-347. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265642183_A_politics_of_priority_setting_Ideas_interests_and_institutions_in_healthcare_resource_allocation

*Velez M, Wilson M, Abelson J, Lavis J and Paraje G. Understanding the role of values in health policy decision making from the perspectives of policy makers and stakeholders: A multiple-case embedded study in Chile and Colombia. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management* 2020; 9(5):185-97.https://www.ijhpm.com/article_3690_e63bbfed4b442690f37fe4f11c1bd6e9.pdf

*Velez M, Wilson M, Lavis J, Abelson J and Florez I. A framework for exploring the role of values in health policy decision-making in Latin America: A critical interpretive synthesis. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 2020. https://www.biomedcentral.com/epdf/10.1186/s12961-020-00584-y?sharing_token=6HlBfCDIdE-uR4UGJPiyTG_BpE1tBhCbnbw3BuzI2RMusXx_l6WUIxBi2lo7jWsBcsxUR-vi8JWay9VRa92nfje9RAxTey1BTrvTGLdpGSFUZ94ikxGI7YaBPQc16ETGKbs5XkmthR5T9NrfPcF2uyvqdyyv2D5CbimGST1cT0o%3D

*Waddell C, Lavis J, Abelson J, Lomas J, Shepherd CA, Bird-Grayson T, Giacomini M, Offord DR. Research use in children's mental health policy in Canada: maintaining vigilance amid ambiguity. *Social Science and Medicine*, 2005; 61: 1649-57. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16029772/

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Further guidance for all assignments will be provided in class and on A2L. All assignments will be marked individually. All assignment materials are to be submitted on A2L by the dates and times outlined below.

Assignment #1 – Weekly discussion leader
You will act as the seminar discussion leader for 2 sessions during the term (weeks 4 through 10); once as content lead and once as application lead. This assignment is worth **20% (2 sessions x 10% each)** of your final grade, and your discussion materials (e.g., presentation slides, handouts) are due by <u>Monday at 5:30pm</u> on the relevant week.

Assignment #2 – Concept and application memos

This assignment is worth **20% (2 memos x 10%)** of your final grade; memos are due by Monday at 5:30pm on the relevant week (weeks 4 through 10). For 2 sessions throughout the term, you will submit a 500 to 750-word memo focusing on one of the following:
   i. Core frameworks/concepts covered (first memo); and
   ii. Application of frameworks/concepts (second memo)
You can choose to complete memos for the weeks that you are a discussion leader, or not.

i. Core concepts memo: Choose one of the week's core readings (i.e., a major conceptual or theoretical paper or an application of a theory or empirical analysis; shorter, review articles don't count) and briefly identify:
   - the main argument developed in the paper;
   - its contribution to the week's topic/ objectives; and
   - how the theory/ concept or its application improved your understanding of a current health policy issue (e.g., perhaps one that you are thinking of focusing your final assignment on, or one that you have been involved in previously).

ii. Application memo: Choose one or more of the application papers or use the weekly discussion activity to work through an application of the core frameworks/concepts covered for the week to demonstrate your ability to apply this material to a current health policy issue/topic. This could include the topic that you will be using for your final course assignment.

Note: These short memos are aimed at honing your ability to succinctly summarize key concepts and to relate them to real-world policy issues. Given the short length of these assignments, you will not have the space, nor are you expected, to provide a detailed summary of the paper. A brief statement of the paper's central aim and core elements of the framework/concept covered is all that is needed.

Assignments #3 – Mini policy analysis, in 3 parts

The mini health policy analysis assignment is designed to give you the opportunity to research a policy topic of interest to you and to demonstrate your understanding and ability to apply the course concepts to this topic. You will be required to include both documentary analysis and can choose to also (optionally) gain familiarity with research ethics considerations and insight into stakeholder perspectives through up to three key informant interviews to support your analysis.

Sample topics/questions will be discussed in class and sample papers from previous years will be made available through Avenue to Learn.

Part 1a - Preliminary ideas

Your preliminary ideas are due to the instructors for feedback on **Monday, September 22, 2025 by 5:30pm EDT (week 3)**. Although it is not graded, it is required that you share your ideas with the instructors before drafting the protocol (Part 1b).

Part 1b - Protocol and optional ethics materials

This assignment is worth **10%** of your final grade and is due on <u>**Wednesday**</u>**, October 15, 2025 by 5:30pm EDT (week 6)**.

This is a brief research protocol (2-page maximum) that outlines the research you intend to do for Assignments 3 – Part 2 and Part 3 (Mini policy analysis – Presentation and Final briefing paper; described below), and optional ethics materials. It sets out the research question, methods and data sources, sampling frame (with rationale), proposed analytic approach, and preliminary reference list. For your submission, you should populate the selected framework (as a supplementary table using bullet points for each element of your framework analysis) and list references (at least 8), as appendices.

Optionally, you may also conduct up to three key informant interviews (in addition to the expected documentary analysis) to support your analysis. If planning to do this, you need to start early. You will need to prepare a recruitment script, a key informant interview guide(s) that reflects your topic and analytic framework, and letter of information and consent. The course has received course-based ethics approval from the McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB): https://research.mcmaster.ca/ethics/macrem/. This means you need to work from the approved materials and tailor them to your needs. Ethics requirements will be introduced in week 1 and discussed in greater depth in week 3 of the course. **An instructor must also review the materials and approve them before they are sent out to potential participants. These will be submitted for approval with your protocol.**

Part 1c – Analysis progress update

During **week 9 (week of November 3)**, you will provide a progress update on your analysis. You will make arrangements with one of the instructors for a 15-minute discussion during their office hours or at another mutually agreeable time (Monday to Friday, during regular business hours). By this time, you should have begun your analysis; it's recommended you come prepared with some bullet points in your policy analysis framework. This step is also **not graded** but provides you with an opportunity to ask questions about and get feedback from the instructors on your analysis to date.

Assignment #3 – Mini policy analysis, Part 2 – Presentation

This part of the assignment is worth **10%** of your final grade. An oral presentation (with supporting presentation materials) of your interim mini health policy analysis made to the class in the last session of the term (Week 13, Monday, December 1, 2025). This will give you the opportunity to receive feedback from the instructor and your peers before finalizing your paper.

Assignment #3 –Mini policy analysis, Part 3 – Final briefing paper

This assignment is worth **30%** of your final grade. The presentation of your final mini policy analysis, which may be in the format of a journal article to subsequently submit for publication in a peer reviewed journal. Your final assignments are due by **11:59pm EST on Monday, December 8,** 2025 (week 14).

Active participation in weekly class discussions
Participation in class is worth **10%** of your final grade, and is in addition to the participation expected in Assignments #1 and 2. This is a small-enrolment PhD-level course so consistent and active participation in weekly class discussions is expected. Active participation requires considerable preparation, involving reading and reflecting on the material assigned for each week's class and on your peers' contributions.

Participation includes 3 components:
  i. Active participation in weekly in-class discussions;
  ii. Posting of 2 substantive discussion questions (1 concept-related and 1 application-related) on the A2L discussion board for the weeks that you are NOT responsible for leading the class discussion (during weeks 4-10) → Questions must be posted no later than **6:00pm EDT/EST the day before class (Sunday)**
  iii. Oral critique of one classmate's final assignment presentation at the end of term → Due by email to the student (CCing the course instructors only) within 24 hours of the classmate's presentation in **week 13 (i.e., by 8:30pm EDT Tuesday, December 2, 2025**)

EVALUATION

Full assignment details, guidance, and rubrics will be posted on Avenue to Learn. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Components and Weights

Assignment 1 *2 weeks of Weeks 4 to 10*	**Weekly discussion leader** • Session leadership role for 2 sessions during the term; once as content lead and once as application lead	20% (2 x 10%)

Assignment 2
2 weeks of Weeks 4 to 10
	Concept and application memos
	• For 2 sessions throughout the term (the session you are responsible for as discussion leader and 1 other session), you will submit a 500 to 750-word memo focusing on one of the following:
	  i. Core frameworks/concepts covered (first memo); and
	  ii. Application of frameworks/concepts (second memo)
		20%
		(2 x 10%)

Assignment 3 – Parts 1a&b	**Mini Policy Analysis**	
Part 1a *Week 3 (September 22)*	Part 1a: Preliminary mini health policy analysis idea/research question submitted to the instructors by email for feedback by week 3 (September 22, 2025 by 5:30pm EDT).	Required but not graded
Part 1b *Week 6 (October 15)*	Part 1b: Mini health policy analysis protocol and optional ethics materials • Brief research protocol (2-page maximum) that sets out the research question, methods and data sources, sampling frame (with rationale), proposed analytic approach, and preliminary reference list • Optional: Ethics materials for up to 3 key informant interviews	10%
Part 1c *Week 9 (November 3)*	Part 1c: Mini health policy analysis progress update • 15-minute consultation with an instructor	Required but not graded
Assignment 3 - Part 2 *Week 13 (December 1)*	Mini policy analysis – Presentation • Part 2 of 'mini' health policy analysis: Presentation of your interim analysis at the end of the term	10%
Assignment 3 – Part 3 *Week 14 (December 8)*	Mini policy analysis – Final briefing report • Part 3 of mini health policy analysis: Policy briefing paper	30%
Participation	In-class contribution (individual), Posting of discussion questions, Critique of peer's presentation	10%
	Total	**100%**

Assignments are due at the beginning of class or on the day/time indicated in the course syllabus. Late assignments received **within 24 hours** of the due date will be docked **5%** of the grade assigned. Assignments received **between 24 and 48 hours will be docked 10%** after which late assignments will no longer be accepted. If you anticipate having problems meeting these deadlines, please contact me before the assignment is due to discuss your situation.

NOTE: The use of a McMaster standard calculator is allowed during examinations in this course. See McMaster calculator policy at the following URL:

www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/UndergraduateExaminationsPolicy.pdf

Grade Conversion

Instructors have the discretion of marking individual components of a course with either a letter or numerical grading scheme but final course grades taken at McMaster can only be reported as either Pass/Fail or letter grades. When numerical grading is used in a course, the final course average with decimal place of 0.5 or greater should be rounded up before conversion to a letter grade. The minimum passing grade for a graduate student in any course taken is a B-, including undergraduate courses or courses taken off campus:

LETTER GRADE	PERCENT	POINTS
A+	90-100	12
A	85-89	11
A-	80-84	10
B+	75-79	9
B	70-74	8
B-	60-69	7
F	00-59	0

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Students who wish to correspond with instructors directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Program Administrator.

Students who have concerns about the course content, evaluation methods, or delivery should first reach out to the course instructor. If your concern remains unresolved after speaking with the instructor, you may then reach out to the relevant Area Chair for further consideration.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of

zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. However, if you have questions regarding a particular assignment, it is always best to ask one of the instructors prior to completing the assignment. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at:

www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

Students are responsible for being aware of and demonstrating behaviour that is honest and ethical in their academic work. Such behaviour includes:
- following the expectations articulated by instructors for referencing sources of information and for group work;
- asking for clarification of expectations as necessary;
- identifying testing situations that may allow copying;
- preventing their work from being used by others (e.g., protecting access to computer files); and
- adhering to the principles of academic integrity when conducting and reporting research.

AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT

All courses use some online elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course.

The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses online elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the *Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities* (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx, Teams, or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

ATTENDANCE

Arriving late or missing class disrupts the learning experience for both you and your peers. Punctuality and attendance are crucial to maintaining a respectful, professional and productive environment for everyone, including our faculty.

This is a seminar course based on weekly discussions with and presentations to your peers. Therefore, it's important that your attendance be regular and consistent in order for you to achieve the learning objectives of this course. However, we understand that circumstances may arise making attendance difficult or impossible. For this reason, the Zoom webconferencing space can be used for one instance to attend and participate virtually when in-person attendance is not possible, and one

excused absence is permitted when virtual attendance is also impossible. In the case of an excused absence, reasonable attempts must be made to consider and determine, alongside the co-instructors, how your contribution to the week's discussion or activities can be made in an alternative format. It's preferred that arrangements for virtual attendance, and excused absence and alterative contributions be made in advance, where possible.

MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

Missed Tests / Assignments/ Class Participation

Please do not use the online McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) as this is for Undergraduate students only. The PhD program will not accept an MSAF.

For scheduled courses where the end date is known and aligns to sessional dates, a grade must be supplied by the end of the course. Under exceptional circumstances a course instructor may approve an extension for the student for the completion of work on a course but must assign an Incomplete grade (INC) at the end of the course. Normally this extension is in the range of a few weeks. A student who receives an incomplete grade must complete the work as soon as possible, and in any case early enough to allow the instructor to report the grade by the sessional deadline noted as 'Final Date to Submit Results of Incomplete Grades'. If the INC grade is not cleared by the deadline, normally an F grade will be entered.

If a student is approved for an extension, they and instructors should make arrangements and submit an Incomplete (INC) Grade Memo to busphd@mcmaster.ca. If the student is not able to complete their course requirements by the INC deadline, they should submit a Request for Extension and be specific regarding the new deadline.

Missing Grade Memo is required if instructors are unable to submit any grades via Mosaic. The instructor must submit a Missing Grade Memo to busphd@mcmaster.ca.

Reasons for Incomplete course work can include:
- Health-related or extenuating circumstances
- Representing the University at an academic or varsity event
- Religious obligations
- Conflicts between two (or more) overlapping scheduled assignments.

Failing a Course

Failure a course is reviewed by the appropriate Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean Graduate Studies in the Faculty. The Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean Graduate Studies requests a departmental

recommendation regarding the student, and this recommendation is given considerable weight. In the absence of a departmental recommendation to allow the student to continue, the student will be required to withdraw. Those allowed to remain in the program must either repeat or replace the failed course or milestone, per the decision of the Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study. A failing grade in a Certificate, Diploma, Master's or Doctoral course remains on the transcript. Students who fail a second course or milestone will not normally be allowed to continue in the program.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is: http://sas.mcmaster.ca

Process for Students

- Students must activate their accommodation(s) (e.g., extra-time, memory aid, etc.) for each upcoming test, assignment, or exam, at least two weeks in advance. Students can do this by emailing their Instructor and the PhD Program Administrator (busphd@mcmaster.ca). If a student cannot meet this deadline, they should contact to discuss alternative arrangements. The program is committed to exploring flexibilities where possible to support students.

- Students will leverage the accommodation (e.g., extra-time, memory aid, etc.), in a designated testing room. Rooms will be booked according to the student's SAS accommodation. Unless the accommodation states otherwise, students should expect that they will be writing in a room with other students. One or more invigilators will always be in the room. Students may also take their tests/exams at the SAS test centre on main campus.

- Following the request to activate the accommodation(s), busphd@mcmaster.ca will reach out to the student with their test, assignment, or exam details, including the date, time, and room number.

All policies and procedures, including restroom access, how extra-time is allocated for assessments under Universal Design, and the submission of memory aids in advance, are consistent with those of SAS on Main Campus. The only variance in procedure is communication around, and physical location of, assessment. There is not a dedicated testing space at RJC or DSB. Existing classrooms and lecture halls will be used for most testing. All SAS-approved accommodations will be honoured by our staff; however, core testing elements are not eliminated in alternative testing formats. Students should expect and plan for invigilation, incidental noise, and other potential distractions.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to the SEAO (Student Experience Academic Office) *normally within 10 working days* of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

RESEARCH USING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Research involving human participants is premised on a fundamental moral commitment to advancing human welfare, knowledge, and understanding. As a research-intensive institution, McMaster University shares this commitment in its promotion of responsible research. The fundamental imperative of research involving human participation is respect for human dignity and well-being. To this end, the University endorses the ethical principles cited in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca

McMaster University has mandated its Research Ethics Boards to ensure that all research investigations involving human participants are in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement. The University is committed, through its Research Ethics Boards, to assisting the research community in identifying and addressing ethical issues inherent in research, recognizing that all members of the University share a commitment to maintaining the highest possible standards in research involving humans.

If you are conducting original research, it is vital that you behave in an ethical manner. For example, everyone you speak to must be made aware of your reasons for eliciting their responses and consent to providing information. Furthermore, you must ensure everyone understands that participation is entirely voluntary. Please refer to the following website for more information about McMaster University's research ethics guidelines: http://reo.mcmaster.ca/

Organizations that you are working with are likely to prefer that some information be treated as confidential. Ensure that you clarify the status of all information that you receive from your client. You **MUST** respect this request and cannot present this information in class or communicate it in any form, nor can you discuss it outside your group. Furthermore, you must continue to respect this confidentiality even after the course is over.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your registration and continuous participation (e.g., on A2L, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of BUSINESS C782 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

As a PhD level course involving the writing of memos, an outline, and a final paper, our strong preference and recommendation for your own learning is that you DO NOT make use of AI software in your assignments. ChatGPT and other AI software can strip meaningful detail and content from your writing, and can also produce inaccurate results.

As a policy analyst, analysis through writing is a key component of the work and the skill of condensing your analysis to a tight format is essential for you to develop. It sharpens and hones your thinking in the process. You are far less likely to develop this essential skill if you rely on AI. However, you may use AI-powered tools (e.g., Semantic Scholar, Scite, Elicit, Research Rabbit, Connected papers) to supplement your search for appropriate literature, but it should not be your only search strategy.

Furthermore, you will be expected to meet all ethical course requirements for any interviews you collect and analyze, which includes protecting confidentiality and this would be an issue for most AI software. Finally, and many journals are still developing policies in this regard, but many have declared they will not allow its use should you choose to publish your work (for example, see Social Science & Medicine's guidance for authors).

That said, if you use any AI tools, such as ChatGPT or a similar tool, in the process of conducting your research and/or writing any of your assignments, it is important to be responsible and transparent about this, considering the direct and broader implications and risks of your use of AI. Specifically, you must include a "AI statement" before the first page of your assignment, stating that you used an AI tool(s) and what you used each tool for (literature search? correction of spelling and grammar?), and the specific prompts/questions/etc. that you used to generate AI outputs. For example, if you used ChatGPT to supplement your writing, you must make clear how you rewrote/modified/corrected/enhanced any text that you used as a starting point. You must include the specific prompts that you used in your conversation with ChatGPT, attaching all of your relevant ChatGPT chats as an appendix to your assignment. There are no penalties for using AI tools appropriately, as long as the guidelines indicated in these assignment instructions and university policies are followed. **It is highly recommended to refer to McMaster University's page for additional information and guidelines**: Generative Artificial Intelligence - Academic Excellence - Office of the Provost (mcmaster.ca)

MENTAL WELLNESS IN BUSINESS C782

If you are struggling academically or otherwise, please know we are available to talk; please reach out over email or connect with us before or after class time. We're also happy to help you connect with other resources such as:

➢ McMaster's Student Wellness Centre:
   Website
   Location: PGCLL 210/201
   Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 277000
   Email: wellness@mcmaster.ca

➢ Empower Me via StudentCare:
   Website
   1-833-628-5589

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	DATE (MONDAYS)	LECTURE CONTENT	
1	September 8, 2025	Topic:	Introductions, course overview, what is health policy analysis and overview of the Canadian health system
2	September 15, 2025	Topic:	Policy analysis: Theories and frameworks
3	September 22, 2025	Topic:	Policy analysis: Methods and approaches
		Due:	**Assignment 3 – Part 1b: Preliminary ideas for instructor approval – Email the co-instructors by Monday at 5:30pm EST, and option to discuss after class or by appointment**
4	September 29, 2025	Topic:	Defining policy problems and the agenda setting process
		Due:	**Assignment 1 – Student Session Leadership begins – Materials due on A2L by Monday at 5:30pm EST**
		• Content lead:	TBD
		• Application lead:	TBD
		Due:	**Participation - Posting of 2 discussion questions begins - Questions must be posted no later than 6:00pm EST/EDT the day before class, Sunday)**
5	October 6, 2025	Topic:	Explaining policy change and policy legacies: Understanding policy development and change (Part 1 of the application of the 3-I framework, Institutions)
		Due:	**Assignment 1 – Student Session Leadership – Materials due on A2L by Monday at 5:30pm EST**
		• Content lead:	TBD
		• Application lead:	TBD
		Due:	**Participation - Posting of 2 discussion questions by 6:00pm EST the day before class (Sunday)**
6	October 13, 2025	**NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**	
		Due:	**Assignment 3, Part 1b: Protocol for final assignment and optional ethics materials due on A2L by Wednesday, October 15 at 5:30pm EST**

WEEK	DATE (MONDAYS)	LECTURE CONTENT	
7	October 20, 2025	Topic:	The structure and role of interests and interest groups in the policy process (Part 2 of the 3-I framework)
		Activity: OR	**Deliberate Dialogue exercise (in-class)** *(to be confirmed)*
		Due:	**Assignment 1 – Student Session Leadership – Materials due on A2L by Monday at 5:30pm EST** *(to be confirmed)*
		• Content lead:	TBD
		• Application lead:	TBD
		Due:	**Participation - Posting of 2 discussion questions by 6:00pm EDT the day before class (Sunday)**
8	October 27, 2025	Topic:	Structure and role of ideas in the policy process (Part 3 of the 3-I framework), part 1: Values
		Due:	**Assignment 1 – Student Session Leadership – Materials due on A2L by Monday at 5:30pm EST**
		• Content lead:	TBD
		• Application lead:	TBD
9	November 3, 2025	Topic:	The structure and role of ideas in the policy process (Part 3 of the 3-I framework), part 2: Theories of knowledge and knowledge use in health policy
		Due:	**Assignment 1 – Student Session Leadership – Materials due on A2L by Monday 5:30pm EDT**
		• Content lead:	TBD
		• Application lead:	TBD
		Due:	**Participation - Posting of 2 discussion questions by 6:00pm EDT the day before class (Sunday)**
		Due:	**Progress update on final analysis to be held this week**

Week	Date (Mondays)	Lecture Content
10	November 10, 2025	Topic: Understanding policy implementation **Due: Assignment 1 – Student Session Leadership – Materials due on A2L by Monday at 5:30pm EDT** • Content lead: TBD • Application lead: TBD **Due: Participation - Posting of 2 discussion questions by 6:00pm EDT the day before class (Sunday)**
11	November 17, 2025	**NO CLASS** Independent work on Assignment 3
12	November 24, 2025	Topic: Course wrap-up and discussion of analysis for final assignments
13	December 1, 2025	**Due: Assignment 3 presentations in class – Presentation materials due on A2L by 5:30pm Monday, December 1, 2025** **Due: Oral presentation critique by email by 8:30pm EST Tuesday, December 2, 2025**
14	December 8, 2025	**NO CLASS** **Due: Assignment 3 due on Avenue to Learn by 11:59pm EST Monday, December 8, 2025**