PAF540: Advanced Policy Analysis
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Session 1
Overview

- Review: Public Policy & Policy Analysis
- Motivation and Examples
- Syllabus
- MS Excel Nuts and Bolts
  - In-class assignment #1
- Homework #1
What is Public Policy?

Any action (or intentional inaction) by a government that has the potential to affect public welfare
[“Ideal”] Policy Process Model

1. **define the problem and set agenda**
2. **formulate alternatives**
3. **legitimate alternatives**
4. **implement policy**
5. **evaluate policy**
6. **policy change**
Issues emerge, Interests (preferences) are formed, and Information is transmitted to the Institutions of government, where policy may or may not change.
Institutional Outcomes: The Constituency Connection
What is Policy Analysis?

“The process of assessing, and deciding among, alternatives based on their usefulness in satisfying one or more goals or values”
(Munger, 2000: 6)
Criteria

- Evaluative Criteria
  - Effectiveness
  - Efficiency
  - Equity
  - Liberty/Freedom
  - Safety

- Analytical Criteria
  - Political Feasibility
  - Social Acceptability
  - Administrative Feasibility
  - Technical Feasibility
## Criteria-Alternative Matrix

**Problem:** Prison overcrowding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Build Prisons</th>
<th>Rent Prison Space from Other States</th>
<th>Early Release/Rehabilitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost (less is better)</td>
<td>$105 million</td>
<td>$29 million/year</td>
<td>$25 million/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice (for the incarcerated person)</td>
<td>Best (3)</td>
<td>Poor (1)</td>
<td>Moderate (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space (prison beds free up Immediately)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recidivism (safety??)</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Policy is Made
- Institutions
  - Agenda Setting
  - Issues
    - Information
- Interests

How Policy Analysis is Made

| Status Quo | Alter. 1 | Alter. 2 | ...
|------------|----------|----------|--------
| Criterion 1 | ?        | ?        | ?      |
| Criterion 2 | ?        | ?        | ?      |
| Criterion 3 | ?        | ?        | ?      |
| ...        |          |          |        |
| Political Feasibility | ? | ? | ? |
| Admin. Feasibility | ? | ? | ? |

Data Analysis and Modeling
The Role of Data Analysis and Modeling

- Characterize a problem or opportunity
- Identify causal effects
- Gain insight into how a system works
- Optimize the allocation of resources
- Forecast future trends
- Detect anomalies
Examples of Data Analytics in Practice

- Predictive policing
- Disease spread
- Suicide prevention
- Gerrymandering
- Smart cities
Self Assessment

A. I am an spreadsheet guru!
B. I know some but am not a guru!
C. I am a novice!
MS EXCEL Nuts and Bolts (Ch. 1 Data Smart)

1. Locating and pulling values using formulas
2. Summarizing data using Pivot Tables
In-Class Assignment #1

- In-Class Assignment #1 is available on Canvas
- I encourage to work together, but each person should have their own spreadsheet they are manipulating
- I will come around to help
Homework #1

- Homework #1 is available on Canvas
- Feel free to work together, but each person needs to submit their own completed assignment before the Week 3 class begins
- We will review together in Week 3
- There will be a short quiz on material in homework and Chapter 1 of Data Smart in Week 5