



Early Childhood Policy In Institutions of Higher Education

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Created originally as a prototypical syllabus by the Early Childhood Policy in Institutions of Higher Education (ECPIHE) initiative, this document has been modified for use by (*insert university name*) for use in its (*insert program name*). This document supports ECPIHE's foundational intent to create and support a cadre of scholars who address early childhood policy. Moreover, it acknowledges ECPIHE's purposeful creation of comprehensive and adaptive materials that are designed to be modified to reflect the instructional goals and needs of diverse contexts and users. For more information about ECPIHE and/or to learn about additional coursework related to the initiative, please visit <http://policyforchildren.org/ecpihe/>

COURSE SYLLABUS IV

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE POLICY: THEORY, ANALYSIS, AND RESEARCH

*** Note: This is not a methods course.*

*This class assumes that students already have a solid background in mixed-methods research. ***

Course IV of IV

Course Semester

Course Meeting Dates, Times, and Place

Professor Name

Professor Title

Professor Office

Professor Phone

Professor Email

Office Hours

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This course provides an interdisciplinary perspective on early childhood education and care (ECEC) policy, focusing on the systematic study, analysis, and interpretation of policy. The

course is designed to help students understand the role that research plays throughout the policy process, and to explore different theoretical frames that can be used to interpret and influence current ECEC policy discourse. The purpose of the course is to equip students to critically examine and analyze the design, implementation, and outcomes of various policies. Any given policy (or set of policies) will engender conflicting evidence and even competing meta-narratives about what it is intended to accomplish. For example, universal pre-K can be seen as an equity tool *and* as an attempt to “school-ify” early learning.

Effective policy researchers are conscious of the analytic strategies they use, why they use them, and how they differ from alternative strategies that could be used to examine the same issue. To this end, the course will guide students to understand and effectively use theories and analytic approaches offered by multiple disciplines: political science, sociology, economics, organizational studies, and others. The course will take an applied approach, using examples of ECEC policy in the United States to compare and contrast. By the end of the course, students will be able to recognize and analyze different theoretical approaches to ECEC policy and, importantly, to define and demonstrate their own, personalized situatedness in the broad field of policy analysis.

The course will be useful for those interested in becoming policy designers, advocates, public managers/administrators, policy researchers and/or evaluators, and policy analysts. It will provide both theoretical and analytic grounding for students interested in local, state, and federal ECEC policy in the United States and around the world.

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION AND CONTENT

Policy research and analysis are key components in each stage of the policy cycle (design → enactment → implementation → evaluation). Theory takes a prominent role in this course, as it provides the lens through which to understand the central questions, logics, and values that underpin how policy is understood and supported by analysts and researchers. Throughout the course, theory will be applied to real-world examples, providing concrete opportunities to examine different, sometimes competing, analytic approaches and the contexts in which they are applied.

To anchor our ability to compare/contrast theories and approaches, we will use a simplified policy analysis framework throughout the course to guide class discussions and to organize ideas (see course assignments for additional detail). The framework may ultimately also be useful for students to develop and refine their own, personalized situatedness in the broad field of policy analysis. This framework is guided by six key questions:

1. What is the problem that begs for a solution? What are the underlying assumptions behind this problem?
2. What indicators demonstrate the problem exists?
3. What is the rationale for government/policy intervention to address the problem?

4. Who are the key stakeholders related to the problem and the solution?
5. Who are the primary opponents to solving the problem this way? What alternative rationales/solutions might they recommend?
6. What evidence or measures of success would “prove” that the problem has been affected in the way the policy designers planned?

The course is organized into three primary clusters of classes, with explicit examination and application of ECEC policy integrated throughout:

Unit I: Foundations for ECEC Policy Analysis

- I.1 Policy Analysis: Skillsets and Approaches
- I.2 Theoretical and Scientific Bases for ECEC Policy

Unit II: Policy Analysis Throughout the Policy Cycle¹

- II.1 Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Design
- II.2 Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Implementation
- II.3 Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Evaluation

Unit III: ECEC Policy Analysis – Theory and Its Application

- III.1 How Do We Address Inequality? Sociology and Critical Theories
- III.2 How Do We Efficiently Allocate Resources? Economic Theory
- III.3 How Do We Coordinate Programs and Build Infrastructure? Institutional and Organizational Theories
- III.4 How Do We Engage Teachers, Families, and Communities? Social Capital and Cognitive Theories
- III.5 How Do We Improve the Complex Interplay of Public and Private Organizations? Systems and Complexity Theories
- III.6 Putting the Diverse Perspectives Together: Compare/Contrast

During the final class session, students will present their analytic papers to one another.

COURSE GOALS

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding that ECEC policy is not value-neutral, but is influenced by and interpreted through different theoretical frames that reflect different disciplinary and values-based perspectives.

¹ Policy advocacy and enactment are addressed in a separate course.

2. Compare and contrast different theoretical frames and analytic approaches to current ECEC policies.
3. Demonstrate understanding of how theory and policy analysis contribute to policy decisions at different stages of the policy cycle.
4. Recognize and produce effective policy writing and analysis.
5. Define and demonstrate their own, personalized situatedness in the broad field of policy research and analysis.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To be effective in public policy, one must exhibit a range of skills that include respectful engagement, intentional preparation for shared dialogue, the ability to critically consider competing ideas and values, and strong written and oral presentation skills. The course requirements reflect these expectations.

All written work should be submitted by email to the professor by the indicated dates and times. All papers should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins and in 12-point Times New Roman type. Papers must follow APA style, 6th edition. All late submissions will be downgraded.

ATTENDANCE AND RESPECTFUL ENGAGEMENT (10%)

As this is a graduate-level course and a community of learners, your attendance and participation in class discussions and activities are vital. We will discuss challenging and sometimes controversial issues in this class, and learning requires both risk and support. The instructor and students share responsibility for fostering a respectful learning environment. Class participation is taken seriously in this course. This means having things to say (and questions to ask) that are interesting, original, and respectful to other students. It also means listening to others and building upon their ideas.

COLLABORATIVE PREPARATION FOR CLASS (15%)

This is a reading-intensive course, and being prepared for class requires intentional time not only to read the assigned texts, but also to analyze *across* texts. Although we may not explicitly cover every reading in class, each text forms an important piece of learning for the course. During the first week of class, you will form reading groups (3-4 students per group) to jigsaw the readings each week. You are expected to spend no less than 90 minutes each week in your reading group, discussing key ideas and generating thoughtful questions for class discussion.

Your grade for this portion of the class will function as a classroom version of peer review. At the end of the course, your reading group peers will “grade” your participation in engagement along three variables: a) completion of readings prior to group time; b) intellectual engagement with the materials; and c) leadership of discussion of ideas during reading group time. Likert-scale feedback will be provided anonymously to the instructor, and your group members’ ratings

of your collaborative preparation for class and engagement in the reading group will be aggregated and provided to both you and the instructor.

SHORT PAPER (4-6 pages) ON THE POLICY CYCLE (15%)

Drawing on the readings and discussions from the first five weeks of the course, present your view of how policy research and analysis inform and strengthen at least one stage of the policy cycle. The paper should begin by identifying and describing one current ECEC policy in enough depth to provide a thorough basis for the paper’s analysis.

Then, depending on which stage of the policy cycle you choose, address one of the following:

- *Policy Design*: Identify what this policy is/was supposed to do (its intended goal or goals) and discuss the political context and factors that shaped its design;
- *Policy Implementation*: Identify how this policy is/was expected to accomplish the goals and who/what entity(ies) are/were responsible for implementing the policy. Analyze where there are, or could be, pitfalls in the implementation process;
- *Policy Evaluation*: Summarize the evidence available regarding whether or not the policy “worked” and discuss the intervening variables that may influence the realized outcomes.

The paper will be due by 5 PM the Friday before Session III.1.

COMPARATIVE POLICY ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK (20%)

To organize multiple perspectives and theoretical frames, each student will incrementally, week by week, populate a comparative policy analysis framework. The framework will provide a means to compare/contrast how different theoretical bases influence the definition of policy problems, how implementation is examined, and how “success” is measured/evaluated. The sample below is provided as a suggested example only. Students may create their own table or framework, but it must contain key variables that distinguish one theoretical perspective from the others. The completed framework will be submitted to the instructor by 5 PM on the Friday preceding Session III.6.

Theoretical Frame	How are each of the following questions answered?						What current ECEC policy(ies) “fit” best with this frame?
	How is the problem defined?	What indicators demonstrate existence of the problem?	Rationale for government involvement	Who are key stakeholders?	Who are key opponents?	What evidence would “prove impact”?	
Developmental							
Political							
Economic							
Institutional/ Organizational							
Cognitive							
Social Capital							

FINAL POLICY PAPER (25%)

This is your opportunity to explore in depth an ECEC policy reform of your choosing. The policy can be from the past or present, from the United States or abroad. The reform can be as broad as “the popularity of state-funded pre-K programs” or as specific as a particular reform in

a particular place at a particular time. For your chosen policy, the paper is expected to answer the six questions spelled out in the policy analysis framework used in the course: 1) What is the problem that begs for a solution? What are the underlying assumptions behind this problem?; 2) What indicators demonstrate the problem exists?; 3) What is the rationale for government/policy intervention to address the problem?; 4) Who are the key stakeholders related to the problem and the solution?; 5) Who are the primary opponents to solving the problem this way? What alternative rationales/solutions might they recommend?; and 6) What evidence or measures of success would “prove” that the problem has been affected in the way the policy designers planned?

The paper should incorporate at least two different theoretical perspectives. In this way, you should be aware of, and refute (or defend), different ways your chosen issue is considered.

This paper should be no longer than 20 pages; a paper that is less than 15 pages is unlikely to have adequately analyzed the issues. ***The paper is due via email to the professor by 5 PM on the Friday prior to the last class.***

POLICY BRIEFING/PRESENTATION (15%)

Each student will be asked to present his/her final policy paper. This presentation will take the form of a policy briefing to a state-level, cross-agency commission (à la an early childhood advisory council). The briefing should include both an oral and a written component. The written component can include: a PowerPoint presentation, a one-page handout, or some other documentation that is appropriate for a policy audience. The oral component should cover the major issues addressed in the full paper. The amount of time allocated to each presentation will depend on the number of students in the class, but students should expect no more than 15 minutes. Presentations will take place during the last class.

COURSE GRADING

• Attendance and Respectful Engagement	10%
• Collaborative Preparation/Reading Group Participation	15%
• Short Paper on the Policy Cycle	15%
• Comparative Policy Analysis Framework	20%
• Final Policy Paper	25%
• Policy Briefing/Presentation	15%

REQUIRED TEXTS

Students will read scholarly research as well as policy briefs, case studies, and other policy-relevant documents. There is no required textbook for the course. All required readings will be made available electronically.

COURSE TOPICS AND READINGS

UNIT I: FOUNDATIONS FOR ECEC POLICY ANALYSIS

Session I.1. Policy Analysis: Skillsets and Approaches

THEMES: The first class session grounds the entire course, providing overview of the distinct functions performed by policy analysts/researchers and the skillsets that make them effective. We will discuss the basic elements of the policy cycle (design → enactment → implementation → evaluation), the importance of studying and understanding theory, and key questions that underlie public policy decisions. We will discuss the importance and value of using theory and organizing frameworks to help policy researchers and analysts understand (and communicate to others) complex relationships and interrelationships in policy. A simple policy analysis framework will be introduced to organize our thinking throughout the course.

GOALS:

- To describe what policy research is and what policy analysts do, and to examine the interaction of the political process with policy analysis
- To describe why theory is used to analyze policy
- To recognize that multi-disciplinary theoretical approaches can be applied to the same policy issue

READINGS:

Birkland, T. A. (2016). Science and theory in the study of public policy. In *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making* (4th ed., pp. 361-389). New York, NY: Routledge.

Lindblom, C. E., & Woodhouse, E. J. (1993). Making the most of analysis. In *The policy-making process* (3rd ed., pp. 126-138). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice.

Mintrom, M. (2012). What policy analysts do. In *Contemporary policy analysis* (pp. 15-25). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Moss, P. (2016). Where am I? Position and perspective in researching early childhood education. In A. Farrell, S. L. Kagan, & E. K. M. Tisdall (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of early childhood research* (pp. 89-102). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

ASSIGNMENTS:

In class, students will form reading groups (3-4 students per group).

Session I.2. Theoretical and Scientific Bases for ECEC Policy

THEMES: As prelude to our discussion of research, analysis, and theory, we will look back at examples of theories and research that have been used to inform ECEC policy. We will also consider agenda-setting and the process by which some issues achieve prominence in public policy discourse. During this session we will also discuss features of good policy writing – a focus that will extend throughout the remainder of the course. This background knowledge is essential for all policy students, and will also be useful for successful completion of assignments for this course.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from theories of learning and development
- To understand that developmental science and theories provide the overarching context for the focus on ECEC policies and programs
- To understand why some policies are adopted while other policy ideas go unexamined
- To become aware of features of effective policy writing

READINGS:

National Research Council. (2001). What does the science of learning contribute to early childhood pedagogy? In B. T. Bowman, M. S. Donovan, & M. S. Burns (Eds.), *Eager to learn: Educating our preschoolers* (pp. 37-58). Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Retrieved from <https://www.nap.edu/read/9745/chapter/4>

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2007). *The science of early childhood development: Closing the gap between what we know and what we do*. Cambridge, MA: Center on the Developing Child. Retrieved from <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/the-science-of-early-childhood-development-closing-the-gap-between-what-we-know-and-what-we-do/>

Phillips, D. A., Lipsey, M. W., Dodge, K. A., Haskins, R., Bassok, D., Burchinal, M. R., . . . Weiland, C. (2017). *Puzzling it out: The current state of scientific knowledge on pre-kindergarten effects - A consensus statement*. Washington, DC: Brookings. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/consensus-statement_final.pdf

Kingdon, J. W. (2003). How does an idea's time come? In *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies* (2nd ed., pp. 1-20). New York, NY: Longman.

Conaway, C. L. (2013). The problem with briefs, in brief. *Education Finance and Policy*, 8(3), 287-299.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Before class: Discuss readings in reading group.
- After class: Begin to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

UNIT II: POLICY ANALYSIS THROUGHOUT THE POLICY CYCLE

Session II.1. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Design

THEMES: This class presents an introduction to different theories of the policy process. It then focuses on policy design and the choices faced by policymakers. We will discuss how competing “measures of success” exist in today’s ECEC landscape (e.g., access, quality, efficiency, equity, security, liberty) and how the choice of policy tools is value-laden. We will also consider the utility of additional theories to understand how policy analysts examine the fundamental questions of who gets what, why, when, and how.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from political and policy-making theories
- To understand the types of data and research methods that contribute to the design stage of the policy cycle
- To recognize that the goal of supporting child development/learning needs to be considered alongside other priorities, opportunities, and goals in the current political context

READINGS:

Readings on Theory:

Birkland, T. A. (2016). Policy design and policy tools. In *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making* (4th ed., pp. 299-330). New York, NY: Routledge.

DeLeon, P. (1999). The stages approach to the policy process: What has it done? Where is it going? In P. A. Sabatier (Ed.), *Theories of the policy process* (pp. 19-32). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Sabatier, P. A. (1999). The need for better theories. In P. A. Sabatier (Ed.), *Theories of the policy process* (pp. 3-18). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Readings on ECEC Policy:

Fuller, B. (2007). Why universal preschool now? Framing the problem. In *Standardized childhood: The political and cultural struggle over early education* (pp. 1-31). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Helburn, S. W., & Bergmann, B. R. (2002). The design: What should a new child care system look like? In *America's child care problem: The way out* (pp. 33-54). New York, NY: Palgrave.

Rigby, E., Tarrant, K., & Neuman, M. J. (2007). Alternative policy designs and the socio-political construction of childcare. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 8(2), 98-108.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Before class: Complete assigned readings; discuss readings in reading group.
- After class: Continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

Session II.2. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Implementation

THEMES: Implementing policy is much more complex than simply executing previously adopted decisions. Policy researchers and analysts must confront the messy question of how to capture and understand the way a policy is implemented in “the real world.” Policy analysts examine how people translate policy into reality within classrooms, ECEC programs, public schools, communities, organizations, states, and systems. During the class session, we will examine how “policy” implementation can differ from “program” implementation, with policies often requiring efforts from a diffuse network of organizations and communities.

GOALS:

- To recognize that policy implementation is a complex endeavor related to the combined effect of policy instruments, actors, activities, resources, and context
- To understand that current efforts to study policy implementation are different from traditional constructs of fidelity and limited variation
- To understand the types of data and research methods that contribute to the implementation stage of the policy cycle
- To recognize the differences between studies of implementation and current trends to employ implementation science methods

READINGS:

Readings on Theory:

Birkland, T. A. (2016). Policy implementation, failure, and learning. In *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making* (4th ed., pp. 331-359). New York, NY: Routledge.

Weatherley, R., & Lipsky, M. (1977). Street-level bureaucrats and institutional innovation: Implementing special-education reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 47(2), 171-197.

Readings on ECEC Policy:

Britto, P. R., Singh, M., Dua, T., Kaur, R., & Yousafzai, A. K. (2018). What implementation evidence matters: Scaling-up nurturing interventions that promote early childhood development. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1419(1), 5-16. doi:10.1111/nyas.13720

Franks, R. P., & Schroeder, J. (2013). Implementation science: What do we know and where do we go from here? In T. Halle, A. Metz, & I. Martinez-Beck (Eds.), *Applying implementation science in early childhood programs and systems* (pp. 5-19). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Goldstein, L. S. (2008). Kindergarten teachers making "street-level" education policy in the wake of No Child Left Behind. *Early Education and Development*, 19(3), 448-478.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Before class: Complete assigned readings; discuss readings in reading group.
- After class: Continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

Session II.3. Policy Analysis in the Policy Process: Evaluation

THEMES: This class session will provide an introduction to the design and conduct of rigorous, useful evaluations of ECEC policies and programs. We will discuss recent writing about policy evaluation, and a more extensive literature on program evaluation – again, noting the key distinctions between “policies” and “programs.” We will examine fundamental tensions and issues residing in the act of evaluation and examine how evaluation designs can take account of these matters, while seeking to develop policy-relevant evidence through strong research designs.

GOALS:

- To recognize the complexity of measuring child outcomes in ECEC policy research

- To understand the difference between technical evaluations and evaluation as policy learning
- To recognize that the structure (or lack thereof) of the ECEC system influences the conclusions that can be drawn by evaluations (e.g., silo-ed administrative data)
- To understand the types of data and research methods that contribute to the evaluation stage of the policy cycle

READINGS:

Burchinal, M. R., & Forestieri, N. E. (2017). What does it mean to be evidence-based? In E. Votruba-Drzal & E. Dearing (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of early childhood development programs, practices, and policies* (pp. 118-134). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Henig, J. R. (2008). The evolving relationship between researchers and public policy. In F. M. Hess (Ed.), *When research matters: How scholarship influences education policy* (pp. 41-62). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

National Forum on Early Childhood Program Evaluation. (2007). *Early childhood program evaluations: A decision-maker's guide*. Cambridge, MA: Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. Retrieved from <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/early-childhood-program-evaluations-a-decision-makers-guide/>

Weiss, C. H. (1999). The interface between evaluation and public policy. *Evaluation*, 5(4), 468-486.

Zubrick, S. R. (2016). Longitudinal research: Applications for the design, conduct and dissemination of early childhood research. In A. Farrell, S. L. Kagan, & E. K. M. Tisdall (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of early childhood research* (pp. 201-222). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Before class: Complete assigned readings; discuss readings in reading group.
- After class: Continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

UNIT III: ECEC POLICY ANALYSIS – THEORY AND ITS APPLICATION

Session III.1. How Do We Address Inequality? Sociology and Critical Theories

THEMES: This session launches the third cluster of classes in the course, focusing on different disciplines and theoretical approaches to policy research and analysis. We begin with perspectives that aim to address issues of inequality and inequities. Policy analysis from

sociological perspectives examines the extent to which society's various needs are met, paying particular attention to determinants of inequality and social processes related to race, class, and gender. Post-modern, critical theories extend these analyses further, problematizing the social processes themselves and examining systemic inequities.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from sociological and post-modern theories
- To problematize basic popular constructs in ECEC (e.g., readiness, quality, child-centered pedagogy)
- To apply the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework to sociological and critical theories

READINGS:

Anderson, J., Moffatt, L., McTavish, M., & Shapiro, J. (2013). Rethinking language education in early childhood: Sociocultural perspectives. In O. N. Saracho & B. Spodek (Eds.), *Handbook of research on the education of young children* (3rd ed., pp. 117-134). New York, NY: Routledge.

Bloch, M. N., & Kim, K. (2015). A cultural history of "readiness" in early childhood care and education: Are there still culturally relevant, ethical, and imaginative spaces for learning open for young children and their families? In J. M. Iorio & W. Parnell (Eds.), *Rethinking readiness in early childhood education* (pp. 1-18). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fallace, T. (2015). The savage origins of child-centered pedagogy, 1871-1913. *American Educational Research Journal*, 52(1), 73-103.

Merolla, D. M., & Jackson, O. (2019). Structural racism as the fundamental cause of the academic achievement gap. *Sociology Compass*, 13(6). 1-13. doi:10.1111/soc4.12696

Sadovnik, A. R. (2007). Theory and research in the sociology of education. In A. R. Sadovnik (Ed.), *Sociology of education: A critical reader* (2nd ed., pp. 3-22). New York, NY: Routledge.

Souto-Manning, M., & Rabadi-Raol, A. (2018). (Re)centering quality in early childhood education: Toward intersectional justice for minoritized children. *Review of Research in Education*, 42(1), 203-225. doi:10.3102/009173X18759550

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Short paper on the policy cycle due at 5 PM on the Friday preceding class.
- Before class: Complete assigned readings; discuss readings in reading group.
- After class: Continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

Session III.2. How Do We Efficiently Allocate Resources? Economic Theory

THEMES: This week we examine economic theory and its application to ECEC policy. Economic theories elevate the importance of preferences, information, costs, and incentives. A small number of economic studies of ECEC programs have been widely popularized and used to bolster the case for investing in pre-K and other early learning interventions. These, and other, examples will be discussed.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from economic theories
- To apply the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework to economic theories
- To understand how economic theory relates to key issues in ECEC, such as access and quality of services

READINGS:

Barnett, W. S., & Nores, M. (2018). Costs and benefits of early childhood education and care. In L. Miller, C. Cameron, C. Dalli, & N. Barbour (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Early Childhood Policy* (pp. 485-503). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE reference.

Kilburn, M. R., & Karoly, L. A. (2008). *The economics of early childhood policy: What the dismal science has to say about investing in children*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved from https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2008/RAND_OP227.pdf

Peters, H. E., & Bristow, B. (2006). Early childhood professional development programs: Accounting for spillover effects and market interventions. In M. Zaslow & I. Martinez-Beck (Eds.), *Critical issues in early childhood professional development* (pp. 339-350). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Reynolds, A. J., Temple, J. A., White, B. A. B., Ou, S.-R., & Robertson, D. L. (2011). Age 26 cost-benefit analysis of the Child-Parent Center early education program. *Child Development*, 82(1), 379-404.

Schweinhart, L. J., Montie, J., Xiang, Z., Barnett, W. S., Belfield, C. R., & Nores, M. (2005). *Lifetime effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool study through age 40*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press. Retrieved from http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/specialsummary_rev2011_02_2.pdf

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Before class: Complete assigned readings; discuss readings in reading group.

- After class: Continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

Session III.3. How Do We Coordinate Programs and Build Infrastructure? Institutional and Organizational Theories

THEMES: Organization theory is a broad topic, with a long history and multiple perspectives. Historically, organization theory has been used to study bureaucracies and to understand the structural, organizational, and management capacities needed to ensure institutions perform well. This week, we explore some of the basic tenets of institutional and organizational theories and apply them to consider why ECEC organizations (and the people in them) do what they do and how policymakers might use that knowledge to improve practice.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from organizational and institutional theories
- To apply the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework to organizational and institutional theories
- To understand the influence of an organization's structure, management, and underlying logics on its performance
- To understand how institutional and organizational theories relate to key issues in ECEC, such as tensions in the mixed-delivery system and the creation of new bureaucracies (e.g., QRIS)

READINGS:

Background on Theoretical Perspective:

Scott, W. R., & Davis, G. F. (2007). The subject is organizations; the verb is organizing. In *Organizations and organizing: Rational, natural, and open system perspectives* (pp. 1-34). London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.

Boxenbaum, E., & Jonsson, S. (2008). Isomorphism, diffusion and decoupling. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, R. Suddaby, & Sahlin, K. (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational institutionalism* (pp. 78-98). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

ECEC Policy:

Colaner, A. C. (2016). Education versus family: Institutional logics in the early care and education field. *American Educational Research Journal*, 53(3), 673-707.
doi:10.3102/0002831216646868

Gamoran, A., Secada, W. G., & Marrett, C. B. (2007). The organizational context of teaching and learning: Changing theoretical perspectives. In A. R. Sadovnik (Ed.), *Sociology of education: A critical reader* (2nd ed., pp. 153-175). New York, NY: Routledge.

Goffin, S. G., & Washington, V. (2007). Calling the question. In *Ready or not: Leadership choices in early care and education* (pp. 6-18). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Graue, M. E., Ryan, S., Nocera, A., Northey, K., & Wilinski, B. (2017). Pulling preK into a K-12 orbit: The evolution of preK in the age of standards. *Early Years*, 37(1), 108-122. doi:10.1080/09575146.2016.1220925

McCabe, L. A., & Sipple, J. W. (2011). Colliding worlds: Practical and political tensions of prekindergarten implementation in public schools. *Educational Policy*, 25(1), 1-26.

Tarrant, K., & Huerta, L. A. (2015). Substantive or symbolic stars: Quality rating and improvement systems through a new institutional lens. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 30(1), 327-338. doi:10.1016/j.ecresq.2014.04.002

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Before class: Complete assigned readings; discuss readings in reading group.
- After class: Continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

Session III.4. How Do We Engage Teachers, Families, and Communities? Social Capital and Cognitive Theories

THEMES: Another sub-field of organizational and institutional studies focuses on the socially constructed aspects of organizations – relationships and stakeholders’ social learning and cognitive capacity. Social capital theories and cognitive sense-making theories take center stage during this class session. This week, we focus on how the behavior and performance of organizations can be largely explained by decisions of actors within those organizations.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from social capital and cognitive theories
- To apply the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework to social capital and cognitive theories
- To understand how social capital and cognitive theories relate to key issues in ECEC, such as teacher identities, professional learning communities, and kindergarten

READINGS:

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Organization Science*, 16(4), 409-421.

Bridwell-Mitchell, E. N., & Cooc, N. (2016). The ties that bind: How social capital is forged and forfeited in teacher communities. *Educational Researcher*, 45(1), 7-17. doi:10.3102/0013189X16632191

Brown, C. P., Englehardt, J., Barry, D. P., & Ku, D. H. (2019). Examining how stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels made sense of the changed kindergarten. *American Educational Research Journal*, 56(3), 822-867. doi:10.3102/0002831218804152

Delaney, K. K. (2015). Dissonance for understanding: Exploring a new theoretical lens for understanding teacher identity formation in borderlands of practice. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 16(4), 374-389. doi:10.1177/1463949115616326

Douglass, A. (2016). Resilience in change: Positive perspectives on the dynamics of change in early childhood systems. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 14(2), 211-225.

Timmons, K. (2018). Educator expectations in full-day Kindergarten: Comparing the factors that contribute to the formation of early childhood educator and teacher expectations. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 46(6), 613-628. doi:10.1007/s10643-018-0891-0f

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Before class: Complete assigned readings; discuss readings in reading group.
- After class: Continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

Session III.5. How Do We Improve the Complex Interplay of Public and Private Organizations? Systems and Complexity Theories

THEMES: Within the early childhood field, there is growing interest in systems and complexity theories, both which recognize that pieces/parts of the field cannot be considered in isolation, but must be considered in interconnected and interdependent ways. These theories call for increased interdisciplinary work, focusing on both the structure and the functions of systems.

GOALS:

- To identify and understand concepts from systems theories
- To apply the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework to systems theories
- To understand how systems and complexity theories relates to key issues in ECEC, such as governance and the establishment of sub-systems

READINGS:

Kagan, S. L., Araujo, M. C., Jaimovich, A., & Aguayo, Y. C. (2016). Understanding systems theory and thinking: Early childhood education in Latin America and the Caribbean. In A.

Farrell, S. L. Kagan, & E. K. M. Tisdall (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of early childhood research* (pp. 163-184). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Coffman, J. (2012). Evaluating system-building efforts. In S. L. Kagan & K. Kauerz (Eds.), *Early childhood systems: Transforming early learning* (pp. 199-215). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Kagan, S. L., Gomez, R. E., & Roth, J. L. (2018). Creating a new era of usable knowledge: Enhancing early childhood development through systems research. In L. Miller, C. Cameron, C. Dalli, & N. Barbour (Eds.), *SAGE Handbook of Early Childhood Policy* (pp. 566-583). New York, NY: SAGE.

Schaack, D., Tarrant, K., Boller, K., & Tout, K. (2012). Quality rating and improvement systems: Frameworks for early care and education systems change. In S. L. Kagan & K. Kauerz (Eds.), *Early childhood systems: Transforming early learning* (pp. 71-86). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Weiland, C., McCormick, M., Mattera, S., Maier, M., & Morris, P. (2018). Preschool curricula and professional development features for getting to high-quality implementation at scale: A comparative review across five trials. *AERA Open*, 4(1), 1-16. doi:10.1177/2332858418757735

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Before class: Complete assigned readings; discuss readings in reading group.
- After class: Continue to populate the Comparative Policy Analysis Framework with theories discussed in class.

Session III.6. Putting the Diverse Perspectives Together: Compare/Contrast

THEMES: Revisit current trends in ECEC policy research – identifying both promising directions and gaps in understanding. Compare/contrast different perspectives and approaches.

READINGS:

Mintrom, M. (2012). Doing ethical policy analysis. In *Contemporary policy analysis* (pp. 95-108). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Peeters, J., & Peleman, B. (2018). The competent system at the intersection of research, policymaking, and practice. In L. Miller, C. Cameron, C. Dalli, & N. Barbour (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Early Childhood Policy* (pp. 522-536). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE reference.

ASSIGNMENTS:

The completed Comparative Policy Framework is due by 5 PM on the Friday preceding class.

Session 12 – Student Presentations

THEMES: During the last week of class, students will present, in small groups, their final papers (see assignment for full details).

READINGS:

None.

ASSIGNMENTS:

The completed Final Policy Paper is due by 5 PM on the Friday preceding class.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

(To be modified according to university/college policies and procedures)

Accommodations for students with disabilities

The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities.

Incompletes

The grade of Incomplete will be assigned only when the course attendance requirement has been met but, for reasons satisfactory to the instructor, the granting of a final grade has been postponed because certain course assignments are outstanding. If the outstanding assignments are completed within one calendar year from the date of the close of term in which the grade of Incomplete was received and a final grade submitted, the final grade will be recorded on the permanent transcript, replacing the grade of Incomplete, with a transcript notation indicating the date that the grade of Incomplete was replaced by a final grade. If the outstanding work is not completed within one calendar year from the date of the close of term in which the grade of Incomplete was received, the grade will remain as a permanent Incomplete on the transcript. In such instances, if the course is a required course or part of an approved program of study, students will be required to re-enroll in the course including repayment of all tuition and fee charges for the new registration and satisfactorily complete all course requirements. If the required course is not offered in subsequent terms, the student should speak with the faculty advisor or Program Coordinator about their options for fulfilling the degree requirement. Doctoral students with six or more credits with grades of Incomplete included on their program of study will not be allowed to sit for the certification exam.

Course Communication

All official communications from the College – e.g., information on graduation, announcements of closing due to severe storm, flu epidemic, transportation disruption, etc. -- will be sent to the student's email account, students are responsible for either reading email there, or, for utilizing the mail forwarding option to forward mail from their account to an email address which they will monitor.

Religious Observances

It is the policy of the University to respect its members' observance of their major religious holidays. Students should notify instructors at the beginning of the semester about their wishes to observe holidays on days when classes are scheduled. Where academic scheduling conflicts prove unavoidable, no student will be penalized for absence due to religious reasons, and alternative means will be sought for satisfying the academic requirements involved. If a suitable arrangement cannot be worked out between the student and the instructor, students and instructors should consult the appropriate department chair or director. If an additional appeal is needed, it may be taken to the Provost.

Academic Dishonesty

Students who intentionally submit work either not their own or without clear attribution to the original source, fabricate data or other information, engage in cheating, or misrepresentation of academic records may be subject to charges. Sanctions may include dismissal from the college for violation of University principles of academic and professional integrity fundamental to the purpose of the College.