THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

The School of Social and Political Science

Agent Conference | 21 May 2024

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- Welcome
- Overview of our School
- Comparative Public Policy mini-lecture

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Student Numbers

From over 85 countries

From over 62 countries

Staff Numbers

Undergraduate	1818
Postgraduate (taught)	620
Postgraduate (research)	185
Postgraduate (online)	196

Academic	298
Professional Services	114

Diverse School – 2023/24 Data

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AQMEN

THE BINKS HUB

skape
Centre for science, knowledge and policy

CENTRE ON CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

CeSeR
Centre for Security Research

CRITIQUE
Centre for Ethics and Critical Thought

EDCMA
SOMA

EDINBURGH EUROPA INSTITUTE

crfr
centre for research on families and relationships

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Edinburgh Hub for Responsible Innovation

Q-Step

A step-change in quantitative social science skills

Funded by the Nuffield Foundation, ESRC and HEFCE

GENDER.ED

ISSTI
THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

NRlabs
neuropolitics research

RACE.ED

GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY UNIT

innogen

CENTRE OF CANADIAN STUDIES
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Global Health Policy

International Development

African Studies

Politics and International Relations

Science Technology and Innovation

Social Anthropology

Sociology

Social and Public Policy

Social Work

Programmes in Social Sciences

20 PGT programmes
and
24 UG programmes

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- Text Mining for Social Research
- Digital Influence
- Data Science for Society
- Global Politics of Public Health
- The European Union in International Affairs
- Energy Policy and Politics
- Institutions and Policies of the European Union
- Culture and Power: The Anthropology of Political Processes
- Gender and Development
- Politics and Theories of International Development
- The Middle East in International Relations
- Global Environmental Politics
- Foreign Policy Analysis
- Global Environment: Key Issues
- Analysing European Governance and Public Policy
- Conflict and Peace in Africa
- Gender, War and Peacebuilding
- Gender, Politics and Representation
- Conflict, Security and Development
- Rethinking AFRICA: Race, Sapce and Power
- Advanced Issues in International Relations
- Terrorism in Global Politics
- Gender, Feminist Foreign Policy and Diplomacy
- The Politics and Governance of Crisis
- The Political Economy of Corporate Power
- U.S. Grand Strategy and Foreign Policy
- Russia in Global Politics
- The Politics of Migration in Europe
- Climate Change, Justice and Responsibility

MSc International Relations – course options

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Placement-based Dissertations

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MSc Conflict, Security and Development

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MSW Social Work

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Public Policy and Comparative Public Policy

MSc Programmes

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	Full-time	Part-time
Duration	12 months	24 months
Courses	Six courses over two terms (3, 3)	Six courses over four terms (2, 2 ,2 ,0)
Dissertation	April to August	Throughout second year

To proceed to the MSc dissertation: average of 50% for the six taught courses

To graduate with an MSc, students have to pass (>50%) dissertation
For CPP students: dissertation **must** include a comparative element

Dissertation *preparation* takes place in late S1 & early S2
Dissertation *implementation* takes place late S2 & through Spring / Summer

Programme Structure

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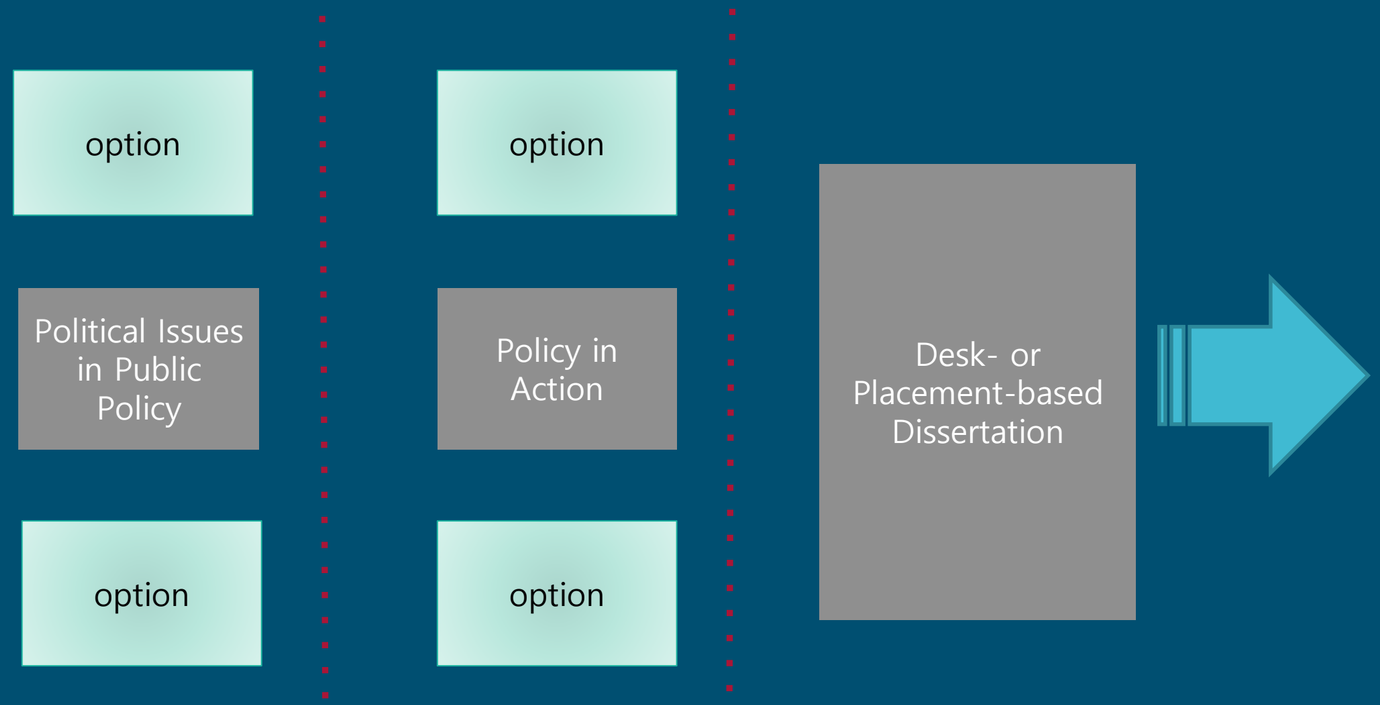
Compulsory core courses

- Political Issues in Public Policy (S1)
- Policy in Action (S2)
- Dissertation

Two out of four ‘semi-core’ options e.g.

Pick for option courses: broadly speaking, courses will be orientated towards:

- A method
- A substantive policy field
- A theoretical perspective



Public Policy at a glance: overall structure

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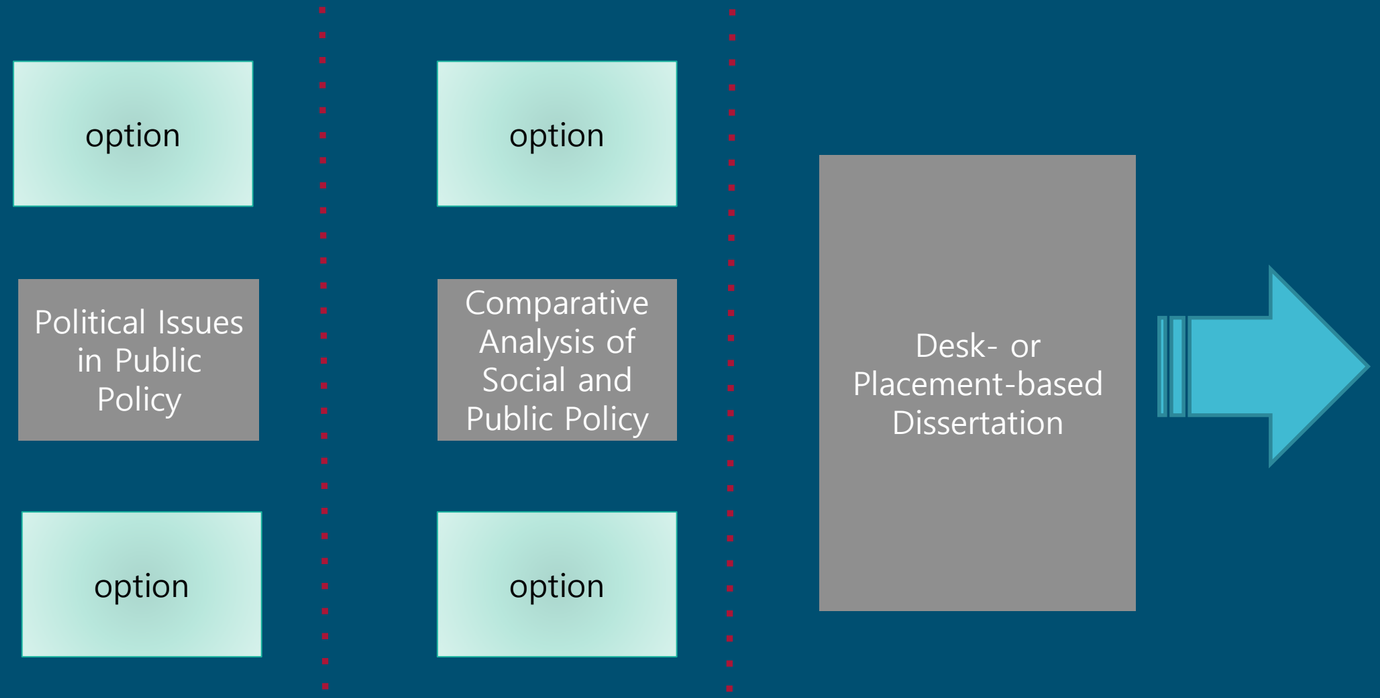
- Compulsory core courses
  - Political Issues in Public Policy (S1)
  - Comparative Analysis of Social and Public Policy (S2)
  - Dissertation

- Two out of four ‘semi-core’ options e.g.
  - European Social Policy (S1)
  - Labour Market Policy: International and Comparative Perspectives (S1)
  - Global and International Social Policy (S2)
  - Global Politics of Public Health (S2)



Comparative Public Policy at a glance: overall structure

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Aims:

1. Introduce literature on theories and concepts of policy-making process.

2. Provide framework for analysis of political systems and contemporary policy-making.

3. Enable critical reflection on general models of policy-making process and relations between the levels of government and other actors.

Week	Topic
1	Understanding the public policy process
2	Party politics and public policy
3	Organised interests, power and public policy
4	The role of ideas in public policy
5	Institutions, policy change and continuity
6	**Narrative policy analysis**
7	Governance
8	Policy transfer and translation
9	Evidence based policy making
10	Understanding policy success and policy failure

Overview: Political Issues in Public Policy course

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Narratives:

- A tool through which humans make sense of their social world (Bruner, 1991)
- A way to create meaning that makes sense of events in their particular social environments (Somers, 1994)
- Make sense of the complexity of human life and social events: 'sense-making devises'

> 'A good narrative not only conveys meaning but offers the listener a way of seeing and thinking about events that points to implications requiring further attention or consideration' (Fischer, 2003:163)

- Linguistic patterns that do more than merely depict reality; they suggest what reality *ought* to be

Mini example lecture: Narrative Policy Analysis

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- Storytelling is how we make sense of what we mean by ‘self’, ‘other’, ‘society’
- Storytelling allows communities to represent and reflect upon events
- The ‘rights’ to formulate official stories are not equally distributed, and the meaning of experiences and events is defined by some more than others. (Ochs, 1998)
- Stories are not neutral. It matters who the storyteller is.

Politics of storytelling

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- Narratives show a change of state: ‘transition from one state of affairs to another’ (Ochs, 1998: 189)
- Focus on a ‘key event that disrupts the equilibrium of ordinary, expected circumstances’ (1998: 197) and a plotline that transitions back to a new equilibrium.

- Narratives need ‘tellability’: if the link between narratives and peoples’ everyday lives becomes too tenuous, narratives might lose their appeal (Koschorke and Golb, 2018)

What does a policy narrative look like?

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- Greta Thunberg and Donald Trump as populist storytellers
  - Same story (climate crisis)
  - Different narratives

- Yet: both apply the same ‘populist narrative logic’:
  - The elites are corrupt and not protecting the interests of the ‘people’
  - Simple, black-and-white narratives about complex policy problems.
  - Not about ideology, but affect; populist narratives are emotional and affective approaches to complex issues
  - Truth-tellers exposing lies of the elite

(Nordensvard and Ketola, 2022)

Applying narrative analysis: environmental narratives

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	Greta Thunberg	Donald Trump
Characters	**Villains:** Corporate Elite Politicians and media The adults **Victims:** The youth, future generations, ecosystems	**Villains:** China Liberal media/fake news The UN **Victims:** US industry & workers, American people
EQ(A): What is the first equilibrium of the story?	The global elites ignore the facts that climate change is creating a disaster that will sacrifice future generations, betting instead on future technologies to enable adult populations to keep on living unsustainable lives.	An imagined past when America was great, and the country could exploit fossil resources without concern for environmental protection and climate change.

Applying narrative analysis: environmental narratives

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	Greta Thunberg	Donald Trump
Change: What disrupts EQ(A) and creates change?	The *negative plotline*. Business as usual leads to a disaster that ruptures the future of the youth, coming generations, and ecosystems. The *positive plotline.* Aggressive reduction of global carbon emissions to keep below key thresholds.	Liberals and activists at home/abroad all use climate change as a way to cripple the American economy and give others a competitive advantage.
EQ(B) What is the next/last equilibrium of the plot?	*Negative:* We will reach a tipping point that will lead to changes that will be beyond human control and irreversible. *Positive:* People will rise up against the elite and challenge business as usual. The power lies with the people.	Removal of all climate change regulation that burdens the American economy. Rolling back environmental regulations and withdrawing from 'poisonous' international agreements.

Applying narrative analysis: environmental narratives

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Thank you

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