

PP5401 – Policy Challenges

Semester 2 (2016/17)

Course Syllabus

Instructors:	Dr Kanti Bajpai (sppkpb@nus.edu.sg) Dr Dodo J. Thampapillai (spptj@nus.edu.sg) Dr Zeger van der Wal (sppzvdw@nus.edu.sg)
Class Hours:	Mondays, 09.00-12.00
Consultation Hours:	Mondays, 14.00-17.00 and by appointment
Venue:	MM SR 3-5 + break out rooms
Teaching Assistants:	Nihit Goyal (nihit@u.nus.edu) Faye Victoria Sit Yin Qi (fayevictoriasit@u.nus.edu) Kidjie Ian Cordova Sanguin (Kidjie_sanguin@u.nus.edu)

Course Description

Assessing and addressing challenges in the creation and implementation of policy are critical for policy developers and analysts. This module is designed to motivate you to think in a practical, problem-oriented, and multidisciplinary way. PP5401 is offered as a follow up to the three core modules from semester 1, which introduced you to the key building blocks and tools of public policy education. The multidisciplinary approach is demonstrated through integrating concepts and tools available in the disciplines of Economics, Political Science, and Public Management, all traditional pillars in public policy education.

These pillars will serve as lenses and toolboxes to explain and understand complex policy challenges and their solutions. Three 21st century policy challenges form the backdrop for discussing, contrasting, and integrating concepts and tools from the three pillars: 1) *Corruption in the Asia Pacific*, 2) *Escaping the Middle Income Trap: Vietnam in 2045*, and 3) *Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea*. The second challenge will also entail a study trip to Hanoi. The entire class will proceed to Hanoi for 5 days during the recess break to interact with officials, business leaders, and civil society representatives.

Teaching Team

All three instructors are present in the classroom each and every week. Usually, one disciplinary expert will drive a particular session, and the other two will add on, intervene, challenge, and debate. By challenging disciplinary assumptions we aim to communicate to you that many real-life public policy problems cannot be solved – and may even be exacerbated – by thinking within silos. We aim to show how perspectives, frames, and tools from Economics, Political Science, and Public Management may conflict with one another. They also need to be integrated in response to such problems. Two overarching questions should guide your thinking for this module:

1. What type of solutions would have been reached, had we worked in silos?
2. How would the integration of approaches from economics, politics, and management make a difference?

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the module, you will have learned more about:

- The nature of 21st century, wicked public policy problems and the responses they require.
- Market–state relations and their implications for public policy. Applied economic reasoning.
- The role of political institutions, regimes (national/international) and actors (state/civil society/ private sector) in policy making.
- How actors in public policy settings get things done, and manage stakeholders, performance, and change.
- The fundamental challenges of governance, policymaking, and implementation in the context of Asia.
- The necessity of integrating the key pillars of public policy education and practice (economics, politics, and management) and critically applying these to a wicked policy problem.

Pedagogy

Needless to say, throughout the entire course you will be challenged to think about wicked problems from many different perspectives. You will be asked on the spot for your opinions and reasons for your arguments. Thus, by the end of the course, you will have the skills to critically think about, make logical arguments in respect of, and provide solutions to problems. It is crucial to emphasize that the course does not aim to provide off-the-shelf solutions to problems; rather, it aims to produce professionals that can ‘think’ and make good decisions on their own.

The team will use a mix of teaching methods that will engage students in learning both in and outside of the classroom. The pedagogy for this course constitutes a dynamic mix of short lectures, class discussions, small group breakout discussions, student presentations and activities, and case studies.

Through both individual and group assignments, you will practice analytical and writing skills, including how to write clear concise memos and reflection pieces. You will also learn how to deliver effective presentations, by practicing in class.

All readings and cases will be made available in the IVLE course folder or a link will be provided before we commence the module.

* Note: In order to maximize the learning experience and maintain a good learning environment both in class and outside the classroom, it is important to keep in mind the following points:

- Tolerate and celebrate differences in opinions. Be respectful to others.
- Listen carefully to different opinions.
- Express your opinions clearly. Do not dominate discussions.
- Have an opinion or point of view. Make an effort to participate.
- Never be shy to ask questions, no matter how difficult or simple they are.

Group Work

Throughout the semester you will work in pre-assigned teams of 6-7 students. There will be 12 groups in total. As a team you will prepare for the group presentations and role play assignments in weeks 8, 9, and 13. You are also encouraged to prepare for the other weekly sessions *as a group* by discussing readings together and preparing case studies and examples used in class. This will enhance your learning experience and elevate overall classroom dynamics.

As the next section on assignments shows, this module strikes a balance between individual and group-based assignments, with 55% of the final marks being designated to individual assignments and 45% to group assignments.

It is expected that everyone will play their part in group work. One of the learnings from the module should be that professional life requires collaborative effort. Good public policy is rarely an individual effort.

Plagiarism

NUS and the LKY School regard academic integrity as a very important value. To avoid giving the impression that you are passing off other people’s work as your own, you will need to acknowledge conscientiously the sources of information, ideas, and arguments used in any of your assignments. In order to understand what counts as plagiarism and why it is wrong, as students at the LKY School you will have taken the NUS online module on Academic Culture during the Orientation Program and formally acknowledged that you had understood the contents. Students who would like an introduction to the different referencing styles can refer to the following website, among others: <https://www.citethisforme.com/guides>. You will be required to submit all written assignments that are uploaded on IVLE for a **plagiarism check**.

Assessments

1. Individual Class Participation (20%)

You will be assessed in terms of your contribution to the discussions on the topics, cases and required readings, and how well you've prepared. You must fully participate in class discussions. Make sure you have thought about your ideas carefully. And always ask yourself: "*How can I contribute constructively and meaningfully to our class discussion on this topic?*" rather than "*How can I just get my views across as assertively as possible?*"

2. Individual Decision Memo Assignment (20%)

After the first round of disciplinary sessions, you will write a 1500-word decision memo on the case covered in week 3, *Jextra Neighborhood Stores in Malaysia*. Guidelines for excellent memo writing will be discussed in class. This assignment assesses your writing skills and your ability to analyse a complex policy issue and provide clear and actionable recommendations to senior decision makers. **Due date is Friday 10 February 2017 at 5 PM via IVLE**. Late submissions will be penalized. Marks and feedback will be provided within 15 working days.

3. Individual Reflection Essay (15%)

Upon returning from the study trip during recess week, during week 7 each of you will write an individual reflection essay of no more than 1500 words consisting of three parts (of maximum 500 words each):

1. Your general impressions of the trip: what struck you? What are your key take-aways? What were some of the main surprises in terms of how things work in Vietnam in terms of governance, politics, and tri-sector collaboration?
2. Argue why (or why not) the interdisciplinary perspective offered in PP5401 was helpful in understanding the situation on the ground in Vietnam with regard to their developmental challenges. Is the Vietnam government trying to integrate different viewpoints, evaluation criteria, and sectoral agendas and interests in their approach to future agendas?
3. Your preliminary views on the issue you will address in your TED talk in week 8 or 9.

Due date is Wednesday 1 March 2017 at 5 PM via IVLE.

4. TED talks (20%)

In weeks 8 and 9, you will present in groups about your subtopics related to the study trip. *Your presentation should be a TED-talk style, in this case capped at 10 minutes (you will be timed), presented in an engaging and personal (rather than technical) style, and keeping the usage of slides and general introductions to a minimum (preferably no slides at all)*. You are welcome to discuss your ideas with us prior to class.

5. ASEAN Simulation (including preparation) (25%)

This simulation will take place in week 13. It is intended to provide an "integrative response in action" to the wicked problem discussed in the three preceding weeks: *Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea*. The simulation is designed to enable you to develop your presentation, negotiation, and group working skills. You will work in 4 larger 'super-groups' (ASEAN, China, Vietnam, Philippines) and you **will be graded as a super group**. How you decide on a division of labour is up to you. You need to devise a means of communication to get your key points across in a way that engages the audience. Both creativity and effectiveness will be rewarded.

This integration exercise pertains to tensions in the South China Sea and takes the form of simulating conflict resolution and mediation through role-play. Towards this end, we nominate three countries as those at the centre of the conflict, namely, China, Vietnam, and the Philippines. We will assign a set of 3 groups to take on the role of each country (that is, the overall China group in this activity will collectively consist of 3 student groups).

These 3 super-groups will each focus on the economic issues, political issues, and public management issues relating to a solution of the South China Sea conflict. The remaining 3 groups will be assigned to take on the role of the ASEAN Secretariat, which will act as the mediating body. The ASEAN group may also divide themselves into political, economic, and management focused committees. To make this simulation work, the country groups and the ASEAN group have to carefully allocate tasks within its now expanded group of 18-21 students. The aim of the exercise is to negotiate a solution to the conflict.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 (Monday 9 January):

Policy Challenges – Introduction, Objectives, Format

Guiding questions:

In this introductory class, we address some of the fundamental questions for this course: What are “wicked problems”? Will most 21st century public policy challenges be *wicked problems by nature*? Why are the individual disciplinary pillars of public policy practice and education – **economics, politics, and public management** – each in isolation inadequate to address such challenges? What do integrative, collaborative institutions, mind-sets, and solutions look like? How do economics, politics, and public management complement each other but compete at the same time, in terms of their worldviews, and the tools and techniques they have to offer? What are some of their key characteristics and assumptions?

After we’ve discussed and managed expectations for how to prepare for case discussions in class and course assignments, and outlined the structure and rationale of this course, we’ll conclude with three short introductions of the three key policy challenges that feature throughout this first semester:

1. *Corruption in the Asia Pacific* (Dr Zeger van der Wal)
2. *Escaping the Middle Income Trap: Vietnam in 2045* (Dr Dodo Thampapillai)
3. *Territorial disputes in the South China sea* (Dr Kanti Bajpai)

Readings:

- H.W.J. Rittel & M.M. Webber (1973). Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning. *Policy Sciences* 4: 155-169.

CHALLENGE I – CORRUPTION IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

Week 2 (Monday 16 January):

Corruption in the Asia Pacific - *Economics* (Dodo)

Guiding questions:

Corruption manifests itself in a wide variety of contexts. From an economics perspective, a basis for identifying what is corruption is perfect competition. Does this mean that all contexts that deviate from perfect competition represent corruption? But, corruption transcends markets. For example can lobbying in politics and incompetence in government be cases of corruption? Economists tend to concede that all acts of corruption, regardless of the context, have an impact on markets and the overall performance of the economy. The key questions are: How do we explain the presence of corruption from an economics perspective? Is there a relationship between economic growth and corruption?

Readings:

- Bai, J., Jayachandran, S., Malesky, E. J., and Olken, B. A., (2014). “Does Economic Growth Reduce Corruption? Theory and Evidence from Vietnam”
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Udd2IJ2LZPs>
- Ades, A. and Di Tello, R., (1997). “The New Economics of Corruption: A Survey and Some New Results”, *Political Studies*, 45: 496-515

Cases/Illustrations: Arms Trade; Mining in Ecologically Sensitive Regions; Human Trafficking.

Week 3 (Monday 23 January):

Corruption in the Asia Pacific - *Politics (Kanti) and Public Management (Zeger)*

Guiding questions:

Politics and corruption are closely connected. Politics is both cause and solution. What kinds of political systems are associated with corruption? Is there a relationship between a country's resource base and corruption? Do political institutions make a difference? Does a separation of powers and the use of independent accountability agencies control the misuse of positions of authority and public funds? Overall, what kind of political engineering and policy design will reduce or control corruption?

Readings:

1. David Brinkerhoff and Arthur Goldsmith, "Clientilism, Patrimonialism, and Democratic Governance: An Overview and Framework for Assessment and Programming," ABT Associates, December 2002, pp. 1-39, http://www.abtassociates.com/reports/2002601089183_30950.pdf.
2. Nicholas Shaxson, "Oil, Corruption, and the Resource Curse," *International Affairs*, 83:6, 2007, pp. 1123-1140, http://projects.iq.harvard.edu/sites/projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/gov2126/files/shaxson_2007.pdf
3. John Ackerman, "Independent Accountability Agencies and Democracy: A New Separation of Powers?" Workshop on Comparative Administrative Law, Yale University, May 8-9, 2009. [Scanned copy will be provided through IVLE.](#)

Case: Jextra Neighborhood Stores in Malaysia (Thunderbird School of Management Case)

This class partly serves as a make-up class for next week when Monday 30 January will be a public holiday due to Chinese New Year. The class will run from 9 AM to 1 PM.

Week 4: (Monday 30 January)

No class – Chinese New Year

CHALLENGE II – THE COMPLEXITIES AND CHALLENGES OF GOVERNANCE: WILL VIETNAM BE ABLE TO ESCAPE THE MIDDLE INCOME TRAP BY 2045?

The second policy challenge for the course is how Vietnam can continue on a sustainable economic development path from being a *low middle income country* to a *high (middle) income country* in the next 25 years without falling into the so called "middle-income trap". What kinds of economic, political and geopolitical, and managerial problems/challenges will confront Vietnam as it tries to become a middle income country? How do different sectors of Vietnamese society conceive of the key problems and challenges and how should those problems and challenges be addressed? Are there contradictions between the economic, political and geopolitical, and managerial responses? Are there also differences between the government, businesses, labour, NGOs, and other groups in civil society? Can the contradictions and differences be reconciled?

Prior to the field trip, we will devote two classes to pre-briefings. These are intended to give students an overview of the history, economics, politics and foreign policy, and public management systems of Vietnam. The second – shorter – briefing will also consist of sharing with students the logistics for the trip. During the trip, the 12 student groups will each focus on addressing a specific issue related to the overall theme of the study trip: 4 groups will focus mainly on Economics aspects (supervised by Dodo), four will focus mainly on (geo)political aspects (supervised by Kanti) and four will focus mainly on public management aspects (supervised by Zeger). These questions will drive the assignments for week 7, 8, and 9.

During the first two weeks of the module, students will indicate their topic of preference based on the submission of topics by students prior to the start of the module. Based on their preference, students will be grouped into 12 groups.

Week 5 (Monday 6 February):

Pre-Briefing Study Trip Part I

Vietnam: history, political and economic context (Vu Minh Khuong, Razeen Sally, and Markus Taussig)

Week 6 (Monday 13 February):

Pre-Briefing Study Trip Part II – 10.30-12.00

Group Assignments and Study Trip Logistics (Professors and Academic Affairs)

----- (18-26 February): Recess week and Study Trip -----

Week 7 (Monday 27 February):

No class – Individual Reflection Paper

In your individual reflection paper, you will share our impressions from the study trip, with a particular focus on three issues: 1) what were your general impressions of the trip? Were pre-formulated views and perceptions corroborated or not? And why? 2) To what extent do our experiences and impressions align with the multidisciplinary approach adopted in this course, and is this approach helpful in understanding and addressing policy challenge II, and 3) What are key takeaways from the study trip related to your group's challenge which will form the basis for your TED talks?

Week 8 (Monday 6 March): TED talks Vietnam (6 groups)

Integration and Interaction (Professors and Students)

Week 9 (Monday 13 March): TED talks Vietnam (6 groups)

Integration and Interaction (Professors and Students)

The classes will be structured as follows:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. TED talk presentations by 4 groups (10 minutes per group + transition time): <u>45 minutes</u>.2. Plenary class discussion on how tools and perspectives from economics, political science, and public management compete with and complement each other in Vietnam's development: <u>45 minutes</u>.3. Break: <u>15 minutes</u>.4. TED talk presentations by 2 groups (10 minutes per group + transition time): <u>20 minutes</u>.5. Plenary class discussion on how tools and perspectives from Economics, Political Science, and Public Management compete with and complement each other in Vietnam's development: <u>40 minutes</u>.6. Wrap up by professors: <u>15 minutes</u>. |
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CHALLENGE III – TERRITORIAL DISPUTES IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

Week 10 (Monday 20 March):

South China Sea – Politics (Kanti)

Guiding Questions:

The South China Sea dispute could be militarized and lead to war which would be disastrous regionally if not globally given the economic importance of the area. What is the quarrel about? Is it really about territory? Or are there deeper causes at work such as the balance of power between the great powers, economic gain and loss, ideological differences, nationalism and identity, or domestic political pressures? What resources exist for resolving the disputes? Can international law and the various institutions and practices of international society help? Can regional institutions in Asia including ASEAN help resolve conflict?

Readings:

1. Aaron Friedberg, “The Future of US-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?” *International Security*, 30, 2 (Fall 2005), pp. 7-45. <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/016228805775124589>.
2. Robert Beckman, “The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Maritime Disputes in the South China Sea,” *The American Journal of International Law*, vol. 147: 142, 2013, pp. 142-163, <http://cil.nus.edu.sg/wp/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Beckman-THE-UN-CONVENTION-ON-THE-LAW-OF-THE-SEA-AND-THE-MARITIME-DISPUTES-IN-THE-SCS.pdf>.
3. “Approaches to Solving Territorial Conflicts: Sources, Situations, Scenarios, and Suggestions,” May 2010, The Carter Center, pp. 10-11, pp. 15-18, pp. 39-44, and pp. 60-63, http://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/conflict_resolution/Solving_Territorial_Conflicts.pdf
4. “The South China Sea Arbitration (The Republic of the Philippines v. The People’s Republic of China)”, <http://www.pcacases.com/web/sendAttach/1801>

Optional Readings:

- Evelyn Goh, “Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia: Analyzing Regional Security Strategies,” *International Security*, Winter 2007/2008, Vol. 32, No. 3, pp. 113-157.
- Akikazu Hashimoto, Michael O’Hanlon, and Wu Xinbo, “A Framework for Resolving Japan-China Dispute Over Islands,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 1, 2014, <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-ohanlon-china-japan-senkaku-diaoyu-islands-20141130-story.html>.
- “Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and China on the Full and Effective Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, 2016/07/25,” <http://ca.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/cpot/t1384530.htm>

Class Activity: In July 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) handed down a decision on the Philippines’ request for arbitration on the South China dispute. A month earlier, Rodrigo Duterte had become President of the Philippines. The two developments have shaken up the South China Sea dispute and the international and regional responses to it. Break into your 4 groups – ASEAN, China, Philippines, Vietnam – and discuss how these two developments – one international and the other domestic – have affected your country/organization and whether these developments have increased or decreased the likelihood of conflict resolution.

Week 11 (Monday 27 March):

South China Sea – Economics (Dodo)

Guiding questions:

Territorial claims are not new. History is full of incidents depicting conflicts stemming from territorial claims. It is just that the tensions in the South China are contemporary. From an economics perspective an expanded territorial base leads in turn to an expansion of factor endowments and expansion in the comparative advantage. Regardless of historical lineages, the disputed islands are platforms for rich deposits of natural resources including oil, gas, and marine reserves. Is this why there are tensions in the South China Sea? Would the depletion/extraction of resources beneath the seabed lead to an expansion of wealth and economic growth, OR would they result in a greater array of natural disasters? New research in geophysics points to oil and gas extraction being the source of earthquakes. So can we regard the South China Sea as a global public good – the lack of protection (conservation) of which can lead to the “Tragedy of the Commons”?

Readings:

1. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11341139>
2. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13748349>
3. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2088414/Dispute-oil-rich-islands-South-China-Sea-escalate-state-state-conflict-U-S-admiral-warns.html>
4. Van Eijs, R.M.H.E; Mulders, F.M.M.; Nepveu, M.; Kenter, C.J.; and Scheffers, B.C., (2006). “Correlation Between Hydrocarbon Reservoir Properties and Induced Seismicity in the Netherlands,” *Engineering Geology*: 84: 99-111.
5. Hardin, G. (1968). “The Tragedy of the Commons”, *Science*, 162: 1243-1248

Class activity: Preparation for week 13’s simulation in your super groups (break out session facilitated by professors and TAs).

Week 12 (Monday 3 April):

South China Sea – Public Management (Zeger)

Guiding questions:

International, high stakes and emotionally-laden conflicts like the territorial disputes in the South China Sea are characterized by irrational behaviour in decision making processes of seemingly rational and competent actors, distrust and lack of teamwork and collaborative capacity (or will), and persuasive capability showdowns. How should public managers in such contexts devise conflict resolution strategies? How can they enhance teamwork and collaboration between distrusting actors? How to create shared goals, responsibility, and accountability? How do effective persuasion and negotiation work; what are effective practices and actions?

Readings:

1. Garvin, D.A. and Roberto, M.A. (2001). “What You Don’t Know About Making Decisions.” *Harvard Business Review*, September: 108-116. <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/2544.html>
2. Katzenbach, J.R., and Smith, D.K. (2005). “The Discipline of Teams.” *Harvard Business Review* July/August: 162-171. http://meridiancoaches.com/resources/Discipline_of_Teams.pdf
3. J.A. Conger (1998). “The Necessary Art of Persuasion.” *Harvard Business Review*, May/June: 84-95. <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.libproxy1.nus.edu.sg/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=b6d560b3-666b-4f81-abe9-c76b5a43e83e%40sessionmgr111&hid=118>

Case: Goodbye to Happy Hour (Electronic Hallway Case)

Week 13 (10 April):

Integration and Interaction (Professors and Students)

Simulation of conflict resolution between China, Vietnam and the Philippines mediated by the ASEAN Secretariat.

The session is structured as follows:

1. Introduction and rules of engagement by professors: 10 minutes.
2. Each country is invited by the Secretary General of ASEAN to make a short positional statement. Each country will delegate their Foreign Minister, Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs, or Chief of the Economic Council to make a brief statement, or coordinate a brief short statement. 15 minutes.
3. ASEAN too will make an initial brief statement. 5 minutes.
4. Three countries will each go to a break out room to discuss and reconcile (we expect some preparation for this to have taken place during weeks 10-12) key issues related to economics, politics, and public management that it needs to tackle to negotiate the best possible position. Each country has 3 teams which are headed by the Foreign Minister (concerned with political feasibility and credibility), Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs (concerned with implementation and delivery of agreements; process management), and Chief Economic Council (concerned with economic and financial dimensions and implications). Negotiations may take place in break out rooms. Delegates may walk around and broker between the countries involved. ASEAN aims to informally mediate and reach consensus. 60 minutes.
5. Break. 15 minutes
6. Plenary negotiation between delegates of 3 countries facilitated by ASEAN. 60 minutes.
7. Wrap up of *Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea* segment by professors. 15 minutes.