Microeconomics for Public Policy Analysis will provide a comprehensive, case-based overview for the MPP student of the consequences of contemporary public policies for individuals, households, and firms. Public policy is often said to consist of the distribution of scarce or valuable resources or benefits through the mechanisms of the public sector. This course will provide the opportunity to gain fluency and expertise in the application of economic analysis to such problems as transfer payments, entitlements, government subsidies, taxation, housing, education, labor, welfare and crime. Issues concerned with exploring the government's role in encouraging innovation, maintaining a growing economy, and budgeting under conditions of "surplus," will be explored using contemporary policy initiatives. Two competing visions of public policy will be examined: the role of economic policy in securing the benefits of "ordered liberty," which accrues to the individual; and (2) the vision of public policy as fundamental to the correction of anomalies in the market and in the distribution of scarce resources, often based on interest group claims of "disparity" and "inequality".

Course Texts & Materials:

2. Additional Readings available through Blackboard (blackboard.du.edu) or as handouts in class.

Prepare for class by reading the assigned materials—this will deepen your understanding of the material and provide structure for the exams. You are responsible for all the material covered in class. You will also be responsible for any and all reading material, handouts, and case assignments, throughout the course, which are available to you as handouts and/or through the online blackboard system. Please refer to the detailed course schedule for assigned readings and schedule of topics.

Course Overview: This course is designed to develop skills required to define and critically analyze policy issues and problems, articulate relevant decision-making criteria for policy analysis, and communicate recommendations. These skills and techniques will be applied to a wide range of substantive public policy issues, with the idea that a good policy analyst can approach problems as a generalist and bring more specific information from a given policy area into the analysis.
Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course. Some exposure, however, to Economic principles and analysis is helpful. Students are strongly encouraged to review Microeconomics.

Microeconomics/Public Policy Process
This course will help you develop skills to perform a microeconomic analysis. The standard analysis approach follows a set of steps, each of which we will spend time on during this course.

• Supply/Demand
• Elasticity
• Utility Optimization
• Market Structure
• Market Failure
• Intervention

In-Class Discussions & Class Participation: The course is designed so that we alternate between learning concepts (drawn from the assigned textbook readings and other assigned readings available on Blackboard) and then applying these new techniques. Be prepared to participate in class discussions. To prepare adequately for class discussions, you must read the assignments.

Discussion Questions: I will often assign discussion questions for a reading assignment to be written and handed in during the class when we discuss the reading. These questions are designed to help you focus on the relevant parts of the reading and be prepared for class discussion.

Economic Analysis Review: You will learn a variety of tools and concepts in this course. All of them are designed to help produce well-reasoned and thorough policy reports. In order to cement your learning, you will use your skills in producing economic reviews. The analysis will comprise 10 percent of your final grade. The analysis reviews need to be submitted (1) by email before class meets and (2) hard copy before class meets.

In this assignment, you will assume the role of an analyst presenting an unbiased review of the key issues to a policy maker. You will prepare an analysis that the policy maker can use to develop his/her opinion on the issue. Your review must be concise and well organized. The analysis review should be no less than 3 pages and no more than 5 double-spaced pages (not including appendix, graphs, and tables).

Your economics analysis reviews will be organized in parts:

Review: Economic Approach Used, Merits, Limitations, Disadvantages; Due TBA

Attendance/Participation: To ensure the class stays on track and encourage all students to learn the material, there will be unannounced question sessions. These will be in the form of definitions and/or short answer. This will account for 10 percent of your grade.

Problem Sets: During the entire course, I will assign problem sets relating to material covered that week. The problems sets are analytical and mathematical questions based on economic and
mathematical constructs. These also form a major component of the exams. This will account for **10 percent** of your grade.

**Examination Schedule:** There will be 2 exams during the semester, Exam 1 and Exam 2. The exam will be no notes and closed-book. You are expected to thoroughly learn the concepts and be able to apply them. All material covered in class, in all textbooks, all handouts, and all blackboard readings constitute exam material. Tentative exam dates are __________ and __________.

**Grade Appeal Policy:** If you have questions about the particular grade you received on an assignment or exam, you have one week after the assignment is returned to contact me regarding the grade. After one week, all grades are final. This system is designed to minimize frivolous grade appeals and to ensure that you have carefully examined and reflected on the quality of your work before deciding to initiate a grade appeal.

**Determination of Final Grade:**

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<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Individual Analysis Review</td>
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94 and above: A  
90-93: A-  
88-89: B+  
84-87: B  
80-83: B-  
78-79: C+  
74-77: C  
70-73: C-  
68-69: D+  
64-67: D  
60-63: D-  
59 and below: F

**Academic Honesty:** You are required to comply with the University’s honesty policy regarding cheating and the use of copyrighted materials. The student honor code can be found at: [http://www.du.edu/facsen/honor_code.html](http://www.du.edu/facsen/honor_code.html).

**Lateness/Courtesy:** Each class is a business meeting. You should be prompt and prepared. Please turn off your cell phones/text/laptops to avoid distracting your classmates. Violation of class rules will result in dismissal from class.

**Make-Up Policies:** No make-ups. I have given you the exam date and all other important deadlines in advance, so please clear your social calendars. It is your responsibility to modify your schedule to attend class, presentations, memos, and exams.

**Absences:** All students are permitted two unexcused absences, except when materials/exams/etc. need to be submitted. After two absences, the final grade will be reduced by 5% for each missed class unless doubly documented—that is, medical, court, family emergency, etc. absence that is written and can be verified.