PPG2016H(S) "Public Policy for Children"
Tuesday 1:00 – 4:00
Winter, 2011
OISE Rm. 2-199

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Course Content and Objectives

Governments across Canada have recently implemented or are contemplating new polices that will have substantial impacts on the way children grow up. Examples include extended and better compensated maternity leaves, universal childcare, full day junior and senior kindergarten, class sizes limits, new vaccinations. This multidisciplinary course introduces students to some of the research that underlies these initiatives. Each week a faculty member drawn from various disciplines within the social sciences, public health and education at the University will present their current research in this area. In selected weeks guest speakers from other institutions will make presentations. The topics covered will follow the current research of these participants. We will highlight the following two themes across these diverse lectures: 1) universal vs. targeted interventions and 2) strategies for weight the quality of evidence that exists in the different areas we will cover.

For students the objective is to gain an appreciation of the connection between research and policy. Most public policies for children draw on a research base. However, research in a given area is sometimes inconclusive and seldom unanimous in recommendation. Furthermore, policies typically integrate any results of research with the claims of various stakeholders in the policy and political processes. A policy maker, therefore, must be able to understand the sometime conflicting claims of researchers and be able to translate them into coherent policy recommendations. A final goal of this course is to provide students with a basis for considering children's policies from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Assignments:

A. In-class participation (20%)

- Student will submit a **typed** discussion question based one of the readings, or integrating across them each class. **You are required to submit discussion questions for 9 our classes.** That gives you a little flexibility if you miss one class. **Please do not email them or submit these questions early/late** as they reflect your attendance in class. These do not need to be long (e.g., a few sentences or a paragraph are fine). They are assigned a pass/fail.
- Participate in class discussions

B. Group Presentation (30%)

In pairs you will present on a current children's policy issue of your choice. A presentation sign-up sheet will be provided on the first class. You can choose the format and topic for these presentations so that they are personally relevant for you. One possibility is to debate a topic. Another is to conduct mock legislative hearings. Each group's presentations should be 45 minutes long (15 minutes per person) with an additional 15 minutes allocated for discussion. Regardless of format or topic**, it is imperative that the arguments you make be empirically based** and that you provide a clear link between your statements and the evidence you used to make them. On the day of your presentation please submit a bibliography with abstracts to help me track the sources you used in building your argument. Please include policy recommendations based on the evidence you reviewed. Below are some potential topics for mock hearings or debates. Feel free to propose your own topic but please speak to me about it first.

Sample topics for policy hearings/debates:
- Home visiting programs delivered by nurses have been used extensively in an effort to improve outcomes for children, especially with at-risk populations such as teen mothers. Does the evidence support government spending on such programs?
- Does the evidence support an emphasis on play based early learning?
- Is risk-based/graduated licensing of child care a good way for the government to save resources?

C. Evaluating the quality of quantitative research (50%)

This assignment is designed to support the course goal of helping students develop the skills to evaluate the quality of empirical/quantitative research. We will do this by developing criteria to examine the research that formed the foundations for the development of the Early Childhood Education Index. This Index was developed to capture how localities are doing in terms of providing early childhood education services. More information about the index is provided at:

http://earlyyearsstudy.ca/media/uploads/report-pdfs-en/i_115_eys3_en_2nd_072412.pdf

Please read the entire report so you have a sense of how it was developed and why.

The assignment involves the following tasks that are to be carried out in groups and individually as outlined below.

List of Tasks:
1. Develop a set of criteria for evaluating the quality of empirical/quantitative research.
2. Apply these criteria to research that the Early Childhood Education Index is based on. Students must each rate 10 papers (reports that are longer than 60 double spaced pages count as two). Two of these must overlap with papers reviewed by your group members. This will enable you to compare your ratings with others to get a sense of where you agree/disagree.
3. Write a short paper in which you draw conclusions about the criteria we developed together, the research you reviewed and make recommendations based on what you have learned.

Tasks 1 and 2 are to be completed in small groups of approximately 3 students. Task 3 constitutes your final, individual paper for this class. Below is a more detailed description of these tasks.

Group work.
Task 1. In small groups students will review the readings assigned for February 7th and any other additional resources they find (the Waldfogel reading as well as the discussion of meta analyses will help inform this task). The February 7th class will cover aspects of research methods that should be considered when developing criteria to evaluate the quality of research. Based on students' summary/synthesis of the readings, each group will identify a list of key indicators for assessing the quality of research. Each group will submit a document that lists the key indicators identified by the group for capturing the quality of research, descriptions of these indicators and a rationale for why they are important on **February 28th.** During the February 28th class we will create a final version of the criteria that will then be used by all of the groups in the next step of this assignment.

Task 2. The class will be provided with a list of studies that formed the basis for the Early Childhood Education Index. Each group will apply the criteria we developed. These ratings will be discussed and submitted in class on **February 28th**. At that point we will resolve any differences in ratings across the different groups and make any necessary modifications to the rating system.

Task 1 and 2 are pass/fail and will not be given grades.

Individual work.
Task 3. Each student will rate 10 papers using the criteria we develop in class. Please select **empirical, quantitative papers** only as the criteria will focus on the evaluation of quantitative studies. Based on the experience of developing and applying the criteria, students are asked to write a short paper in which they provide an overview of the quality of the evidence in this area along with a list of recommendations for policy makers about conclusions that can be drawn from this literature and how it can be used to inform policy. Students also need to include a brief description of the research you think is needed in this area. The paper should be no longer than five double spaced pages. Please submit a copy of your rating of each of the 10 papers along with your final paper. It is due at reception at SPPG by 5:00 on **April 10th** and is worth 50% of the final grade. Please submit the paper in hardcopy at SPPG only.

In this paper remember to:
- Frame the paper around the questions/goals you have for this paper
- Discuss the strengths/limitations of the criteria developed in class and of adopting this approach to evaluating the quality of empirical evidence in general
- Provide examples of the points you make from the papers you reviewed
- Describe your overall impression of the literature based on the papers you reviewed. What is your view of the utility of this research base for making policy and other applied decisions?
- Include a reference section and a separate list of the papers you reviewed (if relevant, please identify any reports/papers that were longer than 60 pages and therefore count as two papers)

Course Text:

Given the structure of the course there is no one book that is relevant to all the presentations throughout the term. For students with interests in the role of families in child development, a recent book by Jane Waldfogel provides a comprehensive review of recent research for children of different ages.

Waldfogel, J. *What Children Need*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.

This book can be purchased at chapters.com or www.amazon.com or www.amazon.ca

Assignment Lateness:
In keeping with SPPG's policy, late assignment will attract a penalty of 3% for the first full late day, and 1% for every day late after that.

Assignments that are late for medical, religious or related reasons require an authoritative note from a doctor, religious or other official explaining the lateness. Lateness for other, exceptional reasons will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Class Schedule

Date	Topic / Speaker
Jan. 10th	Introduction. **Michal Perlman**, Applied Psychology and Human Development, OISE, University of Toronto What does the developmental perspective offer people who develop public policy for children? **Required Readings:** Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. Developmental Psychology, 22(6), 723-742. Bowlby, J. (1982). Attachment and loss: Retrospect and prospect. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 52(4), 664-678. Ellis, B.J., Boyce, W.T., Belsky, J., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M.J., Van Ijzendoorn, M.H. (2011). Differential susceptibility to the environment: An evolutionary–neurodevelopmental theory (2011). Development and Psychopathology 23(1), 7-28.
Jan. 17th	Frameworks: Economics. **Michael Baker**, Economics, University of Toronto Title: How do we evaluate public policy for children and the evidence used to support it? **Required Readings:** Waldfogel, J., What children need. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press, 2006. Introduction and Chapter 1. Baker, M. (2011). Universal early childhood interventions: What is the evidence base? Heckman, J. J. (2011). The Economics of Inequality: The value of Early childhood education. *American Educator,* 31 – 47. **Recommended Reading:** Dahl, G. B., Løken, K. V., Mogstad, M., & Salvanes, K. V. (2013). What is the case for paid maternity leave? *Review of Economics and Statistics*, (0).

Jan. 24th	Frameworks: Political Science. **Linda White**, Political Science. University of Toronto. **Required Readings:** Linda White (2014). Understanding Canada's lack of progress in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Intergovernmental Dynamics of Children's Policy Making in Canada. *International Journal of Children's Rights,* 22, 164-188. Dunn, C. (2016). Harper without jeers, Trudeau without cheers: Assessing 10 years of intergovernmental relations. *IRPP Insight, 8*, 1-30. Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy. Granofsky, T., Corak, M., Johal, S and Zon, N. (2016) Renewing Canada's social architecture. Mowat Centre, the Caledon Institute for Social Policy and the Institute for Research on Public Policy. **Recommended Reading:** Friendly, M. and Linda A. White (2012). "No-lateralism': Paradoxes in Early Childhood Education and Care Policy in the Canadian Federation." Canadian Federalism: Performance, Effectiveness and Legitimacy. 3nd ed. Eds. Grace Skogstad and Herman Bakvis. Toronto: Oxford University Press: 183-202.
Jan. 31st	Frameworks: Human Rights. **Martha Friendly**, Childcare Resource and Research Unit (CRRU). Title: Children's rights and early childhood education and care: Is it a right, and what difference does a rights-based approach make? **Required Readings:** **https://youtu.be/y1C1WIu63lk** Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada and Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC. (2011). A tale of two Canada's: Implementing rights in early childhood. Vancouver. Online at http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/res/rights/ccright_tale2can_brief.pdf. See related documents online at http://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/12/03/child-care-right-supporting-documents-united-nations-pre-se. See, as well, http://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/12/09/canadas-third-review-ready-or-not

	Friendly, M. (2006). *Canadian early learning and child care and the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (2006). Martha Friendly. Occasional paper 22. Resource and Research Unit (online at http://www.childcarecanada.org/pubs/op22/index.html). In Howe, B. and Covell, K. (eds) (2007). A *Question of Commitment: Children's Rights in Canada.* Waterloo, Wilfred Laurier University Press. **Recommended Readings:** Moss, P. 2007. Bringing politics into the nursery: Early childhood education as a democratic practice. Working Paper 43. Bernard van Leer Foundation: The Hague, The Netherlands (online at: http://www.bernardvanleer.org/Bringing_politics_into_the_nursery_Early_childhood_education_as_a_democratic_practice) Prentice, S. (2009). High Stakes: The 'Investable' Child and the Economic Reframing of Childcare. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society. 34*(3), 687 - 710. http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdf/10.1086/593711 **Student Presentation (#1)**
Feb. 7th	How do we know what we know? Assessing the quality of research evidence. **Olesya Falenchuk**, OISE/UT. 1:30 – 4:30. **Required Readings:** Nielsen, R.B. (2011). Cues to Quality in Quantitative Research Papers. Family and Consumer Research Sciences Journal, 40(1), 85-89. de Neufville, J.I. (1978). Validating Policy Indicators. Policy Sciences, 10(2/3), 171-188. Shavelson, R.J., McDonell, L., and Oakes, J. (1991). Steps in Designing an Indicator System. Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation, 2(12). Onwuegbuzie, A.J., and Johnson, R.B. (2006). The Validity Issue in Mixed Research. Research in the School, 13(1), 48-63. Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. The Quantitative Report, 8(4), 597-607. Mays, N., and Pope, C. 2000. "Assessing Quality in Quantitative Research." In Qualitative Research in health care. 2nd Ed. London: BMJ Books, 52-54. Rowan, M., and Huston, P. (1997). Qualitative Research Articles: Information for Authors and Peer Reviewers. Canadian Medical Association Journal, 157(10), 1442-1446. Greenhalgh, T. 1997. How to Read a Paper: Assessing the Methodological

	Quality of Published Papers. BMJ: London, UK. (online at: http://www.bmj.com/content/315/7109/672.full) **Recommended reading:** Shavelson, R.J., McDonell, M., and Oakes, J. (1989) Indicators for Monitoring mathematics and Science Education. Santa Monica, CA. RAND Corporation.
Feb. 14th	Meta-analysis: Challenges and Benefits. Integrations of findings on quality of early childhood education and care programs and child outcomes. Pai, M., McCulloch, M., Gorman, J. D., Pai, N., Enanoria, W., Kennedy, G., ... & Colford Jr, J. M. (2003). Systematic reviews and meta-analyses: an illustrated, step-by-step guide. *The National medical journal of India*, *17*(2), 86-95. Perlman, M., Falenchuk, O., Fletcher, B., McMullen, M., Beyene, J., Shah, P (in press). A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of a Measure of Staff/Child Interaction Quality (the Classroom Assessment Scoring System) in Early Childhood Education and Care Settings and Child Outcomes. *PLOS ONE.* **Student Presentation (#2)**
Feb. 21st	Reading week – OISE Students to develop criteria for rating quality of evidence and test it out by reviewing a paper in pairs and comparing their ratings.
Feb 28th	Risk Based Child Care Licensing. **Dana Green plus staff.** Manager, Program, Policy & Operations (Acting), Early Years Division, Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch, Program, Policy and Operations Unit. (and wonderful SPPG grad!). Required reading: http://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en16/v2_102en16.pdf Also have a look at: https://rikinstitute.com/ This website contains a lot of information about quality oversight and licensing. You are not expected to read through all the content, but rather to read through what seems interesting and we will discuss in class. **Student Presentation (#3)** **Due: groups will submit their draft quality of evidence rating criteria**
March 7th	Risk Based Child Care Licensing: What might such a model look like using City of Toronto ECEC quality data? **Petr Varmuza,** University of Toronto.

	<mark>ASSIGNED AQI READING</mark> **Student Presentation (#4)**
March 14th	Reading week – SPPG Students to develop criteria for rating quality of evidence.
March 21st	**Discussion of draft quality of evidence rating criteria** <mark>ASSINGED CRITERIA READING</mark> **Student Presentation (#5)**
March 28th	**Rupert Gordon**. Director, Poverty Reduction Strategy Office at Ministry of Community and Social Services, Government of Ontario - Treasury Board Secretariat, Government of Ontario Required Readings: https://www.ontario.ca/page/poverty-reduction-strategy-annual-report-2016 http://otf.ca/sites/default/files/indicators_chart_en_04.pdf http://otf.ca/sites/default/files/lprf_guidelines-en.pdf (especially the parts titled sections 1-5) Recommended Readings: http://otf.ca/sites/default/files/en-prs-bklt-aug-28th-approved-final-s.pdf https://www.ontario.ca/page/basic-income-pilot-consultation **Student Presentation (#6)**
April 4th	The Wonderful Dance of Research, Practice and Policy, **Charles Pascal,** OISE/UT. With Our Best Future in Mind Implementing Early Learning in Ontario. http://www.earlychildhoodeducatorsonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/With-Our-Best-Future-in-Mind-20091.pdf **Student Presentation (#7)** Course wrap-up