

PAI 897

Lecture 1: What is policy analysis?

Chapter 2, Weimer and Vining.

Simple:

If we pass bill A, we will have as a consequence outcome X.

Complex:

If we pass bill A, using strategy S, we will have as a result aggregate social costs C, aggregate social benefits B, and disproportionate benefits for group 1 and disproportionate costs for group 2.

Policy advice is informed by social values.

Policy analysts, in either public or private settings, have clients for their advice who can participate in public decision making.

Policy analysis is client-oriented advice relevant to public decisions informed by social values.

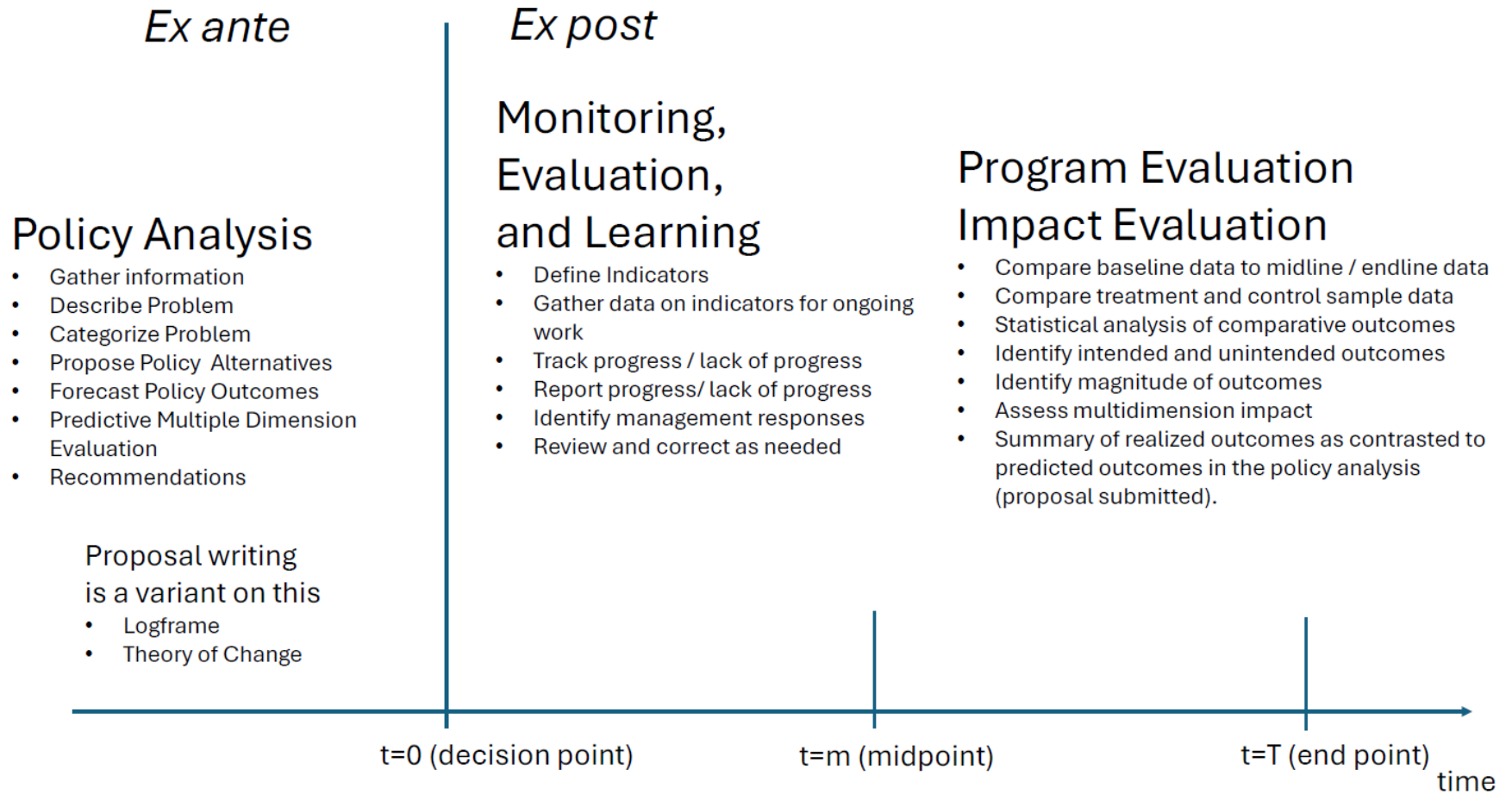
Break down pieces:

Client oriented

Public decision

Social values

Social Science Approaches



Example: Table 14.2: Predicting Impacts of Alternative Policies for Dealing with Central Business District (CBD) Traffic Congestion (from Weimer and Vining, p. 351)

Goals	Impact Category	Alternatives		
		Current Policy	Double CBD Parking Fees	Create Express Bus Lane
Better Access to CBD	1. Number of rush-hour vehicles per workday	50,000	45,000-48,000	44,000-48,000
	2. Average rush-hour delay for vehicles in minutes	12	6-10	14-18
	3. Number of commuter bus riders per workday	30,000	31,000-33,000	32,000-36,000
	4. Average rush-hour delay for bus commuters in minutes	12	6-10	2-4
Fiscal Health	1. Revenues from parking fees and bus fares in excess of current policy in millions of dollars per year	0	13.0 to 20.8	-0.52 to -0.13
	2. Direct costs in excess of current policy in millions per year	0	0.12	3.5
Citywide Social and Economic Well-Being	1. Change in CBD business activity	None	Slight decrease	Slight increase
	2. Change in profits of private parking firms in millions per year	0	13.0	-1.6 to -0.09
	3. Parking congestion in nearby residential neighborhoods	Moderate	High	Moderate
Public Acceptability	1. Public acceptability	Diffuse complaints	Drivers and CBD business owners oppose	Drivers oppose, bus riders favor

Policy Analysis by contrast to other Social Science approaches:

	Major Objective	Client	Common Style	Time Constraints	General Weakness
Academic	Construct theories for understanding society	“truth”, other scholars, journals	Rigorous methods for constructing and testing theories	Tenure!	Can be irrelevant to decision making
Policy Research	Predict impacts of changes in variables that can be altered by public policy.	Actors in the policy arena	Application of formal methodology to policy relevant questions	Some deadline	Translation of findings to specific policy actions
Planning	Define and achieve desirable future state for society	The public interest as professionally defined	Established rules and professional norms	Long term future	Lack of political context and evolving circumstances
Public Admin.	Efficiently execute programs established by a political process	The public interest as embodied in mandated program	Managerial and legal	Tied to budget cycles / policy details	Does not look at other options
Journalism	Focus public attention on societal problems	General public	Descriptive	Deadline issue, topical window	Lack of depth and balance
Policy Analysis	Systematic comparison and evaluation of alternatives available to public actors for solving social problems	Specific person or institution as decision maker.	Synthesis of existing research and theory to predict consequence of alternative policies	Analysis deadline tied to implementation schedule of policy	Myopia due to client orientation and time pressure.

Academic Social Science Research

Some examples from journals in sub-fields related to Policy Analysis.

ECONOMICS

Econometrica

[http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1468-0262](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1468-0262)

POLICY RESEARCH

[HTTP://ONLINELIBRARY.WILEY.COM/JOURNAL/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1541-1338](HTTP://ONLINELIBRARY.WILEY.COM/JOURNAL/10.1111/(ISSN)1541-1338)

If we attempt to distinguish between policy analysis and policy research we find policy research less tied to political decision makers / less client oriented.

It is more geared toward influencing the overall policy environment rather than policy maker.

PLANNING

<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cppr20/current>



(Planned economies: we will turn a five year plan into a four year one)

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/pa/>

Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory

<http://jpart.oxfordjournals.org/>

POLICY ANALYSIS

Journal of Policy Analysis and Management

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/%28ISSN%291520-6688>

Specific for policy analysis focused on education

<http://cepa.stanford.edu/publications/journal-articles>

Or on Energy

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/energy-policy>

Policy analysis as a profession

Grown as a field since the 1980s.

“Policy Analysis” position in government offices.

<http://www.publicservicecareers.org/>

Places one might find such a person:

Academics

Research Institutes

International organizations

Federal

State

Local

Departments, legislatures

Consulting firms, research institutes, trade organizations,
NGOs.

Office of Management and Budget;

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/>

Council of Economic Advisors

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/cea/>

Congressional Budget Office

<http://www.cbo.gov/>

Government Accountability Office

<http://www.gao.gov/>

Office of the Assistant Secretary, Planning and
Evaluation.

<https://aspe.hhs.gov/>

Some are not government, but industry group

America's Health Insurance Plans

<http://www.ahip.org/>

Four functions:

- 1) Desk officer. Point of contact and coordination on key issue. Monitoring other organization working on this topic. Prepared to make assessments and statements on this issue.
- 2) Policy development. Work on policy options papers and help formulate proposals.
- 3) Policy research and oversight. Contract out money for studies to be done. Review research plans, award contracts, review research conducted under contract.
- 4) Firefighting – be ready to respond quickly to requests for analysis from many different actors in the policy making apparatus.

What do you need to be a policy analyst?

- 1) The ability to gather, organize and communicate information in situations where deadlines are strict and access to information is limited / specialized.
- 2) An ability to put the problem in question in context of a larger theoretical structure:
 - a. What is the case for policy as a remedy
- 3) Technical skills to predict and evaluate the consequences of alternative predictions/ an ability to express in the language of the policy world (economics and statistics) the alternative outcomes.
- 4) Understanding of political and organizational behavioral context of the client. Presenting information that they can use in their particular setting in a way that they can use it.
- 5) Ethical framework in which to conduct analysis and present findings.

A side tour of the language of logic and how we speak;
the logical implications used in policy analysis.

Logical conditions: Necessary conditions and Sufficient conditions.

Is one thing a precondition for another thing to happen?
How one condition is logically related to another condition. The first condition can be:

- 1) Necessary but not sufficient.
- 2) Sufficient but not necessary
- 3) Necessary and sufficient.
- 4) Neither necessary nor sufficient – not logically related.

for the second condition to occur.

How is implementation of policy B logically related to outcome A?

A necessary condition is in the nature of a prerequisite.

Statement A is true only if another statement B is true, then “A only if B” or “If A, then B”.

If we want policy outcome A to become ‘true’, then we need to do action B to get that to happen.

B is a necessary condition for establishing the truth of A.

B is the condition, A is what we are trying to find out about.

Example: A, our outcome, is establishing the truth of a person being a father.

If a person is a father (A), then they are a male (B).

Being male (B) is a necessary condition for being a father (A). It is not a sufficient condition. One can be male (B) and not be a father (A). Other things have to happen besides B.

We are trying to find out something about what it means to be a father, B is a condition that goes along with being a father.

If we turn it around, Being a father (A) is not required for you to be a male (B)

It could be true, but one can be male where the condition 'a father' is not true.

Silly example: If Felix is a cat (A), then Felix hates baths (B).

Felix is a cat only if he hates baths.

If A (cat), then B (hates baths) since all cats hate baths.

Hating baths is a necessary condition for being a cat.

Can we turn it around: If you tell me Felix meets condition B (hates baths), then can I conclude A Felix is a cat (cat)?

If Felix hates baths, can we assume Felix is a cat?

No, Felix might be a four year old boy for example.

Felix hating baths is a necessary condition for Felix to be a cat, but it is not sufficient. It is one characteristic of being a cat, but this characteristic is shared by non-cats as well.

B must be true for A to be true but B alone being true does not guarantee us that A will be true.

Is our policy (Say Yes to Education - B) a necessary but not sufficient condition for college completion rates of City of Syracuse students to improve (A)?

Sufficient but not necessary.

Consider the situation where A is true if B is true, but A can be true when B is not true.

B is a sufficient condition for A, but B is not a necessary condition for A.

A if B.

If B, then A.

A is “one can get to Chicago from Syracuse”,
B is “There is a plane that flies to Chicago from Syracuse”,

The truth of B (there is a plane) suffices for the establishment of the truth of A (one can get there from here), but B (there is a plane) is not a necessary condition for A (one can get there) to be true.

B is a sufficient condition for A but not a necessary one.

A sufficient but not necessary condition.

B is a military invasion. A is the fall of an undesirable regime. B might be sufficient but not necessary condition to achieve A. Or perhaps it is what we turn to next....

Necessary and Sufficient.

Consider where A and B imply each other.

A is “it is the month of February”. B is “there are less than 30 days in the month”.

A is a necessary and sufficient condition for B, and vice versa.

A if and only if B.

There is no way for A to be true without B being true.
There is no way for B to be true without A also being true.

If A is false, there is no way B is true. If B is false there is no way A is true.

It is a definition.

A necessary and sufficient condition.

The only way the regime will fall is military intervention.
Military intervention is the only way to make the regime fall.

Point A is on the production function \Leftrightarrow Point A is technologically efficient.