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This introduction applies analytic models to policymaking challenges, equipping students with tools to evaluate core policymaking dilemmas. Students are introduced to the approaches of game theory, social choice theory, research design and causal inference. Key terms, along with current research, are highlighted to build an understanding of public policy study. Exercises and thought questions enable students to develop skills to assess public policy dilemmas. The analytically rigorous style of the text is accessible and avoids lengthy descriptions. Supplementary resources for instructors include extensive notes, ancillaries, and online resources, including a test bank, quizzes, and editable lecture slides for all chapters that can be modified to fit particular courses. This textbook is suitable for introductory public policy and public administration courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

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Democratic Politics making

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An Analytic Approach

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Democratic Policymaking

An Analytic Approach

This introduction applies analytic models to policymaking challenges, equipping students with tools to evaluate core policymaking dilemmas. Students are introduced to the approaches of game theory, social choice theory, research design, and causal inference. Key terms, along with current research, are highlighted to build an understanding of public policy study. Exercises and thought questions enable students to develop skills to assess public policy dilemmas. The analytically rigorous style of the text is accessible and avoids lengthy descriptions. Supplementary resources for instructors include extensive notes, ancillaries, and online resources, including a test bank, quizzes, and editable lecture slides for all chapters that can be modified to fit particular courses. This textbook is suitable for introductory public policy and public administration courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

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Preface: *Democratic Policymaking*

Public policy is the core of politics. Understanding how public policy is created is an essential component of a liberal education. In this book we challenge students to think critically about why policies are the way they are. Developing such an understanding among students can help them work to demand and create better public policies.

We wrote this book as a result of our experience teaching introductory public policy courses over the course of a decade. Our goal was to combine the dense policy description that often is provided in undergraduate texts with the analytic rigor that is available in more advanced policy analysis books and research that draws from academic and scientific sources. We taught from a blend of descriptive texts and more analytic texts and found it difficult to hit the right note: the books were typically too much of one and too little of the other, too much of both, or too little of both. We believe this book strikes a good balance between the descriptive and analytic. We've taught versions of the book to large classes over the past four semesters and have received positive reviews on it from students. We hope you have the same experience.

Democratic Policymaking assumes that students have a rudimentary understanding of political systems, on the level of a good high school civics course. Students who have completed an introductory American or comparative government course should be able to understand the text with little difficulty. We have taught the text to undergraduate students from a variety of majors, including the social sciences, business, natural sciences, and liberal arts, and we have encountered little difficulty in their ability to comprehend the materials.

We apply a broad theoretical framework that allows students to analyze core challenges in the formation and implementation of all public policies; we apply the scientific method to evaluate empirical evidence on public policies; and we draw on contemporary professional public policy scholarship. We believe this distinguishes our approach in *Democratic Policymaking* from that of the majority of texts that are available for general public policy courses.

Our analytical approach focuses on what individuals want and how institutions, interactions with others, and the context in which individuals operate affect the policies that are produced. We highlight the value of the scientific method, which is critical for evaluating and improving public policy. The scientific method leads to better policy evaluation because its process is transparent. Students who understand the scientific method will have a better understanding of the key questions to ask when someone presents evidence in support of a position. Those students will understand that not all evidence or all data is equal. Discriminating between good data and bad data is a key part of a liberal education and aids the creation and implementation of public policy. We pursue these goals by drawing on contemporary scholarship. We draw on recent, scientifically based works as the evidentiary base for our substantive evaluations of policy because such research forms the foundation of public policy as an academic field and the motivation for many real-world public policies.

The first four chapters provide the theoretical and analytic foundation for the text. Following those chapters, instructors may choose among substantive policy topics they wish to teach in a given semester. Each of the substantive chapters incorporates one or more of the analytic tools, and we note which tools are being emphasized in the beginning of each chapter, so instructors may choose based on substance or analytics what they wish to teach, or may teach the entire text over the course of the semester.

To summarize, *Democratic Policymaking*

- Introduces and applies a few models that are helpful for students learning about public policy.
- Helps students to learn by example by applying the models that are included in substantive chapters.
- Provides a more rigorous analytic framework than most introductory texts.
- Provides students and instructors with a full set of slides for use with each chapter.
- Provides instructors with a test bank.
- Uses examples from existing scientific and public policy studies to illustrate important concepts.
- Blends elements of introductory and more advanced public policy texts so that instructors who wish to instruct students on elements of critical thinking may do so in a single text.
- Enables instructors to pick and choose among the substantive topics they wish to cover in a class.

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