

Hebrew University's Intensive Policy Analysis Workshops for APPAM Teaching Workshop  
Abstract by Jennifer Oser, September 19, 2011

Although a number of prominent scholars of policy analysis have emerged from Israeli academia, the study of policy analysis as an academic discipline is in early stages of development in Israel. While courses on policy analysis have been taught in a number of different academic settings for many years, it is only in the past decade that Israel's most prominent academic institution by most measures, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, founded a dedicated School for Public Policy and Government. As a member of the teaching team of Hebrew University's intensive policy analysis courses for four years while pursuing my PhD research, I drew on my previous experience as a teaching fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government to assist the School in pedagogical development of the policy workshops. I am currently a postdoctoral scholar at Harvard's Multidisciplinary Program on Inequality and Social Policy, and the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication, and have been encouraged by Hebrew University to share our pedagogical practices, and to inform my colleagues of the best practices in the field.

Hebrew University's School of Public Policy and government teaches policy analysis to three distinct groups of students. First, the Honor's masters program trains promising young students committed to public service in a two-year research track curriculum. Second, the 'Atidim' (future) program is a joint undergraduate-masters program targeted towards students in the geographic and socio-economic periphery who commit to public service internships and are assured of high-quality public service employment with the successful completion of the program. Both the Honor's masters and the Atidim program students matriculate through two full years of policy analysis courses. The third group of students trained by the School are senior public servants in the Israeli government working in every field possible of Israeli public service. This year the School was awarded an exclusive contract by the Israeli government to train the most senior level of public servants.

The main topics I would like to focus on in terms of both presenting our pedagogical materials and learning from best practices in the field include: (1) Balancing between the presentation of theory and practice for the different student groups we train (2) Adapting the largely U.S.-centered literature on the policy analysis process to contexts such as Israel with very different institutional settings of opportunities and constraints (3) Best practices for connecting students with real-world policy analysis opportunities. (4) Teaching policy *writing* and policy *analysis* at the same time - best practices on improving students' analytical writing (5) How much class time is too much? For the Honor's and Atidim program they have two full years of policy workshop study. We would be interested in learning more about focused, time-limited workshop exercises that depart from the usual academic schedule that seem to be common in the American policy analysis teaching setting.

Attached please find the most recent syllabi we have translated into English from 2009 for the two policy workshop courses for the Honor's program: the introduction to policy analysis, and advanced policy workshop.