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Political Economy for Public Policy

Ethan Bueno de Mesquita

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This textbook uses modern political economy to introduce students of political science, government, economics, and public policy to the politics of the policymaking process. The book's distinct political economy approach has two virtues. By developing general principles for thinking about policymaking, it can be applied across a range of issue areas. It also unifies the policy curriculum, offering coherence to standard methods for teaching economics and statistics, and drawing connections between fields. The book begins by exploring the normative foundations of

political theory, social choice theory, and the Paretian and utilitarian underpinnings of policy analysis. It then introduces game theoretic models of social dilemmas—externalities, coordination problems, and commitment problems—that create opportunities for policy to improve social welfare. Finally, it shows how the political process creates technological and incentive constraints on government that shape policy outcomes. Throughout, concepts and models are illustrated and reinforced with discussions of empirical evidence and case studies. This textbook is essential for all students of public policy and for anyone interested in the most current methods influencing policymaking today. Comprehensive approach to politics and policy suitable for advanced undergraduates and graduate students. Models unify policy curriculum through methodological coherence. Exercises at the end of every chapter. Self-contained appendices cover necessary game theory. Extensive discussion of cases and applications.

"This book brings some much-needed clarity and rigor to the analysis of public policy: What are the aims of policy, what are the inescapable dilemmas and trade-offs, and what are the pitfalls in government action? Above all, its essential message is that effective policy analysis is impossible without taking account of the political realities and the difficulties of implementation."--Diane Coyle, author of *GDP: A Brief but Affectionate History*

"This book offers a comprehensive introduction to analytical methods for helping policymakers and concerned citizens think about practical questions of public policy. In clear, logical steps, Bueno de Mesquita probes the difficulties of getting people to agree on good government policies, and teaches readers how to anticipate the political and economic constraints which can limit the feasible scope of potentially beneficial reforms."--Roger Myerson, University of Chicago

"This is an amazing book. Not only is it a superb pedagogical tool for teachers of public policy, political science, and political economy, it is also an exemplar of deep, systematic thinking about politics, policy, and the contexts in which governments and the governed, parties and interest groups, and politicians and citizens interact."--Kenneth A. Shepsle, Harvard University

"I know of no other book like *Political Economy for Public Policy*, in terms of its intention, ambition, and skill. With a terrific range of topics and masterful exposition, it is an excellent textbook with many clever and attractive features."--Charles M. Cameron, Princeton University

"This ambitious and necessary book provides an advanced introduction to public policy that is built upon a foundation of modern political economy. Filled with examples and applications, the book offers a set of models that are accessible and flexible enough to adapt to a variety of settings."--Michael M. Ting, Columbia University

"This valuable book could revolutionize the study of politics within policy schools."--Craig Volden, University of Virginia

From the Author: I have created a webpage with downloadable (and editable) lecture notes for every chapter of the book. Anyone using the book in a class is more than welcome to these. They are available here: <http://home.uchicago.edu/~bdm/pepp.html>

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