SPEA – A459 (Fall 2011)
Public Policy and the Arts

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Course Description

This course considers the principal aspects of cultural policy in the US and elsewhere. Topics include the ends and means of government support for the arts, multiculturalism, freedom of expression, copyright, other legal rights of artists, and cultural diversity.

I will not approach these topics as an “arts advocate”. Rather, I look at these topics as someone interested in sound social and economic policy towards well-articulated goals, and whatever positions for which we might choose to advocate would follow from that method, somewhat more disinterested than we often see from advocacy organizations. I believe this critical approach leads to a stronger ability to advocate on behalf of what policies you come to see as valuable.

Course Content and Readings

Note there are three sorts of readings in this course: (1) Documents on the web, where you simply follow the URL as provided; (2) readings to be posted on the OnCourse site; and (3) Articles from journals.

All of the journal articles listed below are available online in the IU library. To find articles, go to the IU homepage, then:

- Click “Libraries”
- Click “Resource Gateway”
- Click “Online Full-Text Journals”
- Type the “Journal Title” in the space provided, and click “Search”
- Often a few possible links are given – choose one that includes the year you are looking for.

If you have any troubles, let me know!

Some Useful Websites

You may wish to check these sites on a daily basis, for news from the art world:

www.artsjournal.com
artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com
Course Outline

This is the plan, although amendments are possible due to unforeseen events, interesting topics that become especially newsworthy, new publications, etc.

Why Public Funding for the Arts?

August 29 & 31: First Thoughts

What makes the arts so special amongst all the other goods and services on offer in the economy that governments the world over choose to provide tax-financed support for artists and arts organizations? Does it matter whether there is broad public support for “high” art? Does the state have a role in trying to shape the culture preferences of the populace?


September 7: The Economic Approach to Public Funding

Economists often find justification for public subsidy of an activity where there are externalities, which is where the benefits of an activity go beyond those taking part in the buying and selling. Are there externalities in the arts?


September 12: The “Economic Impact” Study

In the past decade in the US arts advocates have used studies that purport to show the “economic impact” of the arts in a local community to justify subsidy. What do these studies actually tell us?


http://mirushto.blogspot.com/2009/05/worst-arts-advocacy-of-year-so-far.html

September 14: Federal and State Arts Funding in the US.
An overview.
NEA website: www.arts.gov

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies website: http://www.nasaa-arts.org/

Indiana Arts Commission website: www.in.gov/arts.


This is the “official” history published by the NEA; the first half is chronological, and the second half is by genre of art – you do not need to read the whole thing for this class, but it is a useful reference. We return to the history of the NEA later, in the classes devoted to public opinion and to freedom of expression and public funding of the arts.

September 19: The National Endowment for the Arts

What is the NEA for? What is the vision of the current Chairman?


September 21: Arts Education Policy

Guest lecturer Scott Jones – readings TBA.

September 26: State Arts Agencies

What is the mission of state arts agencies? Do they, should they, replicate the NEA at the state level, or is there something distinctive in their role? What is the variation across states in level of government support?


Support for Private Giving to the Arts in the US

September 28: The income tax and estate tax deductions

The federal subsidy of arts organizations through the income tax deduction for charitable contributions to nonprofit arts organizations is much larger than the amounts given by government in direct subsidy, and this is something quite distinctive compared to other countries. What are the implications of this model of support?


Rushton, M. “The personal income tax and the charitable deduction revisited.”

This is a paper I’m working on concerning the proposal to limit the value of the charitable tax deduction for high-income earners – I will post the current draft during the week before class.


October 3: Fractional giving
What are the challenges in designing a fair treatment of charitable donations of major works of art to nonprofit museums?


Measuring Willingness to Pay for the Arts

October 5: Contingent Valuation

Can we accurately measure how much the public is willing to pay for the arts? If we could, should that be the sole way in which we measure the value of the arts?


October 10: Contingent Valuation Applications

Two examples using contingent valuation methods.


**October 12: Public Opinion in the US**

*What do opinion polls tell us about public support for the arts? What demographic factors are correlated with support for public funding?*


**In the City**

**October 17: Local Funding**

*Local arts councils in some metro areas have earmarked revenues for the arts. How should such funding mechanisms be designed, what factors should be taken into account?*


**October 19: Cultural Districts**
Why would a city designate an official cultural district? What is their purpose? Why would state governments adopt plans to give official status to some (but not all) of these local districts?


October 24: The “Creative Class” and all that

Will investment in the local arts and culture scene bring economic growth through attracting the “creative class” of entrepreneurs and innovators?


October 26: In the Country

Can “creative class” models work outside of large metropolitan areas?


Planning

October 31: Strategic Planning in Publicly-Funded Arts Councils
How does an arts council set its mission?


Copyright

Note the emphasis here is on questions of policy – for example, what sorts of works ought to be covered, whether parody ought to be fair use, whether the duration is too long – rather than on details of the law, which are covered in the Art & Law course.

November 2: The Basics

Copyright Office “Circular 1: Copyright Office Basics”
[http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ1.html]. Also be sure to check the provisions on “fair use”, at Section §107:
[http://www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap1.html#107].

November 7: Policy Issues

Conflicts will arise between copyright holders and those who would want to use their works without license. Here we consider four examples, and think about policy options for setting the scope of copyright protection.


November 9: Moral Rights
These are rights held by creators even after they have transferred ownership of a work to someone else. Do we need such rights? If they matter to an artist, couldn’t they just be put into the contract between the artist and the buyer?


Freedom of Expression

November 14 & 16: A Costs and Benefits Approach

This is a very large topic. In this course we will consider one possible way of thinking about freedom of expression, looking at the expected costs and benefits of allowing certain forms of controversial expression.


November 21: Freedom of Expression and Public Funding of the Arts


Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences v. City of New York, 64 F. Supp.2d 184 (E.D.N.Y. Nov 01, 1999).  
[http://www.museum-security.org/brooklyn%20november%201999.htm].


November 28: On the web

Thinking about internet policy as arts policy


Diversity

November 30: International

What does it mean to talk about “cultural diversity”? How would we measure it? Does it warrant special protective measures?


[http://www.gmu.edu/jbc/Tyler/culture-in-the-global-economy.PDF].


December 5: National
Should local and national government funders account for diversity in a dedicated way? What are the implications for government funding the more diverse is the local population?


December 7: Spare

A wrap-up, a chance to catch up on any topics needing a little more discussion.

December 14 (Wednesday): Final Exam 10:15 – 12:15


Evaluation and Grading

Students will prepare three short papers on topics in public policy and the arts, to be assigned later. There is a final exam December 14. The final grade will be calculated as follows:

Two best papers 30 marks each
Final exam 40 marks

The grading scale is as follows:

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SPEA Academic Policies - Academic Dishonesty

SPEA faculty do not tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty. If you have not done so, you should read the IUB Code of Student Rights,
Responsibilities, and Conduct, which can be accessed at http://dsa.indiana.edu/Code/ so you will be sure to understand what these terms mean and what penalties can be issued for academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty can result in a grade of F for the class (an F for academic dishonesty cannot be removed from the transcript). Significant violations of the Code can result in expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism is using another person's words, ideas, artistic creations, or other intellectual property without giving proper credit. According to the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct, a student must give credit to the work of another person when he does any of the following:

a. Quotes another person's actual words, either oral or written;
b. Paraphrases another person's words, either oral or written;
c. Uses another person's idea, opinion, or theory; or
d. Borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material, unless the information is common knowledge.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT:

I will make accommodations for students registered with Adaptive Educational Services (AES) on the Indianapolis campus (Phone: 317-274-3241 or e-mail AES@iupui.edu) or the Disability Services for Students Office in Franklin Hall on the Bloomington campus (Phone: 812-855-7578).