

Chapter 1: Public Policy and Politics

Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. Which statement describes government policy with regard to regulation of amusement park rides in the United States?
- A. complicated and varied across the nation, with different levels and agencies of government involved
 - B. regulated stringently by the federal government
 - C. completely unregulated
 - D. regulated by state governments

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

2. A _____ refers to the results that occur when a policy is implemented.
- A. policy output
 - B. policy outcome
 - C. policy yield
 - D. collective action

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. All of the following are examples of policy outputs except?
- A. EPA clean air regulations
 - B. poverty rates
 - C. requirements that public schools conduct achievement testing
 - D. gun control legislation

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

4. Public policy is best defined as
- A. promotion of the common good through regulatory instruments.
 - B. deconstructing a policy issue in order to study aspects of the issue.
 - C. government action taken in response to a public problem.
 - D. activities of think tanks, interest groups, and government agents to address public problems.

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. _____ refers to the institutions and political processes through which public policy choices are made.

- A. Government
- B. Federalism
- C. Policy analysis
- D. Politics

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-2: Identify key concepts associated with the study of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

6. Which of the following terms refer to deliberate critical thinking about the causes of public problems and which policy choices make the most sense to address them?

- A. policy outcomes
- B. policy analysis
- C. information context
- D. deliberative government evaluation

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-2: Identify key concepts associated with the study of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. Which statement describes the primary reason that U.S. policy making is characterized by conflict over which policies to adopt?

- A. government officials, interest groups, and citizens promote their views about what to do
- B. the political parties have become highly polarized
- C. government regulations have become increasingly complex, and government has grown
- D. the media increasingly exposes the decline in ethics among public officials

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-2: Identify key concepts associated with the study of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. Which level of government is involved in developing public policies?

- A. federal government
- B. state government
- C. municipal or city government
- D. all of these

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-2: Identify key concepts associated with the study of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

9. Government officials propose public policies in response to _____ or conditions that the public widely perceives to be unacceptable.

- A. policy outcomes
- B. market failures
- C. political crises
- D. public problems

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-2: Identify key concepts associated with the study of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

10. _____ has been defined as “who gets what, when, and how” or the exercise of power in making decisions of public policy.

- A. Equity
- B. Feasibility
- C. Government
- D. Politics

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-2: Identify key concepts associated with the study of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

11. _____ are economic justifications for why government becomes involved in societal problems.

- A. Policy impacts
- B. Policy subsystems
- C. Market failures
- D. Agenda settings

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

12. The main reason that government gets involved in addressing a public problem is to _____.

- A. ensure continuity of externalities
- B. conduct policy analysis
- C. improve policy capacity of states
- D. ensure that the general “public good” is maintained and protected

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

13. A recession is likely to affect the policies that Congress and the president adopt, to stimulate jobs. This is an example of which context affecting the development of public policy?

- A. economic context
- B. political context
- C. governing context
- D. social context

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

14. During and after the Great Recession, various governmental entities proposed policies to create jobs, increase the minimum wage, and regulate financial markets. This flurry of policy making was likely a result of which context, affecting the policy-making process?

- A. economic context
- B. cultural context
- C. defense context
- D. governing context

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

15. The ideology of individual members of Congress is an example of the _____ context that affects the development of public policy.

- A. governing
- B. social
- C. cultural
- D. political

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

16. The popularity or relative power of a political party, pressure exerted by interest groups, and the influence of third parties (such as the Tea Party) are examples of the _____, affecting how decisions are made by government.

- A. political context
- B. social context
- C. governing context
- D. economic context

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

17. The governing context affects how policy decisions are made. This context refers to _____.

A. the federal system and separation of powers.

B. values, beliefs, and attitudes.

C. conflicts, elections, and political parties.

D. inflation and unemployment.

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

18. The aging of the Baby Boom generation has led to growing interest in reform of government programs such as Medicare and Social Security. Similarly, immigration policy is in the spotlight because of the influx of immigrants to the United States. These are examples of the _____ influencing policy.

A. moral context

B. social context

C. political context

D. governing context

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

19. A systematic and organized way to evaluate problems, policy alternatives, or the effectiveness of government programs is referred to as _____.

A. policy formulation

B. policy legitimation

C. policy analysis

D. policy capacity

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

20. The United States saw an increase in environmental legislation in the 1970s due in part to pressure from environmental groups. This represents what type of rationale for government intervention?

A. economic reasons

B. moral or ethical reasons

C. market failures

D. political reasons

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

21. When the Environmental Protection Agency adopts regulations that force power plants to take into consideration the actual costs to deal with pollution and the health problems it causes, what type of market failure is the EPA addressing?

A. negative externality

B. natural monopoly

C. positive externality

D. barriers to exit and entry

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Medium

22. Education is often cited as something that benefits more than just the person getting the education; it benefits society in a number of other ways. This is called _____.

A. redistributive policy

B. positive externality

C. buoyancy of community funding

D. market-based incentives

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

23. A(n) _____ occurs when the public has incomplete information in order to make a decision or the decision is too complex and difficult for the average citizen to know how best to proceed.

A. monopoly

B. information failure

C. economic context

D. joint consumption

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

24. Negative externality and information failure are both examples of what?

- A. politics
- B. market failure
- C. political culture
- D. toll goods

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

25. Which of the following is the only type of good for which there is no market failure, and the government need not intervene to prevent it?

- A. pure private good
- B. pure public good
- C. common pool resource
- D. toll goods

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

26. Which of the following are examples of pure public goods?

- A. cable television services, electrical utilities
- B. automobiles, houses, DVDs
- C. air, water, wildlife
- D. national defense, air, public parks

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

27. A good that can be _____ is one for which one individual's consumption of the good does not interfere with another individual's consumption of the same good.

- A. jointly consumed
- B. excluded
- C. externalized
- D. collective

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

28. The Tea Party movement and other factors have led to increased polarization between political parties at the state and national levels. This polarized situation affects the ability of legislatures to enact policies. This situation describes a strong impact of the _____ context on policy making.

- A. economic
- B. social
- C. political
- D. demographic

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

29. Cable television services are an example of a _____.

- A. pure private good
- B. toll good
- C. common pool resource
- D. pure public good

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

30. Which of the following criteria for analyzing public policies examines how government officials appraise the acceptability of a particular alternative or solution?

- A. effectiveness
- B. efficiency
- C. political feasibility
- D. equity

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1-6: Describe the reasons for evaluating public policies today.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Difficulty Level: Easy

31. The “tragedy of the commons” refers to the situation in which individuals attempt to maximize their use of _____ without regard to their degradation or depletion.

- A. pure private goods
- B. toll goods
- C. common pool resources
- D. pure public goods

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

32. Federal subsidies that are only given to dairy farmers who own more than one hundred cows may raise concerns about the _____ of the policy.

- A. effectiveness
- B. efficiency
- C. equity
- D. feasibility

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1-6: Describe the reasons for evaluating public policies today.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

33. _____ argue for less government intrusion into the economy and decision making within business and industry.

- A. Liberals
- B. Conservatives
- C. Moderates
- D. Independents

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

34. A _____ is a law proposed by a state or locality for voters to approve or reject.

- A. referendum
- B. initiative
- C. recall
- D. none of these

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1-5: Explore why citizens should understand public policy

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

35. About _____ % of states allow citizen-generated initiatives.

- A. 20
- B. 30
- C. 40
- D. 50

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-5: Explore why citizens should understand public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

36. Which of the following are considered public goods?

- A. public education
- B. police protection
- C. maintenance of highways
- D. all of these

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

37. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an interagency partnership, was created in _____.

- A. 2007
- B. 2009
- C. 2011
- D. 2013

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

Short Answer

1. _____ are the authorized means for pursuing goals.

Ans: Programs

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension | Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. The _____ is a regulatory agency responsible for ensuring public safety for a wide range of consumer products.

Ans: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge | Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. The American system of governance adheres to the principle of _____.

Ans: federalism

Learning Objective: 1-2: Identify key concepts associated with the study of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

4. The United States is a _____ democracy.

Ans: representative

Learning Objective: 1-5: Explore why citizens should understand public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. _____ refers to widely held values, beliefs, and attitudes, such as trust and confidence in government and the political process, or the lack thereof.

Ans: Political culture

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

6. A _____ exists when one or several persons or companies dominate the market and can control the price of a product or service.

Ans: monopoly or oligopoly

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. _____ are goods that cannot be jointly consumed and for which exclusion is not feasible.

Ans: Common pool resources

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

8. A _____ describes a situation in which a third party gains something from a market transaction but does not pay for it.

Ans: positive externality

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

9. A market failure is an example of a(n) _____ justification for the government to enact policies.

Ans: economic

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

10. An _____ is a form of market failure in which consumers' lack complete understanding or knowledge of their options in a given transaction.

Ans: information failure

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

11. _____ are organized groups of people following the logic of collective action.

Ans: Interest groups

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

12. National defense and public parks are examples of _____, which the private sector has no incentive to provide, are jointly consumed, and cannot exclude some people from benefiting.

Ans: pure public goods

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

13. One would use the _____ criterion in an effort to evaluate how successful a policy is at meeting its goals.

Ans: effectiveness

Learning Objective: 1-6: Describe the reasons for evaluation public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

14. The policy criterion of _____ refers to the assessment of how well a policy works relative to the cost of adopting that policy.

Ans: efficiency

Learning Objective: 1-6: Describe the reasons for evaluation public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

15. _____ is a policy analysis criterion that evaluates whether elected officials are likely to find a proposed policy acceptable or not.

Ans: Political feasibility

Learning Objective: 1-6: Describe the reasons for evaluation public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

16. A course of government action taken in an attempt to address a public problem is known as a _____.

Ans: public policy

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Difficulty Level: Easy

17. Critical thinking about public problems and governmental actions to address them is the activity of _____.

Ans: policy analysis

Learning Objective: 1-2: Identify key concepts associated with the study of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

Essay

1. Choose three of the contexts that surround policy making and explain how each context can affect the decisions that are made or can influence the policy emphases that emerge. As part of your explanation of a context, give an example of how a certain context had an impact on a policy that was enacted.

Ans: Select any of five contexts (social, political, governing, economic, and cultural). For example, the governing context concerns itself with the nation's constitutional design, which includes separation of powers. Because of separation of powers, there is a requirement that in order for policy to be made, there often needs to be an agreement between the legislative and executive branches of government. This could lead to gridlock, compromise, and settling on broad policies that all can support. Things like the economy, social/demographic trends, political culture, and political power all affect the issues that get dealt with by government and how the issue is resolved. Many different examples could be given, such as the social context of the aging population and interest in Medicare or Social Security reform, and the recession and interest in bills that create jobs.

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Hard

2. How can the social context affect the development of public policy? Provide an example as part of your answer.

Ans: Changes in society such as population, age demographics, single-parent families, and so on, will shape the policy process. For example, an increase in the number of the elderly in the population may dictate attention toward issues of Medicare or Social Security.

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. What are the three major reasons for government intervention into a particular problem? Select a substantive issue/problem (e.g., social Security, environmental policy, addressing the recession, etc.) and discuss why the government may intervene for each of the reasons identified. Discuss political, moral/ethical, and market failure reasons for government intervention and what these are. Select any issues (e.g., environmental) and discuss how one might interpret government intervention from each of these reasons.

Ans: Involvement in environmental issues from a political perspective may occur because of pressure from interest groups or a change in public opinion. From a moral/ethical perspective, intervention occurs because protecting the environment for future generations is ethically the right thing to do. It also represents a market failure in which a lot of environmental policy is based on negative externalities.

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Difficulty Level: Hard

4. One type of market failure occurs when markets cannot provide for the public good. Explain the two criteria that determine whether a good is private or public.

Ans: The ability to exclude someone from getting the good, which usually occurs through pricing, and whether a good can be jointly consumed. Jointly consumed goods are those multiple persons can consume without exhausting them, such as, utilities, national defense, and air quality.

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. What is a public good, and why does the government provide and/or protect public goods?

Ans: A pure public good is one that can be jointly consumed and exclusion of which is not feasible. Government provides these goods in order to ensure that the goods are provided or that they are provided in a particular way (e.g., national defense).

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

6. Discuss two reasons why it is beneficial for citizens to study public policy.

Ans: It will help citizens participate more effectively in the policy and political process by providing them with a way of examining issues and alternatives in a more thoughtful way.

Learning Objective: 1-5: Explore why citizens should understand public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis.

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. How are criteria used to evaluate public policy? Discuss the criteria that policy analysts use to evaluate an existing or proposed policy and the focus of each criterion.

Ans: Effectiveness, how well a policy will address the public problem it is designed to alleviate; efficiency, how well it works relative to the cost; equity, whether the policy affects subgroups of people equally; political feasibility, whether the policy will be acceptable in the eyes of government officials.

Learning Objective: 1-6: Describe the reasons for evaluation public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. Ensuring the safety of amusement park rides illustrates the purpose and nature of public policy. Discuss the purpose of policy making, reasons that government gets involved in the solution of public problems, and the factors that make policy making so complex.

Ans: Purpose is to promote the public good; government gets involved for political, moral, or economic reasons, and it gets complex because of issues of federalism and the way our government works, politics, how the various contexts can affect policy making, and ultimately the role of government in a free market or capitalist society.

Learning Objective: 1-1: Define and explain the nature of public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Medium

9. Examine the four kinds of market failures that lead to government involvement in public policy. For each type of market failure, discuss the following: (a) the nature of the failure, that is, what it looks like and how it occurs; (b) an illustrative example; and (c) the way in which government may address the failure.

Ans: Monopolies: when one person or company controls and dominates the market, many examples are possible, and all examples should show dominance by one company.

Externalities: Negative: two parties interact in a market, and as a result of that transaction, a third party is harmed. Many examples are given of negative externalities of pollution due to manufacturing or emissions. Positive: a transaction between two parties benefits a third party, such as education. Government will invest in the support of these transactions because of the benefit to society.

Information failure: situations in which consumers don't have complete information needed for a transaction in the market. Examples of information failures: health insurance policies, safety of drugs and food, and financial markets. Government intervenes to protect consumers when they are not able to get or understand the information that will help them choose wisely on their own.

Markets generally are not concerned with the public good: Other than pure private goods, the government may need to get involved to protect the public good for the other types of goods. Many examples can be used. Government can use a variety of tools to regulate, manage, and create programs to protect the public good.

Learning Objective: 1-4: Examine the reasons for governmental involvement in public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Difficulty Level: Hard

10. Describe the various ways that citizens can have an impact on the policy-making process.

Ans: Citizens can become educated about policies and become more knowledgeable about the issues that policies attempt to address and the proposed solutions. They can join interest groups and collectively analyze issues to advocate for desired policy solutions. They can make their views known in order to influence government officials.

Learning Objective: 1-5: Explore why citizens should understand public policy.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Easy

11. Policy making does not occur in a vacuum. Explain and provide an example of each of the various contexts that surround policy making and how that context can influence the policies that are enacted.

Ans: Social context: demographic trends and how citizens relate to one another; economic context: the state of the economy, employment, poverty, and government budgets; political context: the conduct of the two major parties and their positions.

Learning Objective: 1-3: Explain the different contexts in which public policy is made.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Difficulty Level: Medium