

**Программа учебной дисциплины
"Think tanks as policy actors"**

Утверждена
Академическим советом ООП
№1 dated 27.06.2017

Author	Dmitry Zaytsev
Number of credits	4
Contact hours	44
Self-study hours	108
Курс	2
Educational format	Without use of online course

I. Aim, Results of Mastering the Discipline and Prerequisites

The objective of the discipline " Think tanks as a policy actors " is to introduce students into processes of policy advisory and intellectual support of policy-making. The world is becoming more complex and think tanks help us to bridge the gap between knowledge and policy. This may be a common denominator in any discussion of think tanks. While all think tanks may be characterised by such a general definition – to bring knowledge and expertise to bear on the policymaking process – not all of them do the same things, have the same concept of making their expertise relevant for policy formulation or have the same degree of financial, intellectual and legal independence. How do think tanks produce knowledge? How influential are they in advising on policy formulation? Do they sell objective expertise or partisan advice and is there a need for a pluralistic and balanced think tank set-up?

By the end of the course, the students are expected to:

- **Know** definition of think tanks and their basic distinctive features from other institutes of intellectual policy support, methodological approaches to the analysis of a role and a place of think tanks in political process, function and forms of their participation in political process, a possible set of resources and strategies of think tanks, types of think tanks, based on their role in political process, types of analytical products of think tanks;
- **To be able** to structure kinds of the centers on their role in political process, to find in the Russia analogues of the foreign think tanks for an estimation valid and forecasting of the future role of the Russian think tanks in the Russian policy;
- **Make** their own research on activities of the chosen Russian think-tank and comparing it to a similar foreign think tank, upon the clearly defined criteria and their influence on political process in respected countries.

Before studying of the given course students should master following themes:

- Concept of a public policy, political process, agents and actors of a policy.
- Should own skills of the political analysis, independent search of interpretations of the data about the research centers in Russia and abroad.

The course is intended for professionals in the following areas:

- In think tanks and structures, PR-agencies, consulting firms, etc.;
- In state bodies and municipal authority;
- In corporations of business;
- In the non-governmental and international organizations.

II. Content of the Course

Topic 1 Introduction

What is a think tank? Dilemmas in think tanks' definition: autonomy, applied re-search, power-influence-impact. Conceptualization of think tanks in a broader context.

Why think tanks became Global phenomenon? Think tanks' proliferation and networking around the Globe, expansion in public policy, and their power development. Russia in the global context.

Topic 2. Evolution of intellectual support of policy-making: from advisers to expert organizations

History of different ways to intellectually support policy-making. Who are the experts? Expert networks vs expert organizations. Formal and informal advisory practices.

Topic 3. Think tanks' influence on decision making process: problems and methods of evaluation

Multidimensional think tank typology: ideological think tanks, civil think tanks, institutes for political research, academic think tanks, think tanks working in "open market environment", think tanks working on state contract.

Existing think tanks' typologies: differences between think tanks and traditional scientific research organizations; between public policy centers and interest groups; analytical centers and public policy centers. Comparative analysis of the technologies deployed by US think tanks.

Topic 4. How influential in policy-making process think tanks could be and how to evaluate this influence?

Methods to identify influential political actors: positional, reputational & decisional. Think tank's influence estimation: cases and methods. Contextual factors determining think tanks' capability to influence decision-makers. Russian think tank's influence estimation: case-study of contextual factors in Russian environment. Problems of think tanks' influence estimation. Positional and reputational methods of think tank's influence estimation: parameters and possible indicators. Decisional method of think tank's influence estimation: parameters and possible indicators. Russian think tank's influence estimation: case study using positional, reputational and decisional methods.

Topic 5. Policy advisory market and think tanks' competitive strategies

What is policy advisory market? Consulting and fundamental research. Regional and global competition. Sectoral advisory. Policy and business

Introduction to policy advise and think tanks in different regions.

Topic 6. Think Tanks in Russia

Topic 7. Think Tanks in the US

Topic 8. Think Tanks in Canada

Topic 9. Think Tanks in the UK and Europe

Topic 10. Think Tanks in the Asia-Pacific Region and Beyond

III. Grading

The final grade is composed of a cumulative grade and the exam. The cumulative and final grades are composed according to the following formulas. O stands for “grade”. It is divided into accumulated and final grades which are described by their own formulas.

$$O_{\text{cumulative}} = 0.7*(O_{\text{essay}}*0.7 + O_{\text{ref.paper}}*0.3)$$

$$O_{\text{final}} = (O_{\text{cumulative}} + k_1 * O_{\text{exam}})$$

Where k_1 is 0.3

The assessment criteria:

1) Logical coherence

-Organize your thoughts and information in a clear order.

-State your observations and conclusions clearly.

-Use evidence to support your conclusions.

2) Engagement with course issues and concepts

-In every paper, make use of concepts/methods of analysis discussed in class.

-Be sure to incorporate at least three course readings/lectures into any research paper you write.

- Shorter critical essays must incorporate the key concepts from at least one course reading/lecture.

3) Quality of your particular analysis

-Try to make your paper interesting and unique.

-Try to go beyond simply re-stating someone else's argument.

-Always make sure that your paper ends with a clear and interesting conclusion

Current and final forms of control are graded on a 10- point scale with rounding up of the final grade. Only the final grade goes into the Master Degree certificate.

IV. Grading Tools

ASSIGNMENT 1 (ESSAY), 30% of the accumulated grade. Number of pages: 5 + title and bibliography. Essay topic “My thoughts about the role and place of think tanks in policy-making processes”. Specific task within this assignment: "Pick up a single case of a think tank industry of a specific state. Discuss it's peculiar features and how it differs from other states? Do think tanks matter in a given context?" Use examples, such as the role of think tanks in foreign policy, education system, domestic issues. Examples shall be very specific and include some variation

FINAL PAPER (Comparative analysis of 2 particular think tanks working in the same sphere in different countries or general comparison of think tanks industry in 2 countries), 70% of the accumulated grade.

The recommended structure:

Introduction

Background (political and legal context, some history of think tanks in these countries)

-Overview of think tanks industry in selected countries

-Think tanks features and strategies in the selected country

-Comparative analysis

Conclusion

More recommendations:

- Make it comparative, use:
 - Comparative tables and diagrams,
 - Point out similarities and differences between cases
 - Describe the main trends and regularities between cases
- In Introduction be clear about:
 - Time period for analysis
 - Countries selection criteria

EVALUATION:

Accumulated grade:

1. Essay (30% of accumulated grade)
2. Final Paper (70% of accumulated grade)

V. Sources

5.1. Main Literature

1. McGann, James G.. The Fifth Estate : Think Tanks, Public Policy, and Governance, Brookings Institution Press, 2016. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4549450>.
2. Abelson, Donald E.. Do Think Tanks Matter? : Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3330532>.

5.2. Additional Literature

1. Denham, Andrew. British Think-Tanks and the Climate of Opinion, Routledge, 1997. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=241769>.
2. Transnational Governance : Institutional Dynamics of Regulation, edited by Marie-Laure Djelic, and Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson, Cambridge University Press, 2006. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=268226>.
3. Struyk, R. (2002). Management of Transnational Think Tank Networks. International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society, 15(4), 625-638. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20020140>

5.3. Software

№	Name	Access conditions
1.	MicrosoftWindows 7 Professional RUS MicrosoftWindows 10 MicrosoftWindows 8.1 Professional RUS	<i>From the university's internal network (contract)</i>
2.	Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2010	<i>From the university's internal network (contract)</i>

5.4. Professional databases and reference systems. Internet resources (electronic educational resources)

№	Name	Access conditions
<i>Professional databases and reference systems</i>		
1.	Consultant Plus	<i>From the university's internal network (contract)</i>
2.	URAIT Electronic library system	URL: https://biblio-online.ru/
<i>Internet resources (electronic educational resources)</i>		
1.	Open Education	URL: https://openedu.ru/

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5.5. Material and technical support

Classrooms for lectures on the discipline provide for the use and demonstration of thematic illustrations corresponding to the program of the discipline, consisting of:

- PC with Internet access (operating system, office software, antivirus software);
- multimedia projector with remote control.