

**Effects of constituent influence on pursuit policy decisions:
A case study on the St. Louis Police Department policy**

Ph.D Dissertation

Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
University of Missouri St. Louis

Daniel Isom II

Abstract

This case study is a chronological explanatory analysis of the events and constituents that influenced the development and implementation of the St. Louis Police Department pursuit policy. The goal of the study is to identify policy models that explain the complex mix of issues that influenced policy decisions. This study utilizes police department documents and records, newspaper articles, and interviews. The case study timeframe is an eleven year period from January 1, 1993 to December 31, 2003.

An initial data review indicated three pivotal policy shifts over the eleven year case study period. The first came in 1997. The second occurred in April 2002 and the third policy shift was in 2003. Six policy models were compared to the data collected in each period to determine the best explanation for the policy changes that occurred.

Analysis of the data indicated the Advocacy Coalition model, the Issue-Attention Cycles model, and the Professional model were consistent explanations for pursuit policy decisions across each case study period. The models suggest that constituents can have considerable influence over policy, however, community, political, and organizational structures that characterize St. Louis mute the actual impact of constituent influence. These weak constituent structures allow the police department to pursue its' internal pursuit policy positions with minimal resistance.