

POLA 3240-01 – Public Policy
Spring 2017
TR 9:30-10:45

Prof. J. Celeste Lay
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Course Objectives and Course Goals:

This course covers the policy-making process for national domestic policy in the United States. Policies are the decisions made by a variety of political actors that set and implement a course for action on particular political problems. Thus, they are the meat of politics – without policies, politics have no real stakes. We examine the important concepts and theories about policy-making and study the policy process in its various stages. In the process, there are several case studies we examine as well as an in-depth analysis of policies related to campus crime, health care, and public education.

We will study the following questions:

- Why do some problems reach the political agenda and others do not?
- Who are the important actors in the policy process and what roles do they play?
- What are the values at stake with policy debates?
- What explains why certain solutions are offered and others are rejected?
- How do we know if a policy has been successful?
- Why do some policies succeed and others fail?

Learning Outcomes and Instruments of Assessment:

Upon completion of this course, students will have demonstrated substantive knowledge and analytical competence in the understanding of how policy is made in the United States. Students will demonstrate this knowledge through classroom participation and the exams. Students will also develop research skills and learn to write short policy memos and longer policy briefs. Finally, students will demonstrate critical thinking skills, learn to defend an argument and use evidence to analyze empirical political statements.

Required Materials:

Paul Manna, *Collision Course: Federal Education Policy Meets State and Local Realities* (CQ Press, 2011)

John J. Sloan, III and Bonnie S. Fisher, *The Dark Side of the Ivory Tower: Campus Crime as a Social Problem* (Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Please note that this book and the resulting coursework contain discussions about acts of violence including gun violence and sexual assault which may be triggering to survivors. If you need to step out of class at some points for this reason, please do so. I can help you find resources that will help. If you believe you cannot read this book or attend class at all on these days, you may not want to take this class.

Paul Starr, *Remedy and Reaction: The Peculiar American Struggle Over Health Care Reform* (Yale University Press, 2011)

In addition, several readings are located on Canvas. The readings are in “files.”

Course Requirements:

Regular Attendance, Active Class Participation & Quizzes: 15%

All students are expected to attend class, be on time, and be prepared to discuss the readings. Participation is a function not only of attendance, but also the quality of contributions. There will be **pop quizzes** on the reading throughout the semester. If you enter after a quiz has begun, you may not be allowed to take it and it will count as a zero. I will do my best to make class a positive experience and to make myself available outside of class for students with problems, questions, concerns or who simply want to talk about politics. Please note, however, that students who attend regularly and participate in class are entitled to the bulk of my time outside of class. I am willing to help any student who seeks it, but do not expect too much sympathy if you are not holding up your end of the bargain. If you are struggling, do not wait to contact me.

Exams: 20% each

There will be a midterm and a cumulative final exam. Final examinations are to be held at the times publicized in the Final Examination Schedule posted on the Registrar's website. Any student who is absent from a final examination will be given permission to take a make-up examination only if an acceptable excuse is presented to an associate dean in Newcomb-Tulane College before the exam or within 24 hours after the exam. A student whose absence from a final examination is not excused is to be given an "F" in the course.

Policy Memo: 20%

See instructions after the course schedule.

Policy Brief: 25%

See instructions after the course schedule.

Paper Instructions: All work should include complete footnotes for every citation; there should be no references that are not cited in the paper. Footnotes should be numbered sequentially (i.e. each *note* has a distinct number, not each source). **Students must turn in both a hard copy & they must upload a copy of each paper to Canvas.** Both versions are due at the beginning of class. Once I have taken attendance and started class, assignments are considered late and will be docked 5 points (half letter grade). Papers turned in after class is over are docked one letter grade **per day** (not per class).

In written assignments, grammar and style count nearly as much as the content. Also, problems with uploading your paper will result in a late penalty, including "mistakes" such as uploading the wrong paper or uploading a file I cannot open. Upload only the following types of files: .doc, .docx, or .pdf. Number all pages. **Staple your papers BEFORE** coming to class.

Grading Scale:

93+=A, 90-92=A-, 88-89=B+, 83-87=B, 80-82=B-, 78-79=C+
73-77=C, 70-72=C-, 60-69=D, 0-59=F

Special Circumstances:

If you believe you may encounter barriers to the academic environment, please feel free to contact me and/or the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility. This information is confidential. Any student with approved academic accommodations is encouraged to contact me during office hours or to email me to schedule an appointment. If you have questions regarding registering a disability or receiving accommodations, please contact the Goldman Center at 504.862.8433 or <http://www.accessibility.tulane.edu>. Students needing accommodations must provide me with a Course Accommodation Form and if applicable, an Exam Request Form ("blue sheet") in order to schedule an exam to be taken at ODS. Accommodations involving exams must be requested to me **four days before a test or seven days before a final exam**. Any student receiving an exam-related accommodation should plan to take the exam at the Goldman Center.

If you have any other special circumstances, such as involvement with a university activity that requires you to miss class, let me know as soon as possible. If, during the semester, issues arise that are likely to affect your participation, attendance or performance, it is in your interest to let me know as soon as they arise. You may consult with your academic advisor or Erica Woodley in Student Affairs if issues are serious enough that you need temporary accommodations.

Absence Policy:

Attendance is mandatory. I take attendance in every class, *but* I do not police my students. I only need to hear from you about excused absences; do not bother contacting me about unexcused absences. Regardless of the reason for your absence, it is the student's responsibility to figure out what you missed. Excused absences include university-sponsored events (not including athletic practices – games only), deaths in the family, religious observance, and illnesses *with appropriate documentation*. They do not include family reunions, weddings, or graduations; illnesses without documentation; car problems, including traffic and parking; most police incidents - court dates, getting pulled over, etc.; computer problems – hard drive crashes, empty ink cartridges, paper jams, busy library printers; and, most other unfortunate but commonplace life events. Note the university academic calendar and the syllabus's schedule of assignments. **Any unexcused absence on an exam or quiz means you forfeit all points.** There are no exceptions and do not bother to ask for one. If absences, tardiness, or under-preparation becomes a problem, your grade will suffer. **In addition, any student with perfect attendance (no unexcused absences) will receive one point added onto their final grade.**

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic honesty is expected of all students at Tulane. Your responsibilities as a Tulane student include being familiar with the honor code and the plagiarism policy of the University (see <http://tulane.edu/college/code.cfm>). Cases of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Honor Board, and may result in a failing grade for the class, academic probation, or expulsion. Ignorance is not a valid excuse.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following actions:

- a) presenting another's work, ideas, expressions or research as if it were one's own;
- b) failing to acknowledge or document a source even if the action is unintended (i.e., plagiarism);
Note: Plagiarism includes copying & pasting material from any source (Wikipedia, paper mill, other internet site, book, journal, newspaper, magazine, etc.) without proper attribution. Plagiarism also includes non-verbatim borrowing of words or ideas through paraphrasing or summarizing another's work(s) without proper attribution.
- c) fabricating or altering citations;
- d) giving or receiving, or attempting to give or receive, unauthorized assistance or information in an assignment or examination;
- e) submitting the same assignment in two or more courses without prior permission of both instructors;
- f) having another person write a paper or sit for an examination (includes online paper-mills);
- g) using tests or papers from students in prior semesters;

Other Classroom Rules

1. Without a documented disability, **no electronic devices may be used in class**, including lap tops, cell phones, tablets, I-watches, etc. Devices are not allowed to be out of backpacks or purses during quizzes and exams. Any student who is caught with one of these devices out will have his/her test/quiz taken and will be charged with the Honor Code violation of cheating.

2. Students must not be chronically late, absent or disruptive; otherwise, your grade will suffer. If you have an activity (class, work, athletic practice, etc.) that meets just before this class, you are still expected to make it to class on time. If you cannot make it to class on time, then do not take this course. Once class has started, students should only leave the room in cases of emergency. This means students should take care of all personal business

before class begins. **Except in emergencies, students will not be allowed to leave and return to the classroom during an exam.**

Classroom Conduct

I am committed to providing a classroom environment free of **all** forms of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, political philosophy, religion, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. If you have experienced or experience discrimination, domestic violence, sexual assault or sexual harassment, know that you are not alone. Resources and support are available. Learn more at onewave.tulane.edu. Any and all of your communications on these matters will be treated as either “Strictly Confidential” or “Mostly Confidential” as explained in the chart below. **Note: As a professor, I am required by law to report anything reported to me regarding incidents of sexual harassment, assault, or discrimination. I am a “mostly confidential” source.**

Strictly Confidential	Mostly Confidential
<i>Except in extreme circumstances, involving imminent danger to one’s self or others, nothing will be shared without your explicit permission.</i>	<i>Conversations are kept as confidential as possible, but information is shared with key staff members so the University can offer resources and accommodations and take action if necessary for safety reasons.</i>
Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) (504) 314-2277	Coordinator of Violence Prevention (504) 314-2161
Student Health Center (504) 865-5255 Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE) (504) 654-9543	Tulane University Police (TUPD) (504) 865-5911 Office of Institutional Equity (504) 862-8083

Extra Credit Events:

When there are public lectures or other scholarly events on campus (or off) that focus on public policy, students may attend the event for extra credit. These events must be free and open to the public and available to everyone in class. I must announce the event to everyone, but if you see something that seems relevant, feel free to let me know. I need a few days’ notice. (Note: Events cannot retroactively be counted as extra credit.)

You may get credit for no more than three events. In addition to attending approved events, students must write a short paper (2-3 pages) analyzing the speaker’s remarks. Papers are due one week from the class immediately following the event. It is the student’s responsibility to remember to turn in the papers. At the end of the semester, I will add the extra credit to the part of the grade most in need of help.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Jan 17: Introductions (no reading)

Jan 19: No Class – Complete online survey no later than Jan 20. A link will be provided in an email.

Jan 24: What is the proper role of government and how does one’s answer affect public policy?
Reading: “Capitalism & Freedom,” Milton Friedman; “The Libertarian Illusion,” William Hudson

Jan 26: Solving Value Conflict
Reading: “Mandatory Vaccinations: Precedent & Current Laws,” Kathleen Swendiman; “Managing Value Conflict in Public Policy,” Thacher & Rein

Jan 31: Intro to Multiple Theories
Reading: “In Search of a Framework to Understand the Policy Process,” Stella Z. Theodoulou; “How Policymakers Define ‘Evidence,’” Huriya Jabbar, et al.

Feb 2: Closer Look at Rational Choice Theory
Reading: "Bounded Rationality and Rational Choice Theory," Bryan D. Jones, et al

Problem ID & Agenda Setting

Feb 7: Agenda-Setting
Reading: "Agendas and Instability," Frank Baumgartner & Bryan Jones; "Why Some Issues Rise and Others are Negated," John Kingdon

Feb 9: Constructing Violence & Victimization on College Campuses
Reading: Chapters 1-2, Sloan & Fisher
Policy Memo Due

Feb 14: Sexual Assault on College Campuses
Reading: Chapter 3-4, Sloan & Fisher; Go to <http://ope.ed.gov/campussafety/#/> and view statistics for Tulane and comparable institutions

Feb 16: Contemporary Movement against Sexual Assault
Reading: "The Other Side of the College Sexual Assault Crisis," Max Kutner:
<http://www.newsweek.com/2015/12/18/other-side-sexual-assault-crisis-403285.html>; "How the alt-right's Sexism Lures Men into White Supremacy," Aja Romano:
<http://www.vox.com/culture/2016/12/14/13576192/alt-right-sexism-recruitment>;

Feb 21: Sexual Assault at Tulane
Reading: "Stop Playing Defense on Hate Crimes," Elizabeth Levy Paluck & Michael Chwe:
<http://time.com/4583843/stop-hate-influencers/>

Feb 23: Midterm Exam

Feb 28: No Class (Mardi Gras)

Actors & Tools

March 2: The President & the Courts
Reading: "Presidential Policymaking: Race to the Top, Executive Power and the Obama Education Agenda," Patrick McGuinn; "From *Bakke* to *Grutter* to *Gratz*: The Supreme Court as a Policymaking Institution," Katherine C. Naff

March 7: The Role of Interest Groups
Reading: "Inside the Power of the N.R.A.," Robert Draper; "What the Democracy Spring Protests Miss," Lee Drutman <http://www.vox.com/polyarchy/2016/4/20/11469022/democracy-spring-protests> ; "The More Outside Money Politicians Take, the Less Well They Represent Their Constituents," Anne Baker <http://tinyurl.com/zluhyjt>

March 9: The Media
Reading: "Red Media, Blue Media: Evidence of Ideological Selectivity in Media Use," Shanto Iyengar & Kyu S. Hahn; Bas van Doorn, "Pre- and Post-Welfare Reform Media Portrayals of Poverty in the United States"

March 14: Policy Tools & Social Constructions
Reading: "Social Construction of Target Populations," & "Behavioral Assumptions of Policy Tools," Anne Schneider & Helen Ingram; "Trump Is Respected for Fathering Children by Multiple Women," Nicole Sussner Rodgers & Julie Kohler <http://tinyurl.com/gsv3sch>

March 16: The Submerged State

Reading: “Governance Unseen,” & “The Politics of the Submerged State,” Suzanne Mettler

Passing the Affordable Care Act

March 21: Policy Formulation & Health Care

Reading: Starr, Intro + Chapters 1-2

March 23: Massachusetts Model + Obama’s Priority

Reading: Starr, chapters 6-7

March 26-April 2: No Class (Spring Break)

April 4: The Affordable Care Act

Reading: Starr, chapters 8-9

April 6: The Affordable Care Act – has/did it work(ed)?

Reading: “The Mandate Penalties Are Not Working,” Sarah Kliff

<http://www.vox.com/2016/10/25/13397930/obamacare-mandate-penalties>; “Obamacare Was Built to Fail,”

Avik Roy [http://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2016/10/7/13191250/obamacare-exchanges-crisis-arrogant-](http://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2016/10/7/13191250/obamacare-exchanges-crisis-arrogant-progressives)

[progressives](http://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2016/10/7/13191250/obamacare-exchanges-crisis-arrogant-progressives); “Yes, Obamacare Needs Tweaks – But It’s Been a Policy Triumph,” Bob Kocher & Ezekiel

Emanuel [http://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2016/10/7/13192640/obamacare-exchanges-insurance-healthcare-](http://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2016/10/7/13192640/obamacare-exchanges-insurance-healthcare-fix)
[fix](http://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2016/10/7/13192640/obamacare-exchanges-insurance-healthcare-fix)

Policy Implementation & Evaluation

April 11: Implementation & Rule-making

Reading: “Sweet-Talking the Fourth Branch,” Susan Webb Yackee

April 13: The Bureaucracy

Reading: “Bureaucracy,” Max Weber; “What Do I Need to Vote? Bureaucratic Discretion & Discrimination by Local Election Officials,” Ariel R. White, et al.

Policy Brief Due

April 18: Implementation of No Child Left Behind

Reading: Manna, Chapters 1-3

April 20: Local Responses to NCLB

Reading: Manna, Chapters 4-5

April 25: Implications

Reading: Manna, Chapter 6-7

April 27: Policy Evaluation

Reading: “Instruction Matters: Lessons from a Mixed-Method Evaluation of Out-of-School Time Tutoring Under NCLB,” Annalee Good, et al.; “How Think Tanks Amplify Corporate America’s Influence,” Eric Lipton & Brooke Williams <http://tinyurl.com/jcnpu4m>

May 2: Policy Termination

Reading: “The President’s Pleasant Surprise,” Nathaniel Frank; “Fade to Black? Exploring Policy Enactment and Termination Through the Rise and Fall of State Tax Incentives for the Motion Picture Industry,” Michael Thom & Brian An

Final Exam: Tuesday, May 11, 1pm

Guidelines for the Policy Memo

One of the most important skills to master for success in the policy world is memo-writing. A policy memo is a concise document that provides analysis and recommendations for a specific audience (such as the president, or a member of Congress, or head of an agency or department) regarding a particular policy problem. It aims to provide the rationale for choosing a particular alternative. Components of a memo include:

1. Opening Heading: Write MEMORANDUM at the top of the page. Then, include a heading like this:

To: [Address it to the appropriate person with authority on this issue.]

From: [Your name]

Subject: [A succinct statement of the issue/problem, such as: Establishing a More Humane Deportation Policy or Decriminalizing Marijuana in Louisiana or Simplifying the Tax Code]

Date: [xx/xx/xxxx]

Note: Do not simply address your brief to “President” or “Congress,” but instead direct it to a specific person that has authority over the decision you are recommending. In most cases, this will not be the president.

2. Introduction: You should put the conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) first. Open the memo by summarizing the problem and providing a brief summary of your recommendations. The rest of the memo supports this recommendation with analysis and research. The purpose of this document is to provide advice about a particular issue or problem. Do not be wishy-washy. It is not helpful to policy-makers to fail to give a clear, definitive recommendation.

3. Evidence: If relevant, present a concise summary of any historical or technical information your audience will need to understand the recommendation. Then, you should provide the evidentiary reasons for your recommendation. Policy memos & briefs are not argumentative – they are to be based in evidence about the problem and the consequences of adopting particular policy alternatives. Think about the following: Who is effected by this problem? How many? Where? Is it getting worse? How quickly? What has been done and/or what is being proposed? What is the cost of your recommendation (financial & otherwise)? Are there obvious impediments and how to overcome them?

To find this evidence, you might consult what has worked or not worked in the past, or what other countries or US states do, or the results of academic or think tank studies. Avoid logical fallacies such as slippery slope arguments, over-generalizing, and faulty causation. Present the most important facts in order of priority as concisely as possible.

Follow these guidelines:

- You must select a *domestic* policy issue (can be national, state or local).
- Use headings and sub-headings, bullet points, charts and graphs, or any other device that conveys your points concisely – but you must have enough text to make your argument clearly.
- Avoid using vague phrases like “Throughout American history....” or “X is a problem that affects everyone.” Be specific – how many people? When exactly did this problem become serious?
- Use footnotes for your citations, as well as any additional important information that does not fit in the content/flow of the memo itself. See <http://content.easybib.com/citation-guides/chicago-turabian/footnotes/> for guidance on this format. You will lose points for improper citation format.
- **Do not go over 750 words!**

Guidelines for the Policy Brief

A policy brief requires succinct consideration of policy options for a particular audience (e.g., officials, bureaucrats, politicians, development practitioners, donors). It is a bit longer than a policy memo and includes a variety of policy alternatives and a recommendation. It is a neutral summary of what is known about an issue/problem and a prescription for what should be done (or not done). See Appendix A in Bardach for an example of a brief. Also look at his footnotes in this chapter.

Your brief should include the following components:

1. Cover Sheet, including Executive Summary: Include the same heading as you use in the policy memo (except cut the “memorandum” at the top). An executive summary provides a short narrative summary (approx. 150 words) of the purpose of the brief and its recommendations. It typically appears single-spaced on the cover of a brief or position paper.
2. Statement of the Issue/Problem and Your Recommendation: This might be a single sentence or at most 2-3 sentences that capture the essence of the problem as you define it. Think about why this is a problem, why it is a problem *now*, and what must be done to solve it.
3. Background of the problem: Assume that you have been hired to filter through reams of information on behalf of a very busy person. Be clear, precise, and succinct. You do not need to go back to the dawn of time. Instead, include the essential facts that a decision maker “needs to know” to understand the context of the problem.
4. Policy Options & Your Recommendation: This section delineates the possible courses of action or inaction that the government may pursue to solve this problem. Inform the reader of policy options that have already been pursued, if any. Note that the absence of action may be considered a policy decision. Provide the decision-maker with at least two courses of action. Cap the menu of options at four choices. Think about the advantages and disadvantages of each of the options. Be clear about which option you are recommending and why it is preferable to the others. Don’t be wishy-washy. Make a clear prescription and defend it.

Follow these guidelines:

- You must select a *domestic* policy issue.
- Use headings and sub-headings, bullet points, charts and graphs, or any other device that conveys your points more concisely and straightforwardly.
- Use footnotes for your citations, as well as any additional important information that does not fit in the content/flow of the memo itself. For your background research, you should consider scholarly sources, such as books & journal articles, as well as policy briefs from think tanks and advocacy organizations, media stories (especially investigative pieces), and to a lesser extent, blogs & other online media that provide additional information. Be careful to observe a “good” piece of research from a “bad” one. Polemics written by pundits or politicians are generally not useful.
- See the guidelines and instructions for the policy memo for phrases to avoid and types of arguments to avoid. Remember: Policy briefs are not argumentative – they are based in evidence.
- **Do not go over 2500 words!**

There are many examples online. Here’s one: http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/pb-colorblind_0.pdf

Common Grammatical Mistakes in Political Science Writing

Note: Making any of these mistakes will result in points off your grade.

1. Contractions: There/their/they're ----- Its/It's ----- Your/You're
A simple rule: Do not use contractions in scholarly writing.

2. Then/Than and Affect/Effect

3. Misuse of Possessives/Plurals (especially #1)

4. Capitalization --- Only capitalize proper nouns and words that begin a sentence.

“Federal” as an adjective is not capitalized. Ex: “The federal government’s powers are too expansive.” As an institution, “Congress” is always capitalized; the adjective “congressional” is not. Words like legislature, courts, president, and senator are capitalized *when referring to them as institutions or as titles, but not when referring to generic legislatures or senators*. Ex: The members of Congress feared an outbreak of anthrax would harm their staffs. The courts have become more partisan in the last 30 years. The president is meeting with Senator Byrd later today.

5. Misusing commas (1): Comma Splices & Run-On Sentences

A comma splice is where clauses requiring some stronger punctuation are instead lightly pasted together with a comma. THIS IS VERY COMMON. Ex: “Sally went to the grocery store, she needed to buy eggs.” There should either be a semi-colon or a conjunction (i.e., and/because).

Run-on sentences: Comma splices are simply run-on sentences with a comma. A run-on sentence may not have a comma, such as, “It was a beautiful day she remembered just in time.”

6. Misusing commas (2): The Random Comma

Some writers insert commas seemingly at random: “The unabridged dictionary, was used mainly to press flowers.”

7. Who/Whom

8. Loose/Lose

9. Use of “Bias” ---- One has a bias *against* something he/she dislikes. She has a bias *toward* something she likes. One is “biased” against smokers or liberals, not “bias” against them (that would be “has a bias” against).

10. Democrat/democrat (also Democratic) and Republican/republican

Democrat and Republican are the names of U.S. political parties and as proper nouns, should always be capitalized, even when the word “party” is left out. Ex: “The Democrats and the Republicans are fighting over the budget.” In both cases, the word “party” was implied. The word is not capitalized when you are referring to an advocate of the types of government known as democracy or republic. Ex: “A true democrat values free and fair elections.” Note: It is always the Democratic Party, never the Democrat Party.