

POLA 4350 – The Politics of Education Policy

Prof. J. Celeste Lay

Office: 121C Norman Mayer Building (My office will be moving to Cudd Hall during the semester.)

Office Hours: By appointment (I'm around, just busy, so just reach out to make an appt.)

Email: jlay@tulane.edu

Although there have always been debates about curriculum and teaching methods, for over 100 years, the basic governance and structure of public elementary and secondary education in the United States remained unchanged. In the last 25 years, in response to new interest groups and new framing of educational problems, many new models of governance have emerged. In many cities and towns, schools no longer answer to an elected school board due to mayoral control or state takeover districts. In some states and cities, public funding follows the student to private schools through voucher programs. Teachers in some areas do not have to be state certified and their jobs are subject to their students' performance. Students as young as kindergarten spend an increasing amount of their school year taking standardized tests and there may be serious consequences for schools if its students do not perform highly enough.

Since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, New Orleans has emerged as a leader in this movement, shifting from a central bureaucracy that made most operational decisions to a system of decentralized charter schools.

These changes have been shaped by politics and have subsequently altered politics around education policy. This course studies these politics.

In particular, we consider these questions:

- Who governs America's public schools and who *should* govern America's schools?
- What groups have had power in education policy debates? Which groups have not? And what explains where power lies currently?
- What role has race played in school governance, teaching, and problem identification?
- Where does New Orleans fit into the larger national picture with regard to its education system? How did this system come to be and how well is the experiment working?

The class will also focus on education policy research and students will work in groups to conduct their own research. The course will examine the political debates over governance, accountability, and school choice and privatization (including charter schools), with a particular focus on how these issues play out in New Orleans.

Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe the relationship of the federal, state and local governments in the creation and implementation of policy in local schools.
2. Identify and describe roles of agencies and organizations that have historically influenced educational policy.
3. Describe the debates on current education policy controversies and be able to defend arguments related to them.

4. Develop an understanding of the values and ideologies that permeate discussion of education and school reform.
5. Learn to conduct policy-relevant research in the form of policy briefs and gain experience presenting work orally to stakeholders.

Students will demonstrate they have mastered these objectives through written and oral presentations, class discussion, and satisfactory completion of all assignments and exams.

Required Materials:

Jeffrey Henig, *The End of Exceptionalism in American Education: The Changing Politics of School Reform*, Harvard Education Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-1612505114.

Andrew Pennock, *The CQ Press Writing Guide for Public Policy*, CQ Press, 2018. [You may rent an [online version](#) for \$17 or order a hard copy on your own for ~\$35.

Jesse Rhodes, *An Education in Politics: The Origins and Evolution of No Child Left Behind*, Cornell University Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-0801479540.

James E. Ryan, *Five Miles Away, A World Apart: One City, Two Schools, and the Story of Educational Opportunity in America*, Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN: 978-0199836857

Jack Schneider, *Beyond Test Scores: A Better Way to Measure School Quality*, Harvard University Press, 2017.

The Lens – You must regularly read the education stories in this local newspaper. You should subscribe for its free email alerts so that you can be aware of this information.

All other readings are either on Canvas or the link is provided.

Course Requirements:

Regular Attendance and Active Class Participation: 15%

All students are expected to attend class, **be on time**, and be prepared for class by having read the assigned material for that day. Participation **is a function not only of attendance, but also the quality of contributions**. This means students must demonstrate through their questions and discussion that they have done the assigned reading and that they have thought about the issues under examination.

Participation:

Minimum Expectations: Students must be on time and attend regularly, and all discussion must remain civil. Also, **I may give pop quizzes**. There are no make-ups for missed quizzes. If you do the reading, you should not have trouble with the quizzes. In most cases, they are at the beginning of class, so don't be late. The following grades can be lowered based on lack of attendance or chronic tardiness.

Outstanding (A): Contributions in class reflect excellent preparation, thorough reading and reflection on the material in advance. Ideas offered are always substantive, providing important insights. Contributions took discussion in a useful and constructive direction. The student may

make contributions that could be characterized as brave efforts to synthesize material in new ways, pose and answer difficult questions, bring in creative ideas which, if well-based and well-reasoned do not have to be 100% "right" all the time. Challenges to others are well-substantiated, clearly and persuasively presented, and civil. If this person were not a member of this class, the quality of discussion and the opportunities for learning would be diminished markedly.

Good (A-/B+): Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation or having done what is required. Ideas offered are generally substantive, are relevant to discussion, and contribute substantively to the direction of discussion. The contributions are good and worthwhile, but don't strike out in new or "brave" directions. Challenges to others are generally well-argued, often persuasive, and civil. If this person were not a member of this class, the quality of the discussion and the opportunities for learning would be diminished.

Adequate (B/B-): Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation, which usually means having done enough of the preparation to be on track. Ideas offered are generally useful but don't offer new directions or perspectives. An adequate contribution is unlikely to challenge others' ideas, but if it does, it is fairly well substantiated, somewhat if at all persuasive, and civil. If this person were not a member of this class, the quality of the discussion and the opportunities for learning would be diminished somewhat, at least for some people.

Unsatisfactory (C): Meets only minimum expectations with regard to attendance and tardiness. Says almost nothing and asks very few questions.

Poor (D/F): Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. They may be unrelated to the discussion and suggest that the contributor did not do the reading. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide few if any insights, and almost never a constructive direction for the class. They may be irrelevant to the discussion. The contributor may speak without regard of other participants: e.g. in an uncivil manner, at undue length, or challenging others in a manner that is unsubstantiated. If this person were not a member of the class, valuable air time would be saved.

Adapted from V. Sapiro at Boston University.

Exams (25% total): There is a midterm and a cumulative final exam. Final examinations are to be held at the time 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.

Experiential Papers: (30% total): 2 papers, each 15% - Prompts are after the course schedule.

Policy Brief (30%) – Students will write briefs on current education issues and present the results of the research.

Grading Scale:

A	92.5 - 100
A-	89.5 - 92.4
B+	87.5 - 89.4
B	82.5 - 87.4
B-	79.5 - 82.4
C+	77.5 - 79.4
C	72.5 - 77.4
C-	69.5 - 72.4
D	59.5 - 69.4
F	Lower than 59.4

NOTE ABOUT WRITTEN WORK:

Students must turn in two copies of each paper. One should be uploaded to Canvas. The other should be a hard copy. Assignments 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. Proofread your work. Go to the Writing Center. **Number all pages.**

Absence Policy:

Attendance is mandatory. The class meets once a week, which means missing one class is the equivalent of a week's worth of material. If you miss class due to an excused absence, I will work with you to make up work. Whether excused or unexcused, it is **your responsibility** to communicate with me and to get notes from a classmate.

Excused absences include:

- University-sponsored events (not athletic practices – games only),
- Deaths in the family,
- Religious observance,
- Jury duty,
- Illnesses with appropriate documentation.

They do not include:

- Family reunions, weddings, graduations,
- Illnesses without documentation,
- Traffic, parking difficulties,
- Court dates, getting pulled over,
- Computer crashes, lines for the printer, running out of paper/ink,
- and most of the other reasons students commonly miss class.

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.

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.

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);
- 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;
- h) sabotaging the work of another through destroying or preventing work from receiving fair assessment (especially in group projects)

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.

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 online or at 504.862.8433.

Students needing accommodations should ensure that the Goldman Center sends me this information. Accommodations involving exams must be requested **well in advance**. Any student receiving an exam-related accommodation should plan to take the exam at the Goldman Center and should follow up with me before exams to let me know whether to send the exam to the testing 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.

Classroom Rules

1. **No electronic devices may be used in class**, including lap top computers (unless you have a documented accommodation), cell phones, tablets, I-watches, etc. If this poses a problem for you, please discuss it with me. I am reasonable and discrete. If you see others

“breaking the rules,” it is none of your business.

This policy extends to audio and video recording of lectures. Students are expected to respect the intellectual property of course instructors. All course materials are copyrighted property of the instructor. As such:

- Students must obtain permission to record classroom activities.
- When permission is given, such content is restricted to personal use.
- Recordings are not to be shared with other students and should not be posted online.

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 their 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.**

Sexual Harassment & Classroom Conduct

Tulane University recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. As such, Tulane is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination including sexual and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence like sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or is experiencing these types of behaviors, know that you are not alone. Resources and support are available: you can learn more at allin.tulane.edu. Any and all of your communications on these matters will be treated as either “Confidential” or “Private” as explained in the chart below. Please know that if you choose to confide in me, I am mandated by the university to report to the Title IX Coordinator, as Tulane and I want to be sure you are connected with all the support the university can offer. You do not need to respond to outreach from the university if you do not want. You can also make a report yourself, including an anonymous report, through the form at tulane.edu/concerns.

Confidential	Private
<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 info is shared with key staff members so the U can offer resources & take action for safety reasons.</i>
Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) (504) 314-2277 or The Line (24/7) (504) 264-6074	Case Management & Victim Support Services (504) 314-2160 or srss@tulane.edu
Student Health Center (504) 865-5255	Tulane University Police (TUPD) Uptown - (504) 865-5911. Downtown – (504) 988-5531
Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE) (504) 654-9543	Title IX Coordinator (504) 314-2160 or msmith76@tulane.edu

Course Topics, Readings and Due Dates

I. EDUCATION GOVERNANCE

Jan. 17: No Class

- Read the syllabus completely and get started on the book we will discuss next week.
- You should also begin to read the Pennock book on writing for public policy.

Jan. 24: Values/Purpose of Education & Public Education Governance

- [“‘Education as Great Equalizer’ Deforming Myth, Not Reality,”](#) Paul Thomas
- [“Education Reform: Unsubstantiated Benefit Claims; Unreported Side Effects,”](#) Arthur Camins
- Henig (entire book)

Jan. 31: Racial Segregation & Integration

- Ryan, chapters 1-2
- Listen to [“The Problem We All Live With,”](#) *This American Life* (parts 1 & 2)
- [“The City that Believed in Desegregation,”](#) Alana Semuels
- [“School Segregation Didn’t Go Away. It Just Evolved,”](#) Alvin Chang
- “Can Charlotte-Mecklenburg Desegregate Its Schools...Again?” Rachel Cohen
- “New Orleans Public Schools History”
- “The New Orleans School Crisis of 1960,” Alan Wieder

Feb 7: School Finance

- Ryan, chapter 3-4
- Chapters 1-3, Bruce Baker's *Educational Inequality and School Finance*

Feb 14: From *A Nation at Risk* to No Child Left Behind

- Rhodes, Intro-Chapter 6

Feb 21: The Politics of Accountability & School Choice

- Ryan, chapter 5-7
- “Educational Accountability and Policy Feedback,” Lorraine McDonnell
- “What Do Parents Want From Schools” Mark Schneider & Jack Buckley
- “The Evolving Politics of the Common Core,” Ashley Jochim & Lesley Lavery
- [“A Sea of Charter Schools in Detroit Leaves Students Adrift,”](#) Kate Zernike
- “The Fiscal Externalities of Charter Schools,” Helen Ladd & John Singleton
- [“Why Are New York’s Schools Segregated?”](#) Elizabeth Harris & Josh Katz

Feb 28: Midterm Exam

Mar 7: No Class – Spring Break/Mardi Gras

Mar 14: Standardized Testing & Measuring School Quality

- Schneider (entire)

II. NEW ORLEANS REFORMS

Mar 21: New Orleans School System Today

- Chapters 1-3, Raynard Sanders, *The Coup D'etat of the New Orleans Public Schools*
- La. Act 35
- Watch: ["Rebirth New Orleans"](#)
- ["The Great Charter Tryout,"](#) Andrea Gabor
- ["What Makes New Orleans Unique"](#) (watch all videos, read all sections 1-8)

Mar 28: Success of Reforms in New Orleans: Choice & Scores

- ["What Schools Do Families Want \(and Why\)?"](#) Doug Harris & Matthew Larsen
- "OneApp, Many Considerations," Alexios Rosario-Moore
- "Big Easy, Little Choice," Ashana Bigard
- ["What Effect Did the New Orleans School Reforms Have on Student Achievement, High School Graduation, and College Outcomes?"](#) Douglas Harris & Matthew Larsen
- ["Compare 2018 New Orleans School Ratings,"](#) Marta Jewson
- "Every Kid Is Money," Huriya Jabbar
- ["The real story of New Orleans and its charter schools,"](#) Valerie Strauss

Apr 4: Success of Reforms in New Orleans: Equity & Teachers

- ["Equity Matters,"](#) LCCR, OPEN & Converge
- ["Significant Changes in the New Orleans Teacher Workforce,"](#) Nathan Barrett & Doug Harris
- "Mapping the Terrain: Teach for America, Charter School Reform, & Corporate Sponsorship," Kerry Kretchmar, et al.
- ["New Orleans' Uphill Battle for More Black and Homegrown Teachers,"](#) Emmanuel Felton
- ["New Orleans Student Commute Times by Car, Public Transit & School Bus,"](#) Lincove & Valant
- ["Did the New Orleans School Reforms Increase Segregation,"](#) Lindsay Bell Weixler, et al.
- ["Has Gentrification Begun in New Orleans Public Schools?"](#) Danielle Dreilinger

III: ED REFORM, POLITICS & DEMOCRACY

Apr 11: Democratic Institutions & Practice

- "'Ideas about Interests': Explaining the Changing Partisan Politics of Education," Christina Wolbrecht & Matthew Hartney
- "Comparing Nonprofit Charter and Traditional Public School Board Member Perceptions" Michael R. Ford & Douglas M. Ihrke
- "Re-forming the Post-Political City?" Alice Huff
- "Private Governance of Public Schools," J. Celeste Lay & Anna Bauman
- ["Private Schools Are Anti-Democratic,"](#) Jack Schneider

Apr 18: The Role of Poverty

- ["Poverty Cannot Explain America's Mediocre Test Scores,"](#) Michael Petrilli & Brandon Wright
- "Effects of Inequality & Poverty vs. Teachers and Schooling on America's Youth," David Berliner
- "From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt," Gloria Ladson-Billings
- ["Orleans School Board to Spend \\$1.3 million on Mental Health Services,"](#) Wilborn Nobles,

III

Apr 26: The Role of Outside Groups: Nonprofits, Foundations & Teachers Unions

- "The Expanding Role of Philanthropy in Education Politics," Sarah Reckhow & Jeffrey Snyder
- "Private Sector Contracting and Democratic Accountability," Catherine DiMartino & Janelle Scott
- "'Outsiders with Deep Pockets': The Nationalization of Local School Board Elections" Reckhow, et al.
- "Teachers Unions & American Education Reform: The Politics of Blocking;" Terry Moe
- ["Teachers Unions: Scourge of the Nation?"](#) Bruce Baker

May 2: The Use of Policy Research – **Class Presentations**

- "How Policymakers Define 'Evidence,'" Huriya Jabbar, et al.
- "Intermediary Organizations in Charter School Policy Coalitions: Evidence from New Orleans," Elizabeth DeBray, et al.

Assignments:

Experiential Paper #1: DUE FEBRUARY 21 --- NOTE: **ONEAPP WILL SHUT DOWN ON FEB 22, MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPLETE THIS ASSIGNMENT. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.**

Find the New Orleans OneApp and create an account. Fill out the application as if you are a parent of a child entering kindergarten. Move through the application and make choices about where you would want your child to attend school. Rank these preferences. **DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION!** Keep the following in mind: Assume you earn \$18,000 per year (average per capita income in New Orleans), so you must consider where you are likely to be living (either specifically or a general neighborhood) and how much time, education, and other resources you have at your disposal.

Answer the following questions in your paper: What was the ranking of your schools and why? Include a list of your ranked schools. Could you easily find the information about schools that would be relevant to your choice? Where did you look for info? How does the OneApp system work? How do parents get their child placed in their first choices? What important information was not included that you needed to be able to make a wise choice? What is your overall judgment of the system; what does it tell you, as a parent, about your position in the system?

Experiential Paper #2: DUE NO LATER THAN APRIL 26

Write an op-ed of no more than 750 words based on your response to any article from *The Lens* related to education news. These are fact-based opinion pieces in which you must express a *clear* perspective and make a *definitive* claim. I highly recommend reading several op-eds before writing one and reading the Pennock chapter on op-eds. You can find a daily set of the best political pieces on realclearpolitics.com.

- Keep it short. 750 words max.
- Make a single point – persuasively.
- Be informal.
- Lead with your conclusion - put your main point on top.
- Have a news-hook
- Make it clear why readers and the editor should care.
- Offer specific recommendations.
- Use short sentences, with no jargon.
- Use an “active” voice.
- Acknowledge the other side.

There should be no citations. When you reference a study or an article, use hyperlinks. With your permission, I may send the best piece(s) to the opinion editor either at *The Lens* or *The Advocate* for potential publication. Note: You may turn this paper in at any time, but not later than April 26. If you want to be considered for publication, note that it must be timely. The news moves fast, so they will not be interested in your response to a weeks-old article.

Policy Brief: This project is due in 2 phases.

Part 1: **DUE ON MARCH 21**

This should be a 6-8 double-spaced page paper on an education policy issue. It does not have to relate specifically to New Orleans, but it might. Ultimately, you will piece together what constitutes an advocacy brief, which argues in favor of a particular policy or set of actions. You should provide enough background on the policy matter and provide **substantial evidence*** that supports your proposed line of action. What this means is that you should begin this assignment with the end in mind. For this part of the project, you will be highlighting the policy problem, myths and misconceptions about that policy problem, and how other states (or other levels of government) are dealing (or considering dealing) with that problem. Here is what I mean about each of those sections.

The Problem

For the first part of the assignment, you should provide some context about the problem that you will address over the course of the semester. What history do we need to know to get a real grasp at what is going on? What trends should people be aware of? What concepts and vocabulary do we need to be aware of to fully understand the problem at hand? You should tell us how we got into the position we are in the first place, and then explain the implications and effects of the policy matter at hand.

Myths and Misconceptions

For most policy problems, you're always going to have to explain a few things and refute a few misnomers. Here, your job is to anticipate the questions rooted in the myths and misconceptions of either the people who are most affected by the policy of concern, or the policy itself. Here, you might also consider the major roadblocks to addressing this problem in a systematic, effective way, such as media or elite framing, dominant stereotypes, common public misunderstandings of the issues or groups, etc.

Potential Solutions

Are there best practices already being worked out (say, in another country, or in the private sector, or in some states, but not others)? Some things to consider or think about: What are the counterarguments that might be lobbed toward your proposed solutions? How much does it cost to fix your problem? Is that greater than the cost of not fixing it? Or do the benefits weigh more?

*Substantial evidence = No fewer than 10 sources, 7 of which must be scholarly. A scholarly (peer-reviewed) source includes academic journals, books published with university presses (and some non-UPs, such as Brookings Institution, CQ Press, and others), and reports by think tanks (such as the Education Research Alliance, the Heritage Foundation, CATO Institute, RAND Corporation, and others). Non-scholarly sources that may be useful would include journalistic pieces, interest group reports, and others.

The bibliography should list the scholarly sources **in bold**. You should use endnotes. [Here](#) is a short primer on this.

Note: The superscript number should be placed after the sentence's ending punctuation mark. No floating periods, please.

Note: You may cite multiple sources in a single sentence, in which case they all go in a single endnote, separated by a semi-colon. You should not have multiple superscript numbers in a sentence, nor should you have superscripts anywhere but the end of the sentence. Example:

Instead of conducting extensive research about schools, most parents largely rely on cues, such as safety of the neighborhood or the school's racial composition, and social networks to judge the quality of schools.¹

¹ Jeffrey Henig, "Race and Choice in Montgomery County, Maryland, Magnet Schools." *Teachers College Record* 96 (1995):729–34; Amy Stuart Wells, "The Sociology of School Choice: Why Some Win and Others Lose in the Educational Marketplace." In *School Choice: Examining the Evidence*, edited by Edith Rasell and Richard Rothstein, (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, 1993), pp 29-48; Jack Buckley and Mark Schneider, "Shopping for Schools: How Do Marginal Consumers Gather Information about Schools?" *The Policy Studies Journal* 31 (2003):121–45.

Part 2: **DUE ON APRIL 18**

Use the longer paper, along with my feedback, to create a 2-page (single spaced) policy brief. A policy brief is a relatively short, to the point, jargon free document written for non-specialists. It presents research or project findings to policy actors, highlighting the relevance of the specific research to policy and offering recommendations for change.

Policy makers have very limited time to become informed on a wide range of information, and they need to get up to speed on what is going on, what the range of possible policy alternatives are, and what the best policy would be. Interested parties (like activists, interest groups, non-profits, private citizens) have to work hard to get policy makers focused on *their* favored policy. Policy briefs have the potential to reach large audiences through different networks because of their condensed, but eye-catching format.

You must read the Pennock chapter on issue briefs. You should craft a professional, concise, and informative advocacy-oriented policy brief on your topic. An advocacy brief means that it should argue in favor of a particular policy or set of actions. It should be eye-catching and easy to read. It should include, charts, graphs, bulleted points, tweetworthy side bars and other images that help the reader to get all of the information they need in a concise format. They should be short and to the point and provide a substantial body of evidence to support the highlighted points and policy recommendation and/or alternatives. You will be graded on your ability to convey a great deal of information in a concise format. Someone reading your brief should walk away knowing about the policy problem as well as how it might be addressed.

For examples (and to see the inspiration for this assignment), see Prof. Rebecca Kreitzer's (UNC-Chapel Hill) [tweet-storm](#) with the briefs from her students.