

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY INTERN COMMITTEE**2015 SESSION INTERNSHIP****CLASS SYLLABUS****POLITICS AND POLICY IN THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

***** REVISED 1/8/15 *****

ACADEMIC COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Policy is what government does and does not do. Politics is the process by which it decides what to do and how. Politics and policy are integral to each other: just as there can be no policymaking without politics, we can also understand public policy as both the product of political struggle and the source of grievances for subsequent battles.

In a democracy, choices have to be made, and politics is the best means we have of making those choices. Legislative processes are key to political action, since the legislature is literally the lawmaking branch of a representative government; however, politics goes beyond these arenas, since it refers to all activity designed to acquire and use power for some collective good and includes any arena in which one mobilizes constituents, acquires allies and confronts resistance.

This course is designed to explore how politics influences policy in the New York state legislative process, as well as the role of policy analysis. We will examine the critical issues confronting New York State, and models for understanding how these issues get on the policy agenda. We will focus on the points in the policy process when politics can and does play a role, as well as the various political actors in the process, including legislators, the governor, the attorney general and comptroller, state agencies, citizens, lobbyists and policy entrepreneurs, as well as the media.

We will discuss how policymakers translate their preferred solutions into an agenda that others take seriously and how they take political action to advance this agenda. We will also explore the built-in institutional relationships and fragmentation of the New York political system, as well as the constellation of constituent interests, agency rivalries, legislative conflicts, and external political factors. We will review the way that the political process functions in New York State, the benefits and obstacles that these political features can represent for orderly deliberation, and the proposals for reform.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of the course each student is expected to understand:

- how politics influences policy in the New York State legislative process
- the role of policy analysis
- how issues get on the policy agenda
- the points in the policy process when politics can and does play a role

- the various political actors in the process, including legislators, legislative leaders, the governor, the attorney general, the comptroller, state agencies, political parties, citizens, lobbyists and policy entrepreneurs, as well as the media
- how policymakers translate their preferred solutions into an agenda that others take seriously
- how policymakers take political action to advance this agenda
- the built-in relationships and institutional fragmentation of the New York political system, as well as the constellation of constituent interests, agency rivalries, legislative conflicts, and external political factors
- the way that the political process functions in New York State
- the obstacles these political features can pose to orderly deliberation, and the proposals for reform
- the political and cultural diversity of New York State
- how to communicate effectively orally and in writing on diverse aspects of complex issues
- how to undertake and write a complex research paper

GRADING POLICIES:

- 1. Interns must receive at least a “C” in this course in order to receive a final grade recommendation for the course and the program. If a student’s overall grade in the course is less than a “C”, no report indicating completion of the course and the program will be made to your home college.**
- 2. Plagiarism:** Any student proved guilty of plagiarism through electronic searches or traditional search methods will be failed for the specific assignment, the entire course and/or the entire Internship Program, given college, university and Internship Program guidelines. Plagiarism is defined as the representation of someone else’s work as your own, or the use of someone else’s wording without indicating the source by using footnotes and quotation marks. Changing a few words here and there is not sufficient to avoid plagiarism, nor is placing a footnote at the end of a paragraph taken from someone else’s work without using quotation marks. **A required academic honesty workshop will be given at the beginning of the program. It is the student’s responsibility to attend this workshop, and to be aware of what plagiarism is and the penalties against it within the Internship Program and your own University or College.**
- 3. Late assignments:** Late assignments and papers will be penalized 1/3 of a grade (e.g. A to A-) for each calendar day late. **No late papers will be accepted after one week from the due date.**
- 4. Revisions and extra credit:** Assignments and papers cannot be revised and resubmitted. However, a bonus question will be given on each quiz.

5. **Proofreading and writing skills:** Good writing skills are crucial for participants in the policy process. Therefore, errors of spelling, typing and grammar will negatively impact your grade. Please check, spell-check, and proofread your papers and assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. The use of electronic devices is not permitted in classes, workshops, and Issue Forums. This includes cell phones, pagers, iPods, iPads, texting, instant messaging, etc. Interns should turn off all such devices prior to the beginning of these events.
2. Provided that you have met the requirement of receiving at least a “C” in this course (see above), 45% of your proposed final grade will be based on the evaluation from your office supervisor, and the remaining 55% will be allocated to the academic component.
3. This 55% for the academic component will be calculated as follows:
 - a. Observe required attendance rule at all classes, discussion sections, assigned Policy Forums, and group exercises. Only a signed doctor’s note will be accepted as an excuse. Promptness is necessary in order to sign in to receive credit for attendance.
 - b. Quizzes on readings—10%. Five quizzes will be administered on days when there are no written assignments due, i.e. on January 22, January 29, February 12, March 12 and March 19. Also, spot quizzes are always a possibility. **QUIZZES WILL BE ADMINISTERED AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS. LATE-ARRIVING STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TAKE THE QUIZ.**
 - c. Written assignments—20%. These include papers on district characteristics, legislative reform proposals, as well as political parties, the media and connecting with the district constituency. **Be sure to submit every assignment; a zero on an assignment (or on a quiz or the research paper) has a serious impact on your final grade.**
 - d. Research paper—25%. This paper, 15-20 double-spaced, typewritten pages, should focus on an analysis of a specific bill. The proposal is due February 12, and two copies of the research paper are due April 2 at the beginning of class.

Note that the paper must have a title page, headings and sub-headings, appropriate citations (footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citations), and a separate bibliography. It must be typed and proof-read. Paper should be double-spaced, with 1” margins and 12-point font print.

Topics should be chosen in consultation with your professor based on the areas of policy or legislation that interest you or your office, what is in the newspapers, what was mentioned in the State of the State Address by the Governor, or in Speaker Silver's Address, and whether, for purposes of research, as well as ability to answer all the questions on pp. 4-5 of this syllabus, the bill is a two-house bill with an active and researchable legislative history, as well as strongly articulated public views expressed by various supporters, opponents and interest groups.

- e. The mid-term grades are traditionally not weighted but the average of all the grades received to date.
- f. In addition to the two mandatory workshops (one on academic integrity and the other on writing the final research papers), throughout the semester, Dr. Wesley Nishiyama will offer a series of presentations on selected topics. These presentations are not mandatory, but will prove to be engaging. Students will receive extra credit for attending. Two points will be added to the quiz average for each of the six optional presentations attended. Topics will be announced.

REQUIRED QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN YOUR RESEARCH PAPER:

Based on the assigned readings for this course and your research on a particular bill (using materials mentioned in handouts on New York legislative research; readings in the New York Times, district newspapers, and relevant academic literature, and information from the LRS), address the following questions in your paper:

1. What is the specific bill that you are analyzing? (Attach copy in Appendix.)
2. What conflict or catalyst precipitated the bill? Did a specific problem suddenly emerge, or has the problem been building up gradually? Were there any policy windows and policy entrepreneurs?
3. Does the conflict involve large groups, or is it relevant to only a small group? What are the implications either way?
4. What does the legislation propose to do to resolve the conflict?
5. Who is in favor of the bill and why? Which groups and Assembly Members are supporting it? Which groups and Senators are supporting it?
6. Who is opposed to the bill and why? Which Assembly Members? Which Senators? Any organized groups against it? If the bill is not moving out of committee in the Assembly or the Senate, why not?
7. Has the leadership in each House taken a position on the bill? What about the Governor's office?

8. How well have the staffs of the legislature (Assembly and Senate) analyzed the pros and cons of the legislation? Are there any unknowns? What role if any does policy analysis play in this policy story?
9. What are the implications of the legislation for your Member's district? Have there been any public statements on his/her part, and from district newspapers or constituents?
10. What do you think are the prospects for the legislation, or how do you explain its history? Why?
11. If your piece of legislation was not passed or is highly unlikely to be passed, are there specific strategies for either the political or policy process that might enhance the likelihood of this bill's passage in the future?
12. What are the lessons about the intersection of politics and policy around the issue that you chose for your research paper?
13. Do you think the proposed legislation and legislative process around this issue represents or departs from your model of democratic government (you must summarize the model you use)? What are the democratic implications?

REQUIRED READINGS FOR THE COURSE:

- 1) Edward V. Schneier, John Brian Murtaugh, and Antoinette Pole, New York Politics, 2nd Edition, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2010, ppb.
- 2) READINGS PACKET distributed to all interns
- 3) Daily newspaper—New York Times or district newspaper; newspaper articles on current events will often be used in class as case studies for the week's readings.

CLASS SESSIONS:

January 6 INTRODUCTION—INSTITUTIONS IN THE NEW YORK POLICY PROCESS
(Sections I and II – Combined Lecture – Hearing Room C, 11:00am - 12:30 pm)

Schneier, Murtaugh and Pole, New York Politics, pp. 217-260 (“Making Public Policy”).

Dall Forsythe, “The Governor of New York,” The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government and Politics, Oxford University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin, pp. **262-286**.

Eric Lane and Joshua M. Wolf, “The New York State Legislature,” The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government and Politics, Oxford University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin, pp. **225-261**.

January 15 POLITICAL REALITIES AND THE POLICY PROCESS
(Sections I and II - Combined Lecture—Hearing Room C, 10:00-11:00 am)

“American Democracy in an Age of Rising Inequality,” APSA Task Force Report, pp. 651-666

Schneier, Murtaugh and Pole, New York Politics, pp. **3-29**, (“The State of New York”) and Appendix A, pp. **329-337** (“A Citizen’s Guide to the New York State Legislature”) and Appendix B, (“Maps”) pp. **338-344**.

**January 22 POLICY ANALYSIS AND THE POLICY PROCESS
(Sections I and II - Combined Lecture—Hearing Room C,
10:00-11:00 am)**

Michael Kraft and Scott Furlong, Public Policy. Politics, Analysis and Alternatives, Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2007, pp. **97-183**.

“Welfare Policymaking and Intersections of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in the US State Legislatures,” Beth Reingold and Adrienne R. Smith

“Intersectionality and Public Policy: Some Lessons from Existing Models,” Olena Hankivsky and Renee Cormier

******* QUIZ**

“District Characteristics” survey in readings packet

“Tips for Completing the District Characteristics Paper”

******* ASSIGNMENT DUE: 3-4 PAGE PAPER ON CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR MEMBER’S DISTRICT.**

This paper should be based on discussing the survey in your readings packet with your Assembly member, if at all possible, or his/her representative, plus research on all the web sites and in the volumes listed in the document, “Tips for Completing the District Characteristics Paper,” which is also in your readings packet.

**January 29 THE ALL-IMPORTANT BUDGET PROCESS, OR WHO GETS WHAT, WHEN, AND HOW?
(Section I – Hearing Room C – 9:30-10:30 am;
Section II – Hearing Room C – 11:00-12:00 pm)**

Schneier, Murtaugh and Pole, “New York in the Federal System” New York Politics, 2nd Ed., 2010, M. E. Sharpe, pp. **29-59**.

----- “Taxing, Spending and Public Policy Priorities,” New York Politics, pp. **261-309**.

****** QUIZ**

****** WORK/LEARNING CONTRACTS DUE.** Sign up for individual meetings with faculty from 1:00-3:00 pm only if you wish to discuss any problems with your work/learning contracts. Otherwise, hand them in at the Internship Office. See Attachment D in the 2015 Session Intern Handbook for form if necessary.

February 5 **CRITICAL POLICY ISSUES IN NEW YORK STATE TODAY**

Pick and read any two from the following:

Michael K. Gusmano, et al, "Health Care Politics and Policy in New York State," The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government and Politics, Oxford University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin, pp. **599-634**.

Dennis C. Smith and Martin Horn, "Public Safety Policy in New York State," The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government and Politics, Oxford University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin, pp. **635-661**.

Jonathan Drapkin, "Economic Development in New York State," The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government and Politics, Oxford University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin, pp. **735-766**.

Michael B. Gerrard and Claire H. Wood, The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government and Politics, Oxford University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin, pp. **792-828**.

February 12 **POLITICS AND POLICY IN NEW YORK STATE: COMPARISONS IN THE LABORATORIES OF DEMOCRACY**

Schneier, Murtaugh and Pole, New York Politics, pp. **133-170** ("The Living Constitution,"), and pp. **171-216** ("Struggle for Power, Position and Access").

Keith E. Hamm and Gary F. Moncrief , Legislative Politics in the States, and Margaret Ferguson, Governors and the Executive Branch, in Gray et al. Politics in the American States. Congressional Quarterly Press.2012

"How to Choose a Research Topic" (readings packet).

***** **QUIZ**

**** **ASSIGNMENT DUE: RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC PROPOSAL.**

Turn in a proposal that includes the following: 1) a copy of the bill you propose to analyze; 2) the legislative history from LRS; 3) a 3-page analysis of why the bill involves an important policy problem in New York; 4) a bibliography of materials that exist on the topic, and 5) a tentative outline of the proposed paper. We will return the proposal with an indication of whether the proposed topic is doable and acceptable, from the point of view of whether your proposed topic allows you to answer all the questions listed on pp. 4-5 of this syllabus. We will also let you know whether we need to meet to discuss questions or concerns.

**February 19 PROPOSALS FOR POLITICAL REFORM
(Sections I and II – Combined Lecture—Hearing Room C,
10:00-11:00 am)**

GUEST LECTURER, PROFESSOR FRANK ANACHARICO,
Maynard-Knox Professor of Government and Law, Hamilton College
Managing Editor, *Public Integrity*, a journal of the American Society for
Public Administration

“Tips on Writing the Proposals for Legislative Reform Paper”
(assignment).

Jeffrey M. Stonecash (as updated by Suzanne Post), “The Proposal and
Disposal of Legislation in the New York Legislature.”

Schneier, Murtaugh and Pole, “New Directions for New York,”
New York Politics, 2nd Ed., 2010, M. E. Sharpe, pp. **310-328**.

“The Philip Weinberg Forum on the Brennan Center Report: The New
York State Legislative Process—An Evaluation and Blueprint for Reform:
Two Views,” January 6, 2005, **33** pp.

Patricia E. Salkin and Amy Lavine, “The Judiciary and Judicial Reform,”
The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government and Politics, Oxford
University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin, pp. **357-383**.

Andrew Stengel, Lawrence Norden, and Laura Seago, “Still Broken: New
York State Legislative Reform 2008 Update,” Summary of Findings and
Recommendations, NYU Brennan Center for Justice, **6** pp.

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, “Assembly Approves Sweeping Ethics
and Campaign Finance Reform Legislation,” Press Release, January 20,
2010.

“Statement from Speaker Silver and Minority Leader Kolb Regarding the
Assembly’s Override of Governor Paterson’s Veto of Ethics Legislation,”
Press Release, February 8, 2010.

Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb, “Is Albany Working for You?,” Press
Release, July 27, 2010.

February 26 ENGAGING THE PUBLIC: THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE MEDIA

Schneier, Murtaugh and Pole, New York Politics, pp. **60-98** (“Parties, Politics and Elections,”), and pp. **122-132** (“Power, Pluralism, Public Opinion and the Permanent Government”).

Douglas Muzzio, “Politics and the New Media in the Empire State,” The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government and Politics, Oxford University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin, pp. **190-222**.

Elizabeth Benjamin, “Reporters and Politicians in Albany: Access, Reciprocity and News Management,” in Pecorella and Stonecash, Governing New York State, Fifth edition; New York: SUNY, 2006, pp. **111-123**.

**** ASSIGNMENT DUE: 3-4 pages on your suggestions for two procedural or political reforms in the New York legislative process.

Assignment sheets: “Political Parties, the Media and Connecting with the District Constituency.”

March 5 POWER AND DEMOCRACY IN THE AMERICAN CONTEXT (Sections I and II – Combined Lecture—Hearing Room C, 10:00-11:00 am)

“Contemporary Models of Democracy,” Wayne Gabardi

“Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal, and Hartz: The multiple Traditions in America,” Rogers Smith

**** Interview your Assembly member (or staff member if he or she is not available) using the questions listed in the assignment sheets in the readings packet. Compose a 3-4 page paper that discusses his or her responses to the questions.

**** **MID-SESSION EVALUATIONS DUE**; sign up for individual mid-session meetings from 2:00–4:00 pm only if you want to discuss a concern, issue or problem; otherwise, hand in evaluations at the Internship Office. See Attachment C in the 2015 Session Intern Handbook for forms.

***** **HAND OUT MATERIAL ON MOCK SESSION CALENDAR TO BE DISCUSSED IN THE FIRST PARTY CONFERENCE STARTING ON APRIL 2.**

March 9 MOCK SESSION

**** **Mock Session Committee Chairs and Rankers Meeting,
9:00–10:00 am – 104A LOB.**

**** **Mock Session Majority and Minority Leadership Meeting,
10:00–11:00 pm – 104A LOB.**

March 12 VALUES AND FRAMING THE ISSUES: EQUITY AND RIGHTS

Deborah Stone, Policy Paradox, NY: Norton, 1997, pp. **1-14;**
39-60.

Matt Bai, “The Framing Wars,” New York Times Magazine, July 17, 2005,
entire.

**** **QUIZ**

**** **Last Day for Mock Session Bill Introductions by 5:00 pm –
104A LOB**

**** **Last Day for Mock Session Resolutions by 5:00 pm –
104A LOB**

March 16 MOCK SESSION BILL LIST DISTRIBUTED**March 19 THE POLITICS OF POLICY: THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURS AND LOBBYISTS**

John Kingdon, Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies, NY:
Harper Collins, 1995, 2nd ed., pp. **179-195.**

Schneier, Murtaugh and Pole, New York Politics, pp. **99-122**
(rest of chapter on “Power, Pluralism, Opinion and the
Permanent Government”).

Norman Adler and Bruce N. Gyory, “Lobbying and the Interest
Group System,” The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government
and Politics, Oxford University Press, 2012, edited by Gerald Benjamin,
pp. **168-189.**

**** **QUIZ**

March 26 COMPARATIVE INTEREST GROUPS

Anthony J. Nownes and Adam Newmark Interest Groups in the States, in Gray et al, Politics in the American States. Congressional Quarterly Press. 2012.

April 2 CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE POLICY PROCESS: VOICE, TRUST, EFFICACY

Russell J. Dalton, Citizen Politics (3rd ed.), NY: Chatham House, 2001, pp. 32-57; 235-258.

Carl E. Van Horn, Politics and Public Policy, 3rd ed; Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2001, pp. 231-269.

**** **RESEARCH PAPERS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.**

FIRST MOCK SESSION PARTY CONFERENCES

12:00–1:30 pm – Minority – 104A LOB

2:00–3:30 pm – Majority – Hearing Room C

MOCK SESSION MAJORITY LEADERSHIP AND MAJORITY COMMITTEE CHAIR MEETING - 4:00–5:00 PM – 104A LOB

April 9 NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK – APRIL 6-10, 2015

April 14 MOCK SESSION AGENDAS DUE

April 15 MOCK SESSION AGENDAS DISTRIBUTED

April 16 MOCK SESSION COMMITTEE MEETINGS ALL DAY – 104A LOB AND 711A LOB

**** **FINAL EVALUATIONS are due**; sign up for individual final evaluation meetings from 2:00-4:00 pm only if you want to discuss a concern, issue or problem; otherwise, hand in evaluations at the Internship Office. See Attachments A-2 and A-3 in the 2015 Session Intern Handbook for forms.

April 17 MOCK SESSION PASSING COMMITTEE BILL LIST DISTRIBUTED

