

**Political Science 4015**  
**American State Politics and Policy Making**  
**Fall 2011**

Dr. Hogan  
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117 Tureaud, TTH 9:10-10:30  
Office Hours TTH 10:40-11:40 or by appt.

**Course Description**

This course introduces students to governmental institutions, political behavior, and policy issues at the state level. Our goal is to understand how different institutions and political conditions interact and play a role in the public policy process. A comparative approach is used whereby the political contexts and policies of the various states are compared and contrasted. While Louisiana will be used as a prominent example in our study, this is not a course on Louisiana politics.

The topics to be covered are divided into four broad sections. The first part of the course focuses on various political contexts in which state governments operate. The second part explores the institutions in which policy is created and implemented (legislative, executive, and judicial). A third section gives attention to differences across states in political party structures, interest group activities, media coverage, and election practices. The fourth section of the course focuses on different policy areas. We will spend time covering problems or conditions that policies are intended to alter, the specific actions governments take in response to these conditions, and whether or not such efforts have their intended effects.

In addition to our focus on the substantive aspects of state politics, we will also spend time examining the methods used by scholars to answer questions on these topics. Part of our goal is to assess the evidence obtained by scholars and to consider alternative approaches. While this is not a course on political science methodology, issues involving research design and analysis will play prominently in our class discussions.

**Reading Materials**

The following books are available for purchase in the bookstore:

- *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis* (9<sup>th</sup> edition) by Virginia Gray and Russell L. Hanson, editors (2008 Congressional Quarterly Press, Washington, DC).
- *Inside the Statehouse: Lessons from the Speaker* by Ralph G. Wright (2005, Congressional Quarterly Press, Washington, DC).

In addition, other required readings listed on the syllabus are accessible through the LSU Moodle system.

**Course Requirements**

The grade for the course is determined by a student's performance in the following areas:

Participation	10%
Policy Project	15%
Mid-Term Exam #1	20%
Mid-Term Exam #2	25%
Final Exam	30%

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**TOTAL**                      **100%**

Letter grades will be determined as follows: A = 90 – 100 percent, B = 80 – 89 percent, C = 70 – 79 percent, D = 60 – 69 percent, and F = Below 60 percent.

### *Participation: Class Discussions, Quizzes, and Brief Writing Assignments*

Classes are generally conducted in a lecture-discussion format so it is important to keep up with the readings and to come to class prepared. Students are strongly encouraged to take part in class discussions. In order to do this, it is necessary to complete the readings in advance and to spend time thinking about them in a critical manner. Also, please keep up with current political developments at the state level since these will often be used as examples in our discussions.

Quizzes will be administered periodically along with brief in-class writing assignments. In addition, I will occasionally ask you to complete a short assignment that is due at the beginning of the next class meeting. These assignments typically involve writing a brief essay on a given topic. This work will be counted as part of your participation grade. All class assignments will be posted on Moodle soon after they are provided in class. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to check Moodle for any missed assignment prior to the next class meeting. Also, assignments not handed in on time will receive a grade penalty.

### *Policy Project*

A policy project is required that counts for 15 percent of the course grade. In this assignment students identify and write a brief report on a policy innovation or change recently adopted at the state level. Further details on this assignment will be provided in a separate handout. The project is due on Tuesday, November 22 at the beginning of class.

### *Exams*

There are three exams – two mid-terms and a final (dates are listed on the syllabus). These tests will consist of short-answer/essay style questions. Note that makeup exams are only administered when a student can produce a valid written excuse. If you anticipate a problem, please let me know as soon as possible. Also, for anyone who has special needs or who requires accommodations through Disability Services, please advise me of your situation in advance of the exams so arrangements can be made.

## **General Policies**

### *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is a serious offense and is not taken lightly. Use of another's words or ideas without giving proper credit will not be tolerated. Care should be made to properly cite sources where appropriate. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please consult me. I reserve the right to investigate when I suspect that you are not doing your own work. All violations of this policy are turned over to the Dean of Students for adjudication.

### *Classroom Etiquette*

Please be considerate to those around you who are trying to listen, take notes, and participate in class discussions. Please make every effort to be on time to class. Be seated and ready to begin at 9:10 and leave early only for emergencies. Turn cell phones and pagers to silent. Most importantly, do not talk during class. Disruptive students will be asked to leave immediately.

### *Recording Devices and Computers*

No audio or video recording devices are allowed unless special permission is granted by the instructor. Please do not take photographs of the overheads. You are free to use laptop computers for class purposes (e.g., taking notes, looking up relevant information on the internet, etc.). But please do not simply play on the internet, check e-mail, or use social networking sites.

### *Late Assignments and Missed Work*

All written assignments are due at the beginning of class. Penalties will be assessed based upon the circumstances, but will generally involve a substantial loss of points. In other words, be certain that I receive your written work at the beginning of class. Please note that for reasons of fairness to other students in the class, credit cannot be given at the end of the semester for missed exams and quizzes or for papers not handed in. In other words, when you experience a significant problem that prevents you from meeting a deadline or taking a test, it is your responsibility to let me know about it in a timely manner and to make arrangements to make up the missed work. Excuses must be provided within one week of your return, NOT at the end of the semester.

## Course Schedule

### The Contexts of State Politics

- August 23      *Introduction to the Course*
- August 25      *Why Study States?*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 1.
  - Reading #1: Lupia, Arthur. 2000. "Evaluating Political Science Research: Information for Buyers and Sellers," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (pp. 7-13).
  - Reading #2: Berry, William D., and Mitchell S. Sanders. 2000. (Chapter 1) *Understanding Multivariate Research: A Primer for Beginning Social Scientists*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
  - Reading #3: "Appendix: A Brief Introduction to Regression."
- August 30      *Culture, Public Opinion, and Constitutions*
- Reading #4: Dinan, John. 2010. "State Constitutional Developments in 2009," in *Book of the States*, pp. 3-17.
  - Reading #5: Elazar, Daniel J. 1966. "Marketplace and Commonwealth, and the Three Political Cultures," from *State and Local Government*, ed. by John R. Baker.
  - Reading #6: Fellowes, Matthew C., 2004. "Politics and the New American Welfare States," *American Journal of Political Science*, 48: 362-373.
- September 1      *Federalism: National and State Government Relations*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 2.
  - Reading #7: Donovan, Todd, Christopher Z. Mooney, and Daniel A. Smith. 2010. "Federalism: State and Local Politics within a Federal System," (Chapter 2) in *State and Local Politics: Institutions and Reform*, Massachusetts: Wadsworth.
  - Reading #8: Nathan, Richard P. 2006. "There Will Always Be a New Federalism," *Journal of Public Administration* 16: 499-510.
- September 6      *Federalism in Practice*
- Reading #9: Schneider, Sandra K., William G. Jacoby, and Daniel C. Lewis. 2010. "Public Opinion Toward Intergovernmental Policy Responsibilities," *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 41: 1-30.
  - Reading #10: Zernike, Kate. 2010. "Proposed Amendment Would Enable States to Repeal Federal Law," *New York Times*, December.
  - Reading #11: Barnett, Randy and William J. Howell. 2010. "The Case for a 'Repeal Amendment,'" Cato Institute September.

### Institutions of Governing in State Politics

- September 8      *Characteristics of Legislative Institutions*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 6.
  - Reading #12: Squire, Peverill, and Gary Moncrief. 2010. "99 Chambers and Why They Matter," Chapter 1 in *State Legislatures Today: Politics Under the Domes*.
  - Reading #13: Galbraith, Kate. 2010. "Texas Stands Against Tide in Retaining Biennial Legislature," *The New York Times* December.
- September 13      *State Legislators: Who They Are and How They Got There*
- Gray and Hanson, Re-read part of Chapter 6 (154-171).
  - Reading #14: Hogan, Robert E. 2001. "Campaign War Chests and Challenger Emergence in State Legislative Elections," *Political Research Quarterly* 54: 815-830.
- September 15      *One Legislator's Perspective*
- Wright, Ralph G. 2005. *Inside the Statehouse* (entire book).
- September 20      **Midterm Exam #1**

- September 22     *Descriptive Representation*
- Reading #15: Hogan, Robert E. 2001. "The Influence of State and District Conditions on the Representation of Women in State Legislatures" *American Politics Research*, 29: 4-24.
  - Reading #16: Sanbonmatsu, Kira, Susan J. Carroll, and Debbie Walsh. 2009. "Poised to Run: Women's Pathways to the State Legislature," Rutgers University, NJ: Center for American Women and Politics.
- September 27     *Other Elements of Representation*
- Gray and Hanson, Re-read part of Chapter 6 (171-173).
  - Reading #17: Cooper, Christopher A., and Lilliard E. Richardson. 2006. "Institutions and Representational Roles in American State Legislatures," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 6: 174-94.
  - Reading #18: Jewell, Malcolm E. 1982. "Communicating with Constituents," from *Representation in State Legislatures*, Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.
  - Reading #19: Maestas, Cherie. 2003. "The Incentive to Listen: Progressive Ambition, Resources, and Opinion Monitoring Among State Legislators," *Journal of Politics* 65: 439-456.
- September 29     *Term Limits*
- Gray and Hanson, Re-read part of Chapter 6 (173-191).
  - Reading #20: Browser, Jennie Drage and Gary Moncrief. 2007. "Term Limits in State Legislatures," (Chapter 1) *Institutional Change in American Politics: The Case of Term Limits*, University of Michigan Press.
  - Reading #21: Carey, John M., Richard Niemi, Lynda W. Powell, and Gary F. Moncrief. 2006. "The Effects of Term Limits on State Legislatures: A New Survey of the 50 States," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 31: 105-34.
- October 4     *Legislative Decision Making*
- Reading #22: Richardson, Lilliard E., Brian E. Russell, and Christopher A. Cooper. 2004. "Legislative Representation in a Single-Member versus Multiple-Member District System: The Arizona State Legislature," *Political Research Quarterly* 57: 337-44.
  - Reading #23: Masker, Seth. 2008. "Where You Sit is Where You Stand: The Impact of Seating Proximity on Legislative Cue-Taking," *The Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 3: 301-11.
- October 6     *Executive Branch*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 7.
  - Reading #24: King, James D. 2001. "Incumbent Popularity and Vote Choice in Gubernatorial Elections," *Journal of Politics* 63: 585-597.
  - Reading #25: Goodman, Josh. 2009. "The Second Best Job in the State," *Governing*, April 1: 1-6.
- October 11     *Governors and Legislatures*
- Reading #26: Dilger, Robert Jay, George A. Krause, and Randolph R. Moffett. 1995. "State Legislative Professionalism and Gubernatorial Effectiveness, 1978-1991," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 20: 553-71.
  - Reading #27: Klarner, Carl E., and Andrew Karch. 2008. "Why Do Governors Issue Vetoes? The Impact of Individual and Institutional Influences," *Political Research Quarterly* 61: 574-84.
- October 13     *Fall Break*
- October 18     *State Courts*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 8.
  - Reading #28: Bonneau, Chris W. 2007. "Campaign Fundraising in State Supreme Court Elections," *Social Science Quarterly* 88: 68-85.
  - Reading #29: Sulzberger, A. G. 2010. "Ouster of Iowa Judges Sends Signal to Bench," *New York Times*, November 3.
- October 20     *State Court Decision Making*
- Reading #30: Hall, Melinda Gann. 1992. "Electoral Politics and Strategic Voting in State Supreme Courts," *Journal of Politics*, 55: 427-446.
  - Reading #31: Liptak, Adam. 2011. "Overriding the Jury in Capital Cases," *New York Times*, July 11.
- October 25     **Midterm Exam #2**

## Linking Institutions and Citizens

- October 27      *Interest Groups*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 4.
- November 1      *Interest Group Influence*
- Reading #32: Nownes, Anthony J., and Krissy Walker DeAlejandro. 2009. "Lobbying in the New Millennium: Evidence of Continuity and Change in Three States," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 9(4): 429-55.
  - Reading #33: Ozymy, Joshua. 2010. "Assessing the Impact of Legislative Lobbying Regulations on Interest Groups Influence in U.S. State Legislatures," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 10: 397-420.
- November 3      *Political Parties and Elections*
- Gray and Hanson Chapter 3.
  - Reading #34: McDonald, Michael P. 2004. "A Comparative Analysis of Redistricting Institutions in the United States, 2001-02," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 4: 371-95.
  - Reading #35: Jewett, Aubrey W. 2001. "Partisan Change in Southern Legislatures, 1946-95," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 26: 457-486.
- November 8      *The Media in State Politics*
- Reading #36: Gurwitt, Rob. 2009. "Death and Life in the Pressroom," *Governing*, January: 1-6.
  - Reading #37: Tan, Yue, and David H. Weaver. 2009. "Local Media, Public Opinion, and State Legislative Policies: Agenda Setting at the State Level," *International Journal of Press/Politics* 14: 454-76.
- November 10     *Direct Democracy*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 5.
  - Reading #38: Nicholson, Stephen P. 2003. "The Political Environment and Ballot Proposition Awareness," *American Journal of Political Science*, 47: 403-410.
  - Reading #39: Arceneaux, Kevin. 2002. "Direct Democracy and the Link between Public Opinion and State Abortion Policy," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 2(4): 372-87.

## Making and Evaluating Public Policies

- November 15     *Elements of the Public Policy Process*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 9 and 12.
- November 17     *Economic and Social Regulation*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 13
  - Reading #40: Smith, Kevin B. 2004. "The Politics of Punishment: Evaluating Political Explanations of Incarceration Rates," *Journal of Politics* 66: 925-38.
- November 22     *Fiscal and Economic Development Policies*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapters 10 and 14.
- \*\*\*\*\*Policy Project Due at the beginning of Class\*\*\*\*\*
- November 24     **Thanksgiving**
- November 29     *Policy Outcomes: Health and Welfare Programs*
- Gray and Hanson, Chapter 11.
  - Reading #41: Morgan, David R., and Kenneth Kickham. 2001. "Children in Poverty: Do State Policies Matter?" *Social Science Quarterly* 82: 478-93.
- December 1      *Summation and Review*
- December 10     **FINAL EXAM** in this classroom on Saturday, December 10 from 12:30-2:30 p.m.