

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY INTERN COMMITTEE

2020 SESSION INTERNSHIP

CLASS SYLLABUS

POLITICS AND POLICY IN THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Professor-in-Residence: Dr. Angela Ledford

E-mail: ledforda@nyassembly.gov

Office: 104 Concourse

Phone: (518) 455-4704

Professor-in-Residence: Dr. Anthony Maniscalco

E-mail: maniscalcoa@nyassembly.gov

Office: 104 Concourse

Phone: (518) 455-4704

Professor: Dr. Wesley Nishiyama

E-mail: nishiyw@nyassembly.gov

Office: 104 Concourse

Phone: (518) 455-4704

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 turn, those grievances and battles may constitute the sources of continuing civic engagement and governance processes that involve elected officials, affected groups, and citizens.

In a democracy, choices need 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 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 are placed on the policy agenda. We will focus on the points in the policy process when politics plays a role, as well as the various political actors in the process, including legislators, the governor, the attorney general and comptroller, state agencies, citizens, non-profit organizations, 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. In addition, we will 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. Furthermore, 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 courses, each student is expected to understand:

- The policy-making process and the influence of politics in a democratic system
- New York State politics and the legislative process
- How a policy is placed on the agenda
- The role that political, economic, and cultural diversity play
- Principles and practices of democracy, citizen participation, equity and rights
- The importance of Global/Intercultural fluency
- How to write effectively on diverse and complex subjects
- How to research and write a detailed policy and political analysis report
- How to use the Legislation Retrieval System (digital data base)

Mock Session will enhance:

- Oral communication and debating skills
- Teamwork and group collaboration
- Professional and work ethics
- Leadership skills
- An understanding of a career in public service

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Interns will attend three different 4-week courses. Each course will be taught every 4-week course cycle (there will be three course cycles.) The courses are as follows:

Dr. Ledford – Democracy, Citizen Participation, Equity and Rights

Three Lectures: in LOB 711A, Thursdays 10:30 am to 11:30 am and
One Combined Lecture (see group schedule)

Dr. Maniscalco – Politics in New York State

Three Lectures: in LOB 711A, Thursdays 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm and
One Combined Lecture: (see group schedule)

Dr. Nishiyama – Public Policy and Policy Analysis

Four Lectures: in LOB 711A, Thursdays (3) and Wednesday (1)
11:45 am – 12:45 pm and
One Combined Lecture: (see group schedule)

Each intern will be placed in one of six groups (A to F). For class times, locations and required readings, please consult the schedule for your group. Interns will attend only one class (4 or 5 lectures) each four-week cycle. Your home professor, who will sign your midterm and final evaluations, will be the professor of first class you attend—starting January 16.

2. Interns must be respectful toward speakers, staff, professors, (all) Assemblymembers, constituents, and other interns, in class, during issue forums, in the office, on the floor and in public. Politics is often very contentious; there are ways to voice a political position while being respectful toward others.
3. On-time attendance classes and events is required. An unexcused tardy may result in an unexcused absence.
5. The use of electronic devices is **NOT** permitted in lectures, workshops, presentations, and Issue Forums. This includes laptops, cell phones, smartphones, iPods, tablet, texting, instant messaging, etc. Interns who do not comply, will receive an absence for the day and may be asked to leave the classroom. Interns must turn off and store all such devices before the class or event begins.
6. 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.
7. The 55% for the academic component will be calculated as follows:
 - a. Interns must attend all classes, Issue Forums, and mandatory Mock Session meetings. Only a signed doctor’s note, a police report, firefighter call, court order, or official military orders constitute an excuse. Promptness is necessary in order to sign-in to receive credit for attendance.
 - b. **The five highest quizzes out of six quizzes** comprise 15% of the overall grade (about 27¼% of the academic grade). Six quizzes will be administered on: January 30, February 6, February 27, March 5, March 19 and May 26 (the second and third lectures of each class cycle). Also, pop quizzes are always a possibility, which will be averaged in with the scheduled quizzes. **QUIZZES WILL BE ADMINISTERED AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS. LATE-ARRIVING STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TAKE THE QUIZ. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE THE QUIZ AND ATTEND THE LECTURE IN THE CLASS YOU HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED.**
 - c. **Two short papers** makeup 15% of the overall grade (around 27¼% of the academic grade). These include papers on “District Characteristics Survey” and “Procedural and Political Reforms.” All sources must be cited using **in-text citation in APA style. Be sure to submit every assignment on time; a zero on an assignment (or on a quiz or the research paper) has a serious impact on your final grade.**

- d. Submission of late **Research Proposals** will result in a deduction of the final research paper grade (see the next section on page 4, “Grading Policies”). Topics should be chosen in consultation with your professor based on the areas of policy or legislation that interest you and/or your office, what is in the newspapers, what was mentioned in the “State of the State Address” by the Governor, or in Speaker Carl E. Heastie’s Address. The bill must be currently considered in both the Assembly and the Senate (Same-As Bill) with an active and researchable legislative history, as well as strongly articulated public views expressed by various supporters, opponents and interest groups. The proposal is **due in class on February 13**.
- e. **The Final Research Paper (Report)** constitutes 25% of the overall grade (around 45½% of the academic grade). This paper, 15-25 double-spaced, typewritten pages (not including the table of contents, illustrations, graphic, maps, reference page, appendices, etc.), should focus on an analysis of a specific bill. **Two** copies of the **Final Research Paper (Report)** and **two** copies of the bill text, summary and memo from LRS are **due on Monday, April 20**, in the Intern Office, 104A LOB, as follows:

Last Names: A-F at 9:30 am; G-K at 10:00 am; L-R at 11:00 am and S-Z at 11:30 am.

The research papers must be received and recorded by the Intern Staff at the time specified above.

Note that the paper must have a title page, headings and sub-headings, appropriate citations **in-text parenthetical citations** (no footnotes), and a separate references page in **APA style**. It must be typed and proofread. Paper should be double-spaced, with 1” margins and 12-point font print. **SUBMITTED PAPERS NOT FOLLOWING THE FORMAT ABOVE WILL BE RETURNED AND WILL BE CONSIDERED LATE AND PENALIZED** (See the next section, “Grading Policies”)

- f. The **mid-session academic evaluations** consider only the academic grade average and not the office grade.
- g. In addition to **mandatory workshops** (including one on academic integrity), 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. One point will be added to the quiz average for each optional presentation attended. Topics will be announced. Additional non-mandatory workshops will be offered, but no extra credit will be given.

GRADING POLICIES:

1. **Academic Portion:** Interns must receive at least a “C” (73%) in the academic part of their internship in order to receive a final grade recommendation for the internship. **IF A STUDENT’S OVERALL GRADE IN THE ACADEMIC PART IS LESS THAN A “C”, A REPORT WILL BE SENT TO THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDING A FAILING GRADE FOR THE INTERNSHIP.**
2. **Plagiarism:** Any student guilty of plagiarism will fail the specific assignment, the entire course and/or the entire Internship Program pursuant to 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 or ideas without citing the source and/or not using quotation marks (and/or block quotes). Changing a few words here and there or placing a footnote at the end of a paragraph taken from someone else’s work without using quotation marks both constitute plagiarism. If you use your own work from another course, you must cite yourself. **A mandatory academic integrity workshop (plagiarism 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 his/her University or College.**
3. **Late Assignments:**
 - All **late short papers** (3 ½ - 4 ½ pages) will be penalized a grade (e.g. A to a B), and penalized an additional grade for each additional week it is late.
 - **Late research proposals** will result in a 1% deduction on the research paper final grade for each day it is late (including weekends). For example, a student may originally receive a 90% on his research paper, but because he submitted his proposal two days late, his paper will be penalized 2% and so he will receive an 88% (90% - 2% = 88%) for his paper.
 - **Late research papers** (15-25 pages) will only be accepted under extraordinary circumstances and with documentation (i.e., medical, legal, and military obligations). Unexcused late research papers will be penalized one letter grade for each day it is late. Furthermore, all late research papers (including excused papers) will not be eligible for the Intern Paper Awards.
 - **Late quizzes** will not be administered without a documented excuse.
4. **No Revisions:** An assignment cannot be revised and resubmitted once it has been graded.
5. **Writing and Proofreading:** Good writing skills are crucial for participants in the policy process. Therefore, **EXCESSIVE SPELLING ERRORS, TYPOS, DISORGANIZATION, POOR GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION MISTAKES, INFORMAL LANGUAGE (UNLESS IN A QUOTE) AND/OR IMPROPER USE OF APA STYLE, WILL REDUCE YOUR PAPER BY ONE LETTER GRADE** (i.e., an A becomes a B). Please proofread your papers and assignments. Good organization, excellent writing style and clarity will positively impact your grade.

6. **Mandatory Attendance:** Perfect attendance for all classes and issue forums will improve your grade if it is borderline (e.g., A- to an A). **AFTER THE FIRST TWO UNEXCUSED ABSENCES FOR THE SEMESTER, EACH ADDITIONAL UNEXCUSED ABSENCE WILL RESULT IN A 5% DECREASE IN YOUR ACADEMIC GRADE** (about a 2¼% decrease in the overall grade). **YOU MUST ATTEND THE CLASS TO WHICH YOU ARE ASSIGNED**, (see the schedule for your group).

7. Overall Grade Breakdown:

Office Grade	45%
Two Short Papers (Each 7.5%)	15%
Five Quizzes (out of Six Quizzes)	15%
<u>Research Paper</u>	<u>25%</u>
Grade (Our Recommendation)	100%

Provided the student receive no less than a C in the academic portion of the internship.

Again Note: Absences and Late Assignments will result in a reduction of your academic grade. (See above)

8. **Grading Scale**

97% – 100%	A+	77% – 79%	C+
93% – 96%	A	73% – 76%	C
90% – 92%	A-	70% – 72%	C-
87% – 89%	B+	60% – 69%	D
83% – 87%	B	59% and Below	F
80% – 82%	B-		

The final class grade will be rounded to the nearest integer (e.g., 79.4% will be rounded down to 79% and 79.5% will be rounded up to 80%)

Note: different colleges and universities have different grading policies. Most do not grant A+, other institutions do not have “-” and “+”, while others will grant only a “satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade.” We will recommend a grade, but your academic institution will determine the grade you will receive for the program. Consult your institution for details.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER 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, relevant academic literature, reliable websites—ending in “.gov” and “.edu” or very reliable and recognized sites ending in .org or .com, i.e., www.redcross.org, www.morganstanley.com, personal interviews, and information from LRS), consider the following questions below. The questions are arranged in three parts, around which the research paper should be organized—**Policy Analysis**, **Political Analysis**, and **Democratic Analysis**. Although the following is not a rubric, each section should be addressed, but not necessarily each question. Which questions should be considered depend on the nature of the policy analyzed.

I. Introduction

II. Policy Analysis (at least five pages)

- What is the specific bill that you are analyzing? (Attach a copy of the bill, summary, and memo in the Appendix)

1) The Catalyst

- What problem, conflict, or catalyst precipitated the bill? Did a specific problem suddenly emerge or has the problem been building up gradually?
- Is the problem serious? Is it a current problem or a potential problem (i.e., averting a disaster)?

2) Policy Development

- Who will benefit, who will bear the cost, and to what degree? What indirect benefits and cost might it incur? What are the fiscal implications?
- Will the policy work if implemented? Will it eliminate the problem or only treat the symptoms? Can the feasibility of the policy be determined with the existing data and studies conducted?
- Have similar policies been implemented in the U.S., in New York, in other states and in other countries; and if so what were the results? Are there better solutions to the problem? If so, why have they not been considered?
- Is there a more economical solution to the problem even if it is less effective?
- What values (i.e., fairness, equality, deserts, liberty, economic utility, the common good, rights, public opinion, etc.) should be considered and what values indeed are considered?
- What different demographics must be considered?
- Are there any possible unintended consequences and known externalities? Will the policy be hindered by other existing policies, which are being considered?
- As written, are there any problems with the wording—ambiguities, vagueness, contradictions, loopholes, and unaddressed circumstances?
- Is the policy expected to yield serious results immediately, in a few months, before the next election, a few years, or in generations to come?
- How enduring will the outcomes be?
- How well have the staffs of the legislature (Assembly and Senate) analyzed the pros and cons of the legislation?

- How do policymakers translate their preferred solutions into an agenda that others take seriously?
- How do policymakers take political action to advance this agenda?

3) Implementation

- How will this policy be implemented? Will it require the cooperation of state and local governments?
- Will incentive be necessary? If so what are these incentives—tax breaks, penalties, grants, etc.?
- Who will implement this policy? State agencies? Municipalities? Institutions (schools, hospitals, corporations, prisons, etc.)? Street bureaucrats (teachers, nurses, police, etc.)?
- What are some obstacles, which might prevent the proper implementation of this policy?

4) Evaluation

- Once the policy is implemented, can it be accurately evaluated and if so how?
- What would be considered successful results? Has success been defined?
- What might impede proper evaluation?

III. Political Analysis – Agenda Setting and the Legislative Process (at least five pages)

- Does the bill have a political history extending back to previous sessions? If so what is it?
- What are 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?
- Who supports the bill and who opposes it and why? Which Assemblymembers and Senators support or oppose it, and to what degree? Are there Assemblymembers or Senators on the fence (undecided or uncommitted)?
- Of these groups, which are politically influential and in what way?
- Who introduced the bill and why?
- Are there other bills on the agenda that may affect the policy in question?
- Is the bill partisan? Is the division between support and opposition along party lines?
- Is this bill being reintroduced? If so, what is its history? Where had it failed—committee, Assembly floor, Senate floor, Governor? Will things be different this session and if so why? Has the bill been amended? If so how?
- If the bill is not moving out of committee in the Assembly or the Senate, why not?
- Does the leadership support or oppose the bill and how might this affect the bill?
- Are there any policy entrepreneurs?
- How does the election this November affect this bill?
- Is this bill high profile? How will this influence the passage of the bill?
- What role does the media, public opinion, interest groups, the two parties, other states, the federal government, etc., play?
- How will the political and cultural diversity of New York State affect this bill?

- If the bill is passed, what are the implications of the legislation for your Assemblymember's district? Have there been any public statements on his/her part, and from district newspapers or constituents?
- What are 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?
- Will it pass in the Assembly? The Senate? Be signed by the Governor? Why or why not?
- If the bill is 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 passing in the future?
- What are the lessons about the intersection of politics and policy around the issue you choose for your paper?

IV. Democratic Analysis (at least two pages)

- Is the legislation process through which the policy is decided democratic? Why or why not? You need to discuss the model of democracy you are using, i.e., pluralism, Schumpeterian, procedural, direct democracy, etc. (Hint: The Guide to the NYS Legislature offers three models of democracy; also, see the article in your readings, Gabardi, W. (2001) Contemporary models of democracy. *Polity* 33(4), 547-568.
- If the process is not democratic, is this good or bad? Why? How can the procedure be made more democratic?

V. Conclusion

Note: although the minimum number of pages for sections II, III, and IV is five, five, and two, respectively, the overall **minimum number of pages for the paper is fifteen** (not including graph, charts, diagrams, pictures, tables, contents, references, etc.). For example, you may write seven pages for the policy analysis, just as long as the political analysis and the democratic analysis are at least five pages and two pages and the overall paper is at least 15 pages.

REQUIRED READINGS FOR THE COURSE:

- Schneier, E. V., Murtaugh, B., & Pole, A. (2010). *New York politics: A tale of two states* (2 ed.). Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- READINGS—uploaded on Moodle. Also, a paper copy will be provided upon request.
- Daily newspaper—*New York Times* and/or district newspaper; newspaper articles on current events will often be used in class as case studies for the week's readings.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED SOURCES:

- Percorella, R. F., & Stonecash, J. M. (Eds.). (2012). *Governing New York State* (6 ed.). Albany, NY: SUNY Pres.
- Ward, R. B. (2006). *New York State Government* (2 ed.). Albany, NY: Rockefeller Institute Press.
- *The Legislative Gazette* (Online)
- *City and State* (can be found in magazine racks in the Capital, Concourse, etc.)

INTERN PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:

ALL INTERNS MUST CONDUCT THEMSELVES PROFESSIONALLY AT ALL TIMES! This is not limited to the class or the office, but also with respect to social activities and social media.

**MISCONDUCT MAY RESULT IN A DISMISSAL
FROM THE PROGRAM AND A FAILING GRADE!**