



## SYLLABUS

NOTE: THIS SYLLABUS WAS WRITTEN ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2017 WITH THE LATEST UPDATES TO LAMAR UNIVERSITY'S FALL 2017 SCHEDULE IN MIND. CLASS IS EXPECTED TO BE HELD ONLINE THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2017 AT THIS POINT. IF ANY CHANGES ARE MADE TO LAMAR'S SCHEDULE OR THE NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY, THE COURSE COMPONENTS, GRADE CALCULATION, AND SCHEDULE ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO THOSE FACTORS.

The Lamar University, a member of The Texas State University System, is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award Associate, Baccalaureate, Masters, and Doctorate degrees (more details at <http://www.lamar.edu>).

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Semester</b>               | Fall 2017   |
| <b>College</b>                | Arts and Sciences   |
| <b>Department</b>             | Political Science   |
| <b>Course Number</b>          | POLS 4362   |
| <b>Course Title</b>           | Policy Formulation  |
| <b>Instructor</b>             | James P. Nelson, Ph.D.<br>Department of Political Science   |
| <b>Instructor Information</b> | Office Location: SBS 201-D<br>E-mail: james.nelson@lamar.edu<br>Office Phone: (409)880-8529<br>Office Hours: W 8:00-10:00 a.m., R 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Class Information</b> | Class Location: SBS 113<br>Class Time/Section: MWF 11:30a.m.-12:25p.m./03 |
|--------------------------|---|

**Course Description:** This course provides a general overview of policymaking in the United States, which includes decisions at multiple levels of government. This course primarily focuses on policy formulation, the stage at which decisions are made by policymakers. One of the primary subjects examined will be which groups succeed in receiving the policies they advocate and which groups do not. Multiple perspectives will be considered to determine which groups organize better and which ones receive better treatment from government.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** After taking this course, students will be able to explain whether citizens and policymakers behave in an economically rational manner. Students who have completed this course will also be able to determine whether economic rationality is given an appropriate amount of consideration in academic discourse on public policy. Further, upon completion of this class students should understand the explanations for the success or failure of advocacy coalitions. Understanding why some groups succeed and some do not is essential to understanding policy formulation. Students will also be informed consumers of data analysis because of its importance in evaluating government performance and public opinion.

### **Required Textbooks and Materials:**

Wheelan, Charles. 2011. *Introduction to Public Policy*. W. W. Norton & Company: New York.

ISBN-13: 978-0-393-92665-1

CQ Researcher. 2018. *Issues for Debate in American Public Policy: Selections from CQ Researcher*. Sage/CQ Press: Washington, D.C.

ISBN: 978-1-5063-6880-1

**Attendance Policy:** Your grade will not be directly impacted by your attendance on lecture days. Attendance will be taken for record-keeping purposes. A student may postpone a test if I receive notice from that student regarding the absence before the test begins. Tests may only be postponed for excused school absences, such as representing Lamar at school functions, medical emergencies, illnesses, or religious holidays.

**Grading Scale:** Your grade in this class will be determined by your paper grades and exam grades. I will determine which letter grade your course average falls into using the following criteria.

90-100%= A

80-89%=B

70-79%=C

60-69%=D

0%-59%=F

### **Components of Grade:**

Exams 75% (25% each)

Research Paper 20%

Introductory Writing Assignment 5%

Total 100%

### **Grading and Evaluation:**

A student's grade will be determined by the weighted average of his/her scores on three exams (25% each, 75% total), one research paper (20%), and an introductory writing assignment (5%). The first two exams will each be made up of fifty multiple choice questions. The third exam will contain thirty multiple choice questions covering the material that follows the second exam. The third exam will also have a comprehensive essay portion that will account for 40% of the exam grade (10% of overall average). The introductory writing assignment is a short essay over the first assigned reading and will be due at 11:59 p.m. on Friday, September 8. Students will turn in the assignment through Blackboard. Further details are available in the "Content" section of the class Blackboard site.

The research paper must be 10-15 pages long and analyze an issue or problem in American public policy. The paper will be due on November 22 at 11:59 p.m. Submit it to me on Blackboard. This paper should analyze a current debate in U.S. public policy. A student may make a causal argument about why a certain policy continues to exist or was initially instituted. A student may also analyze a current policy problem and propose his/her own solution to address it while contrasting that approach with current law and/or other proposals. Many other approaches to this paper are permitted; students may write about any debate in U.S. public policy (national, state, or local government) from any perspective as long as their papers are analytical in nature. I will be available for consultation regarding any uncertainty about how to approach this assignment during my regular office hours and by appointment. Students must use at least eight sources and APSA (American Political Science Association) citation style to receive full credit for this assignment.

**Late Work Policy:** Any student who turns in an assignment after the due date will lose 10 points (of 100) per business day (M-F) it is late. In accordance with this policy, any paper turned in 5 business days late or later will not receive a grade above 50% (F).

### **Course Management Policies:**

**1. Disability Accommodation – Americans with Disabilities Act:** Lamar University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is located in the Communications Building, Room 105. Office staff collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

For students: If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact the DRC at [409-880-8347](tel:409-880-8347) or [drc@lamar.edu](mailto:drc@lamar.edu) to arrange a confidential appointment with the Director of the DRC to explore possible options regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations. If you are registered with DRC and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, we encourage you to contact your instructor early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

It is the policy of Lamar University to comply with the fundamental principles of nondiscrimination and accommodation in academic programs set forth in the implementing regulations for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; these regulations provide that: *No qualified student with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any ... postsecondary education program or activity.* Rules governing accommodations are available on the University DRC website.

### **2. Academic Honesty Statement**

Students are specifically warned against all forms of cheating and plagiarism. The Lamar University Student Handbook states: *Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. Punishable offences include, but are not limited to, cheating on an examination or academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.* One aspect of the handbook's definition of cheating is, "purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm". Plagiarism is defined as, "the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or ideas into one's own offered for credit". Students seeking to avoid plagiarism should consult with the course instructor or recent handbooks such as the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences

investigate all cases of suspected plagiarism. Any student who submits plagiarized work will fail the course.

Students are encouraged to discuss the ideas needed for implementing programming assignments, but copying code or allowing another to copy your own source code is an act of plagiarism and will result in a zero grade on the assignments where this occurs.

### **3. Course Evaluation**

Instruction as well as student performance is subject to evaluation. Procedures may be instituted for this purpose near the end of this course.

### **4. myLamar Portal**

Students are asked to obtain a Lamar Electronic Account username and password so they can log into the myLamar website and Blackboard. Students may get information on how to get into the myLamar Web site from the University's homepage (<http://www.lamar.edu>) by clicking on the myLamar link on the left top corner of the screen. Follow the steps to secure your myLamar username and password.

### **5. Sexual Harassment**

In accordance with administrative policy, sexual harassment is reprehensible and will not be tolerated by the university. Behavior in the course must conform to the university policy.

### **6. Campus Closure**

In the event of an announced campus closure in excess of four days due to a hurricane or other disaster, students are expected to login to Lamar University's website's homepage ([www.Lamar.edu](http://www.Lamar.edu)) for instructions about continuing courses remotely.

### **7. Emergency Preparedness**

Instructions for specific emergencies, such as severe weather, chemical release, active shooter, or fire can be found at: <http://www.lamar.edu/about-lu/administration/risk-management/index.html>

Here are some simple things you should do in the event an emergency occurs during our class:

1. Always follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel.
2. If told to evacuate, do so immediately.
3. If told to shelter-in-place, find a room, in the center of the building with few windows, on the lowest level of the building.
4. If told to lockdown, lock and barricade the door if possible. Turn off the lights and wait for police to arrive.

#### In case of severe weather:

1. Follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel.
2. Seek shelter in an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, putting as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
3. If you are in a multi-story building, and you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building.
4. Stay in the center of the room, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors.

#### In case of violence or an active shooter (CADD):

1. **CALL** - 8-3-1-1 from a campus phone (880-8311 from a cell phone). Note: Calling 911 from either a campus phone or cell phone will contact Beaumont City Police Dispatch rather than University Police.
2. **AVOID**- If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside the building. Follow directions of police officers.
3. **DENY**- Barricade the door with desks, chairs, bookcases or any other items. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet. Remain there until told by police it is safe.
4. **DEFEND** - Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract and/or defend yourself and others from attack.

### **8. Instructor’s Rules of the Class**

Cell phone use and use of other electronic devices for activities not related to the lecture are prohibited during class. If you need to use your phone because of a family emergency or other special circumstance, you must leave it on vibrate. Do not record me or your fellow students during class. Recording lectures is not permitted. Also, if you must leave class early or arrive late please discuss your reasons for doing so with me beforehand. If you have to either arrive late or leave early, select a seat near the door in order to avoid distracting other students. Do not bring children to class. During discussions of the limitations of free speech and other controversial subjects some classroom content will not be appropriate for children. The instructor reserves the right to have disruptive students removed from class.

### **Privacy Notice:**

Federal privacy laws (FERPA) apply to universities and colleges. University employees, including instructors, cannot discuss student information with third parties including parents and legal guardians of students. Anyone requesting information about a student should be referred to the Registrar. Instructors will be officially notified in writing by the Registrar’s Office about the specific information to be released and the persons authorized to receive the information.

### **Important University Dates:**

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| August 28       | First Class Day   |
| September 4     | Labor Day Holiday (No Classes)  |
| September 13    | 12 <sup>th</sup> Class Day (census) – Last day for full refund on dropped (not withdrawn) courses |
| September 25    | Final non-payment purge   |
| September 29    | Last day to drop or withdraw without academic penalty   |
| November 3      | Last day to drop or withdraw with academic penalty  |
| November 23-24  | Thanksgiving Holiday (No Classes)   |
| December 4      | Last Class Day  |
| December 5 – 12 | Final Examinations  |

### **Course Schedule - POLS 4362 – Fall 2017**

#### **Week 1**

- August 28: Hurricane Harvey – Class Cancelled
- August 30: Hurricane Harvey – Class Cancelled
- September 1: Hurricane Harvey – Class Cancelled

#### **Week 2**

September 4: Labor Day: No Class

September 6: Class held online – Introductory Writing Assignment required

Axelrod, Robert. (1988). “The Evolution of Cooperation.” In Anatoly Gomyko and Martin Hellman, ed., *Breakthrough: Emerging New Thinking: Soviet and Western Scholars Issue a Challenge to Build a World Beyond War*. New York: Walker and Company, pp. 185-192. Available at: <https://www-ee.stanford.edu/~hellman/Breakthrough/book/chapters/axelrod.html>.

September 8: Class held online; Introductory Writing Assignment due at 11:59 p.m.

### Week 3

September 11: Wheelan: Chapter 9: Gathering and Measuring Information

September 13: Wheelan: Chapter 10: Basic Data Analysis

September 15: Wheelan: Chapter 11: Introduction to Regression Analysis

### Week 4

September 18: Lindblom, Charles E. 1954. “The Science of ‘Muddling Through’.” *Public Administration Review* 19: 79-88.

September 20: Wheelan: Chapter 2: Why is it so Hard to Make the World a Better Place?

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 2: “Managing Western Lands” by Barbara Mantel, page 27-52

September 22: Wheelan: Chapter 2: Why is it so Hard to Make the World a Better Place?

### Week 5

September 25: Wheelan: Chapter 2: Why is it so Hard to Make the World a Better Place?

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 5: “Jailing Debtors” by Christina Hoag, page 103-26

September 27: Wheelan: Chapter 3: Understanding Behavior: Rational Man and Woman

September 29: Wheelan: Chapter 3: Understanding Behavior: Rational Man and Woman

### Week 6

October 2:

October 4: Wheelan: Chapter 3: Understanding Behavior: Rational Man and Woman

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 4: “The Gig Economy” by Eugene L. Meyer, page 79-102

October 6: Wheelan: Chapter 4: Understanding Group Behavior: Collective Action

### Week 7

October 9: Wheelan: Chapter 4: Understanding Group Behavior: Collective Action

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 14: “Vaccine Controversies” by Jane Fullerton Lemons, page 333-360

October 11: Exam One (all previous class material)

October 13: Wheelan: Chapter 5: Evaluating Social Welfare

### Week 8

October 16: Wheelan: Chapter 5: Evaluating Social Welfare

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 10: “Future of the Middle Class” by Peter Katel, page 229-254

October 18: Wheelan: Chapter 6: The Political Process

October 20: Wheelan: Chapter 6: The Political Process

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 6: “Populism and Party Politics” by Chuck McCutcheon, page 127-152

#### Week 9

October 23: Wheelan: Chapter 6: The Political Process

October 25: Wheelan: Chapter 7: The Market System

October 27: Wheelan: Chapter 7: The Market System

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 12: “Prescription Drug Costs” by Leslie Allen, page 281-306

#### Week 10

October 30: Chapter 7: The Market System

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 11: “Student Debt” by Tom Price, page 255-280

November 1: Wheelan: Chapter 7: The Market System

November 3: Wheelan: Chapter 8: The Role of Government

#### Week 11

November 6: Wheelan: Chapter 8: The Role of Government

November 8: Wheelan: Chapter 8: The Role of Government

Hardin, Garrett W. 1968. “The Tragedy of the Commons.” *Science*: 1243-1248.

November 10: Exam Two (all previous, post-Exam One class material)

#### Week 12

November 13: Wheelan: Chapter 12: Benefit-Cost Analysis

November 15: Wheelan: Chapter 12: Benefit-Cost Analysis

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 11: “Drinking Water Safety” by Jill U. Adams, page 53-78

November 17: Wheelan: Chapter 13: Program Evaluation

#### Week 13

November 20: Wheelan: Chapter 13: Program Evaluation

November 22: Wheelan: Chapter 13: Program Evaluation

CQ Researcher Reader: Chapter 16: “Protecting the Power Grid” by Jill U. Adams, page 387-411

Research Paper due

November 24: Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class

#### Week 14

November 27: Wheelan: Chapter 13: Program Evaluation

November 29: Wheelan: Chapter 14: The Role of Institutions

December 1: Wheelan: Chapter 14: The Role of Institutions

#### Week 15

December 4: Wheelan: Chapter 15: Policy Design

December 6: Wheelan: Chapter 15: Policy Design

December 8: Wheelan: Chapter 15: Policy Design

Week 16

December 11: Final Exam (see Grading and Evaluation section for details)

**CHANGE STATEMENT:**

This syllabus may change with prior notice from the instructor.