



## 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 COURSE 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 5353
<b>Course Title</b>	Policy Formulation
<b>Instructor</b>	James P. Nelson, Ph.D. Department of Political Science
<b>Instructor Information</b>	Office Location: SBS 201-D E-mail: james.nelson@lamar.edu Office Phone: (409)880-8529 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 Class Time/Section: M 5:30-8:25p.m./01
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**Course Description:** This course provides a general overview of policymaking in the United States, which includes decisions at multiple levels of government. However, 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. Policy competition and diffusion between localities and between states will be examined as well because different governments of the same level are often in competition with one another and copy successful policies from other governments.

**Course Prerequisites:** Graduate standing.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

After taking this course, students should be able to understand how policies are made at the national, state, and local levels and be able to explain why decisions are made differently in these settings.

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

Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge.

ISBN: 0-674-53751-3

Nelson, Michael, and John Lyman Mason. 2007. *How the South Joined the Gambling Nation: The Politics of State Policy Innovation*. Louisiana State University Press: USA.

ISBN-13: 978-0807132548

**Attendance Policy:** Your grade will not be directly impacted by your attendance on lecture days, but I will be grading your classroom participation. You cannot participate if you are not in class. 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, participation, and discussion leadership. 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:**

Participation 10%

Reflection Essay 4%

Status Update 1%

Discussion Leadership 15% (5% each)

Papers 45% (15% each)

Research Paper 25%

Total 100%

### **Grading and Evaluation:**

Due to Hurricane Harvey I must require you to have read some material before our first class meeting. If I do not do this we will not finish the class material. You need to come to class Monday, September 11 ready to discuss

one of the two sets of readings listed for that week. I have provided an alternative set of readings that does not require students to have the textbook until after September 11 due to the difficulties associated with Harvey. Each student is required to write a reflection essay on either set of readings listed for September 11. A student will be expected to write a two to three-page essay (double-spaced, 12-point font) on his/her chosen set of readings for that week. If a student chooses to write about READING SET #1 the essay should focus on whether these readings are accurate assessments of decision making in the public sector. If a student chooses to write about READING SET #2 the essay should focus on whether he/she agrees with the article's perspective on the role countries should have in citizens' lives. READING SET #2 only contains one article but the article is longer than the one in the first set and more intensive reading than the textbook. In my assessment, the reading sets are comparable in their level of overall difficulty.

Regardless of which reflection essay a student chooses to write he/she needs to use examples and explain the reasons for agreement or disagreement with the perspectives in the assigned reading. Students may also approach the readings from a more nuanced perspective and explain which parts of the readings they thought were insightful and which parts they thought needed improvement. Students may cite other material in their reflection essays but must cite all the assigned readings in the chosen reading set. The final version of the essay must be submitted to me via Blackboard by 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday September 13. This will give students some time to edit papers in response to our class conversation.

Please send me a Blackboard email notifying me of whether you have any storm-related difficulties that could impact your ability to complete the class (Status Update). The e-mail is due Friday, September 8 at 11:59 p.m. and count will count as 1% of your final average. Even if Harvey will not interfere with your ability to complete the class I need you to complete this assignment.

You will be required to write three 5-7 page analysis papers for the weeks that you lead discussion. You will be expected to present the argument in your paper and help lead the discussion during these seminars. The final versions of these papers will be due one week after you lead discussion.

Students may address the readings from any perspective in their papers as long as the papers are not strictly summaries and contain analytical components. Your analysis papers may discuss how the readings for the week relate to one another. Papers may also highlight another subject that could be discussed along similar lines. They can discuss the shortcomings (what could the author have done better? etc.) and/or highlights (what did the author explain/justify well?) of the readings. These papers must cite the assigned readings for the week. Other articles and books may be discussed in the paper but each paper must address the readings corresponding to the chosen week.

Your term paper will be due on the date of the final exam and must be 15-20 pages long and use at least ten sources. This paper should analyze a current debate in U.S. public policy. You may make a causal argument about why a certain policy continues to exist or was initially instituted. You may also analyze a current policy problem and propose your own solution to address it while contrasting your approach with current law and/or other proposals.

**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 5353 – Fall 2017**

Week 1

August 28: Class Cancelled – Hurricane Harvey

Week 2

September 4: Labor Day: No Class

Week 3

September 11: Introduction and course overview

READING SET #1: Wheelan: Chapter 1: Public Decision Making

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

Reflection Essay due Wednesday, September 13

or

READING SET #2: Reich, Robert. 1991. “What is a Nation?” *Political Science Quarterly* 106: 193-209.

Reflection Essay due Wednesday, September 13

Week 4

September 18: Wheelan: Chapter 2: Why is it so Hard to Make the World a Better Place?

Reich, Robert. 1991. “What is a Nation?” *Political Science Quarterly* 106: 193-209.

### Week 5

September 25: Wheelan: Chapter 3: Understanding Behavior: Rational Man and Woman

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>.

### Week 6

October 2: Wheelan: Chapter 4: Understanding Group Behavior: Collective Action

Olson Chapters 1-2

### Week 7

October 9: Olson Chapters 3, 6

Lupia, Arthur and Gisela Sin. 2003. "Which public goods are endangered? How evolving communication technologies affect *The logic of collective action*." *Public Choice* 117: 315-331.

### Week 8

October 16: Wheelan: Chapter 5: Evaluating Social Welfare

Soss, Joe, and Sanford F. Schram. 2007. "A Public Transformed? Welfare Reform as Policy Feedback." *American Political Science Review* 101: 111-127.

### Week 9

October 23: Wheelan: Chapter 9: Gathering and Measuring Information

Wheelan: Chapter 10: Basic Data Analysis

### Week 10

October 30: Wheelan: Chapter 11: Introduction to Regression Analysis

Brady, Henry E., Sydney Verba and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89: 271-294.

### Week 11

November 6: Wheelan: Chapter 7: The Market System

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

### Week 12

November 13: Wheelan: Chapter 8: The Role of Government

Tiebout, Charles M. 1956. "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures." *The Journal of Political Economy* 64: 416-424.

### Week 13

November 20: Wheelan: Chapter 6: The Political Process

Berry, William D., and Brady Baybeck. 2005. "Using Geographic Information Systems to Study Interstate Policy Competition." *American Political Science Review* 99: 505-519.

### Week 14

November 27: *How the South Joined the Gambling Nation: The Politics of State Policy Innovation* by Michael Nelson and John Lyman Mason; Introduction and Conclusion

Wheelan: Chapter 15: Policy Design

### Week 15

December 4: *How the South Joined the Gambling Nation: The Politics of State Policy Innovation* by Michael Nelson and John Lyman Mason; Chapter 2 and 7

### Week 16

December 11: Research Paper due

### **CHANGE STATEMENT:**

This syllabus may change with prior notice from the instructor.