

**Political Science 4015**  
**American State Politics and Policy Making**  
**Spring 2014**

Dr. Hogan  
238 Stubbs Hall  
Telephone: 578-3217  
[rhogan1@lsu.edu](mailto:rhogan1@lsu.edu)

218 Coates: TTH 10:30-11:50  
Office Hours: Mon. 9:00-11:00 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* (10<sup>th</sup> edition) by Virginia Gray, Russell L. Hanson, and Thad Kousser editors (2013 Sage and Congressional Quarterly Press).
- *The Best Job in Politics: Exploring How Governors Succeed as Policy Leaders* by Alan Rosenthal (2013, Sage and Congressional Quarterly Press).

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	15%
Book Review	15%
Policy Report	15%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%
<hr/>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

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*

Classes are generally conducted in a lecture-discussion format so it is important to keep up with the readings and to come prepared for every class. 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. Participation comprises a relatively large portion of your grade (15% total) and will be determined by three equally weighted components:

- Class Activities: Several times during the semester I will divide the class into small groups to complete an assigned task. These assignments involve discussing a particular issue or topic and then completing a brief writing assignment. A grade will be assigned to members of your group based upon your group's performance in the assigned class activity.
- Self-Reported Class Participation: During each class period I will ask questions about the day's readings and will expect to receive answers from you. If you have questions about the readings or comments about the substantive topics in the course, please ask them. I will track your participation based upon your self-reported participation. If you have participated in the day's class either in asking questions, answering questions, or providing comment, you may hand in a piece of paper at the end of class indicating what your contribute was for that day (briefly restating your question, answer, or comment).
- Homework and Attendance: Occasionally during the semester I will ask that you complete a brief homework assignment that is due at the beginning of the next class. If you miss a class, make certain to check Moodle where any homework assignments will be posted there by the end of the day (listed prominently at the top of the page). Also, attendance will be checked regularly with a sign-in sheet. Please make certain that you come to class on time so that you will not miss signing in.

### *Book Review and Policy Report*

Students are required to write a review of *The Best Job in Politics* by answering a series of questions that will be provided at least one week prior to the review's due date (Thursday, February 13). There is also a policy report that requires you to identify and write about policies recently adopted in an assigned state. Students will make brief presentations to the class on their states beginning in early April and the final report is due on Thursday, April 24. Further details on both the book review and policy report will be provided in separate handouts.

### *Exams*

There are three exams (dates are listed on the syllabus). These tests will consist of objective-style question (multiple-choice, short-answer, and/or brief essay questions). Note that a makeup exam is only administered when a student can produce a valid written excuse. Note also that makeup exams are all-essay exams. 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**

### *Academic Honesty*

Students are required to abide by the academic conduct policies outlined in the LSU Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs>). Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: cheating on exams, plagiarizing, buying or selling assignments, altering grades, and collaborating with others without permission. I reserve the right to investigate when I suspect a violation of any of these policies. All violations of the university's academic conduct policies are turned over to the Dean of Students.

### *Classroom Etiquette*

Please be kind to those around you who are trying to listen, take notes, and participate. Please make every effort to be on time to class. Be seated and ready to begin at 10:30 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, Photography 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. Photography of any kind is forbidden. This rule is strictly enforced during exams and during review of exam materials. All violations of this policy are turned over to the Dean of Students. You are free to use laptop

computers and other electronic devices for class purposes (e.g., taking notes, looking up relevant information, etc.). But please do not simply play on the internet, check e-mail, or use social networking sites.

### *Late Assignments and Missed Work*

Make every effort to take scheduled exams and hand in work on time. However, I recognize there are legitimate reasons for missing a deadline or an exam. The following reasons are some, but probably not all, of the excuses that are considered acceptable: a documented illness, a family emergency, some severe mechanical failure (related to transportation, computing, etc.), or a scientifically documented anomaly in the space-time continuum. Please note that most job-related issues are not considered acceptable excuses (although see university regulations concerning military duties, official events, etc.). For late assignments, penalties are assessed based upon the circumstances, but will generally involve a substantial loss of points. Recognize that for reasons of fairness to other students in the class, credit cannot be given at the end of the semester for missed exams or 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. Excuse forms are available on this course's Moodle site where they must be submitted along with any other accompanying documentation (a doctor's note, etc.).

### *Graded Work*

I do not make grades available on Moodle and I will not e-mail grades. I return major assignments and will allow time in class for you to view exams. You are also free to come by during my office hours to look at your tests. During office hours I am happy to review grades with you and talk with you about ways to improve your performance.

### *Graduate Credit or Honors Credit*

For students taking this course for graduate credit or for those who wish to receive special Honors credit, it is the student's responsibility to contact me to make appropriate arrangements.

### *Special Needs*

For students who have special needs or require accommodations through Disability Services, please advise me of your situation so arrangements can be made.

## **Course Schedule**

### **The Contexts of State Politics**

January 15      *Introduction to the Course*

January 21      *Why Study State Politics*

- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser Chapter 1.
- Reading #1: Greenblatt, Alan. 2013. "Newbies Infiltrate State Legislative Chambers," *Governing*, January.
- Reading #2: Nagourney, Adam. 2014. "After Flurry of Changes, Some States Ease Up," *New York Times*, January 15.
- Reading #3: Kardish, Chris, et al. 2014. "The Top 10 Legislative Issues to Watch in 2014," *Governing*, January.
- Reading #4: Povich, Elaine S. 2014. "Fiscal Outlook Brighter in Most States," Pew Center.
- Reading #5: Stolbert, Sheryl Gay. 2013. "State re Focus of Effort to Foil Health Care Law," *New York Times*, October 18.

January 23      *Methods and Approaches Used in Studying State Politics*

- Reading #6: Chapters from *Everything is Obvious Once You Know the Answers: How Common Sense Fails Us* by Duncan J. Watts, 2011, New York: Crown Publishing (Preface, Chapters 1 & 2).
- Reading #7: Berry, William D., and Mitchell S. Sanders. 2000. (Chapter 1) *Understanding Multivariate Research: A Primer for Beginning Social Scientists*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Reading #8: "Appendix: A Brief Introduction to Regression."
- Reading #9: Hartney, Michael, and Patrick Flavin. 2011. "From the Schoolhouse to the Statehouse: Teaching Union Political Activism and U.S. State Education Reform Policy," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 3: 251-68.

- January 28      *Political Cultures and Public Opinions*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, re-read part of Chapter 1 (20-25).
  - Reading #10: Carsey, Thomas M., and Jeffrey J. Harden. 2010. "New Measures of Partisanship, Ideology, and Policy Mood in the American States," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 10: 136-56.
  - Reading #11: Fellowes, Matthew C., 2004. "Politics and the New American Welfare States," *American Journal of Political Science*, 48: 362-73.
- January 30      *Federalism: National and State Government Relations*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 2.
  - Reading #12: Nathan, Richard P. 2006. "There Will Always Be a New Federalism," *Journal of Public Administration* 16: 499-510.
  - Reading #13: Zernike, Kate. 2010. "Proposed Amendment Would Enable States to Repeal Federal Law," *New York Times*, December.
  - Reading #14: Barnett, Randy and William J. Howell. 2010. "The Case for a 'Repeal Amendment,'" Cato Institute, September.
- February 4      *State Constitutions*
- Reading #15: Dinan John. 2012. "State Constitutional Developments in 2011," in *Book of the States*, pp. 3-10.
  - Reading #16: Lupia, Arthur, Yanna Krupnikov, Adam Seth Levine, Spencer Piston, and Alexander Von Hagen-Jamar. 2010. "Why State Constitutions Differ in their Treatment of Same-Sex Marriage," *Journal of Politics* 74: 1222-1235.
- Institutions of Governing in State Politics**
- February 6      *Executive Branch*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 7.
  - Reading #17: King, James D. 2001. "Incumbent Popularity and Vote Choice in Gubernatorial Elections," *Journal of Politics* 63: 585-597.
  - Reading #18: Windett, Jason Harold. 2011. "State Effects and the Emergence and Success of Female Gubernatorial Candidates," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 4: 460-82.
  - Reading #19: Jacobson, Louis. 2012. "How Do Business Execs Do as Candidates and as Governors?" *Governing*, March.
  - Reading #20: Glueck, Katie. 2013. "Rick Perry faces backlash over jobs raids," *POLITICO* June 1.
- February 11      *Governors and Legislatures*
- Reading #21: 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 #22: 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.
- February 13      *Governors as Policy Leaders*
- Rosenthal, Alan. 2013. *The Best Job in Politics: Exploring How Governors Succeed as Policy Leaders* CQ Press: Washington, DC.
- \*\*\*\*\* Book Review Due at the Beginning of Class \*\*\*\*\***
- February 18      *Characteristics of Legislative Institutions*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 6.
  - Reading #23: Squire, Peverill, and Gary Moncrief. 2010. "99 Chambers and Why They Matter," Chapter 1 in *State Legislatures Today: Politics Under the Domes*.
  - Reading #24: Galbraith, Kate. 2010. "Texas Stands Against Tide in Retaining Biennial Legislature," *The New York Times* December.
- February 20      *State Legislators: Who They Are and How They Got There*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Re-read part of Chapter 6 (173-183).
  - Reading #25: Hogan, Robert E. 2004. "Challenger Emergence, Incumbent Success and Electoral Accountability in State Legislative Elections" *Journal of Politics*, 66: 1309-29.
  - Reading #26: Greenblatt, Alan. 2012. "Can You Separate Federal Issues from State Elections?" *Governing*, October.

- February 25      *What Legislators Do*
- Reading #27: Konisky, David M., and Michiko Ueda. 2011. "The Effects of Uncontested Elections on Legislator Performance," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36: 199-229.
  - Reading #28: Butler, Daniel M., Christopher F. Karpowitz, and Jeremy C. Pope. "A Field Experiment on Legislators' Home Styles: Service versus Policy," *Journal of Politics* 74: 474-86.
- February 27      *Representation in the Legislature*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Re-read part of Chapter 6 (183-185).
  - Reading #29: 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 #30: Maestas, Cherie. 2003. "The Incentive to Listen: Progressive Ambition, Resources, and Opinion Monitoring Among State Legislators," *Journal of Politics* 65: 439-456.
- March 4            **Mardi Gras Holiday**
- March 6            *Term Limits*
- Reading #31: Bowser, 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 #32: 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.
  - Reading #33: Weissert, Carol S., and Karen Halperin. 2007. "The Paradox of Term Limit Support: To Know Them Is NOT to Love Them," *Political Research Quarterly* 60: 516-530.
- March 11          *Legislative Decision Making*
- Reading #34: 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 #35: Butler, Daniel M., and David W. Nickerson. 2011. "Can Learning Constituency Opinion Affect How Legislators Vote? Results from a Field Experiment," *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 6: 55-83.
- March 13          **Midterm Exam**
- March 18          *State Courts*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 8.
  - Reading #36: Bonneau, Chris W. 2007. "Campaign Fundraising in State Supreme Court Elections," *Social Science Quarterly* 88: 68-85.
  - Reading #37: Hall, Melinda Gann. 1992. "Electoral Politics and Strategic Voting in State Supreme Courts," *Journal of Politics*, 55: 427-446.
  - Reading #38: Sulzberger, A. G. 2010. "Ouster of Iowa Judges Sends Signal to Bench," *New York Times*, November 3.
- Linking Institutions and Citizens**
- March 20          *Political Parties and Elections*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser Chapter 3.
  - Reading #39: Masket, Seth E., Jonathan Winburn, and Gerald C. Wright. 2012. "The Gerrymanderers Are Coming! Legislative Redistricting Won't Affect Competition or Polarization Much, No Matter Who Does It," *PS: Political Science & Politics* January 39-43.
  - Reading #40: Confessore, Nicholas. 2014. "A National Strategy Funds State Political Monopolies," *New York Times*, January 11.
  - Reading #41: Bentele, Keith G., and Erin E. O'Brien. 2013. "Jim Crow 2.0? Why States Consider and Adopt Restrictive Voter Access Policies," *Perspectives on Politics*, December: 1088-1116.
- March 25          *Interest Groups*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 4.
  - Reading #42: 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.

- March 27 *Interest Group Influence*
- Reading #43: 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.
  - Reading #44: Grasse, Nathan, and Brianne Heidbreder. 2011. "The Influence of Lobbying Activity in State Legislatures: Evidence from Wisconsin," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36: 567-89.
- April 1 *News Media in State Politics*
- Reading #45: Gurwitt, Rob. 2009. "Death and Life in the Pressroom," *Governing*, January: 1-6.
  - Reading #46: Vining, Richard L., Teena Wilhelm. 2010. "Explaining High-Profile Coverage of State Supreme Court Decisions," *Social Science Quarterly* 91: 704-23.
- April 3 *Direct Democracy*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 5.
  - Reading #47: Nicholson, Stephen P. 2003. "The Political Environment and Ballot Proposition Awareness," *American Journal of Political Science*, 47: 403-410.
  - Reading #48: Lewis, Daniel C. 2011. "Bypassing the Representational Filter? Minority Rights Policies under Direct Democracy Institutions in U.S. States," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 11: 198-222.

### **Making and Evaluating Public Policies**

- April 8 *Elements of the Public Policy Process*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 14 and 15.
- April 10 *Social Regulation*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 9.
  - Reading #49: Smith, Kevin B. 2004. "The Politics of Punishment: Evaluating Political Explanations of Incarceration Rates," *Journal of Politics* 66: 925-38.
- April 15 **Spring Break**
- April 17 **Spring Break**
- April 22 *Education and Fiscal Policies*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapters 10, 12, and 13.
- April 24 *Economic Development Policies*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 16.
  - Reading #50: Nichols, Russell. 2011. "State Governments: The Latest Venture Capitalists," *Governing*, March.
  - Reading #51: Scott, Dylan. 2012. "Southern States Have Become Job-Training Leaders," *Governing*, July.
- \*\*\*\*\*Policy Report Due at the Beginning of Class\*\*\*\*\***
- April 29 *Policy Outcomes: Health and Welfare Programs*
- Gray, Hanson, and Kousser, Chapter 11.
  - Reading #52: New, Michael. 2011. "Analyzing the Effect of Anti-Abortion U.S. State Legislation in the Post-Casey Era," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 11:28-47.
- May 1 *Summation and Review*
- May 9 **FINAL EXAM** in this classroom on Tuesday, May 6 from 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.