

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON, LA FOLLETTE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PA 974(FALL SEMESTER 2023-24): TOPICS IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS: THE POLITICS OF STATE POLICY ISSUES

Meeting time and location:

Wednesday 1:20pm-3:15pm

Room: Education L150

Instructor:

Jim Doyle

E-mail: jdoyle6@wisc.edu

Office hours: In office, Wednesday 12-1:15pm

Also, other hours, by appointment, in person or remotely

This is a three credit, face-to-face course. All of the campus requirements for a face-to-face course must be followed. The credit standard for the course is met by an expectation of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), including class meetings of 115 minutes per week, as well as reading, writing, studying, preparation of projects, etc.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

To a large extent the adoption and implementation of governmental policy affecting people's lives is determined not in Washington D.C., but in state capitals and municipal halls. State governments operate in a complex federal system and are affected by their relationships with the federal government on the one hand, and local governments on the other. State politics are influenced not only by the larger national trends, but also by the particular history, nature and character of each state. This

course is being held this semester at a time when the federal/state relationship, for better or worse, is affecting our approach to immediate pressing health, social and political issues. Over the last several years the most contentious political issues--abortion, covid response, the management and conduct of our elections, climate change, immigration--have all involved different approaches by state government and frequent conflict between state and federal governments. The political dimensions of our federal system are on fully display and are being tested.

This course is based on two premises: 1) policy ideas, however well founded, are only effective if they are adopted through the political process; 2) the political process is grounded in the needs of the people, historical precedent, economic, demographic and social trends, political ideology and identification, communication, advocacy and more. We will focus on a number of broad areas of state governmental policy--access to health care, criminal justice, pre-K-12 education, higher education, the environment, economic development, budgeting and taxes. We will examine and discuss the practical, political and budgetary issues confronting state policy makers and advocates in each of these areas. By examining the political divides, communication strategies, campaign politics, effective methods of advocacy and persuasion, students will gain a sense of how to anticipate and strategically navigate the political challenges and opportunities they may face in their careers.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be expected to:

Explain the role state governments play in the development of policy;

Critically analyze the political dimensions of policy change at the state level given the policy divides between and within parties, the advocacy and interest groups involved, the budgetary constraints, and the broader political climate;

Anticipate and strategically navigate the political opportunities and obstacles in effecting governmental policy; and

Develop a policy initiative directed at meeting a specific perceived need in one of the policy areas we consider and set forth a strategy for implementation.

TEXTS/MATERIAL

There is no required textbook for this course. Any readings noted in the syllabus or

assigned in the class are available online or made available via Canvas or directly by me.

The readings are listed for the first few weeks. They will be added for the following weeks. All readings are required to be read before we meet each week. The readings will form a backdrop for our discussions.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Class Participation.	45%
Assignment #1	15%
Assignment #2	40%

Class participation is the most important component of how students will be evaluated. All of the assignments involve significant participation. **There are not right and wrong answers. I strongly encourage you to share your thoughts.** You will be expected to read materials prior to class meetings and to come prepared to discuss them and the issues they raise. We will work in groups focused on particular policy areas. You will be expected to engage in critical analysis. Regular class attendance is necessary.

Assignment #1 (15%)

The first assignment is due at the beginning of class on October 18, 2023.

Imagine public health experts at the CDC, and similar organizations in the world, have identified a new COVID variant that is rapidly spreading in Asia. It appears to be even more contagious and deadly than the original variant. The pharmaceutical companies are working on a vaccine, but, as yet they do not believe they have found it. The first American cases have been discovered. In this assignment students should imagine that they are working as a health policy advisor in a Governor's Office in a state of their choosing and have been asked to write a confidential memo of about 5 pages (double-spaced) to the Governor on how the state should respond. A complete memo will consider:

- The effect the proposal will have on people's health, including mental health;
- The effect the proposal will have on the economy and quality of life of the state;
- The political consequences of adoption/rejection;

- The effect the previous response to covid will have on current options;
- The scope and language of the political fight that will occur;
- The messaging the Governor should employ regarding the recommendation;
- The strategy for implementing the recommendation.

You are strongly encouraged to choose a policy position that is contrary to your personal views.

Assignment #2 (40%)

The second assignment will be in a group of 3. The assignment is due at the beginning of class on December 6 or December 13, depending on when you are scheduled to present.

Early in the semester, each group will choose one of the subject areas we are studying. The group may be asked to select readings for the class discussion on their topic area. Each group will develop a state-specific policy proposal. You will describe how the policy works and what its fiscal implications are. Then you will describe the political strategy for its adoption.

Each group will prepare a paper of about 10 pages, a one page executive summary, and appropriate slides for the class presentation. Students will pitch their proposal to the class in a 10 minute presentation, followed by a 10 minute question and answer session.

ACCOMODATIONS

Please inform me if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to participate fully. Confidentiality of the shared information will be strictly maintained. Certain accommodations may require assistance of the UW McBurney Disability resource Center: <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu>.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

The best way to contact me is via email. jdoyle6@wisc.edu. I will return emails from students within two business days. I have indicated my office hours above. Students can schedule to meet then or stop by. We can also arrange to speak by telephone or other remote means.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please note that the following schedule may be adjusted from time to time to accommodate guest speakers and class interests.

Week 1, September 6: **THERE WILL NOT BE A CLASS ON THIS DAY. OUR FIRST CLASS WILL BE THE FOLLOWING WEEK. WE WILL MAKE UP THIS CLASS IN THE COURSE OF THE SEMESTER**

Week 2, September 13: Introduction to the Seminar, Understanding the Role of States in the Quilt of American Government

Week 3, September 20: States Sovereign Powers and Politics; Federal Powers

Week 4, September 27: Continuation of Previous Weeks' Discussion; Begin Discussion of Dobbs Decision and Its Aftermath

In these sessions we will set the foundation for the rest of the course by discussing how states fit in to the American political system, the inherent sovereignty of the states, the variety of governmental structures among the states, the responsibilities states have to their residents, and the politics surrounding federalism and states' rights. We will consider the sovereign states as the source of one's sense of identity, the exercisers of sovereign power, the dutiful implementers of federal policy, the resisters to federal policy and power, and "the laboratories of democracy."

The United States Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* brings the nature of our federal system into sharp focus. An individual right long recognized in our federal constitution and therefore protected against state action is no longer protected. It is now a matter for the states, with their own constitutions, political makeup, culture and history.

Required Readings and Materials

2023 State of the State Addresses

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis

Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs

Colorado Governor Jared Polis

West Virginia Governor Jim Justice

Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves

California Governor Gavin Newsome

<https://www.nasbo.org/resources/stateofthestates>

Former Texas Governor Perry's speech to CPAC, 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acoTrhWtQBM>

"Drink Wisconsinibly"

<https://www.drinkwisconsinbly.com>

"This Is Where Wisconsin Ranks Among the Drunkiest States in America," 24/7 Wall St. via The Center Square, Hristina Byrnes, April 1, 2021

<https://247wallst.com/state/this-is-where-wisconsin-ranks-among-the-drunkest-states-in-america/>

"Wisconsin's death grip with alcohol is killing more residents," Sarah Eichstadt, Anupras Mohapatra, Wisconsin Watch, August 3, 2023

<https://wisconsinwatch.org/2023/08/wisconsins-death-grip-with-alcohol-is-killing-more-residents/>

"As Washington Stews, State Legislatures Increasingly Shape American Politics," The New York Times, Michael Wines, August 29, 2021

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/29/us/state-legislatures-voting-gridlock.html>

“California Sanctuary Law Divides States in Fierce Immigration Debate,” NPR, October 17, 2018

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/29/us/state-legislatures-voting-gridlock.html>

“Texas governor sends migrants to Los Angeles, aiming to send a message about border,” Jeremy B. White, Politico, June 14, 2023

<https://www.politico.com/news/2023/06/14/abbott-sends-migrants-to-los-angeles-00102076>

“Gov. Abbott’s Policing of Texas Border Pushes Limits of State Power,” J. David Goodman, NYT, July 26, 2023

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/26/us/texas-greg-abbott-border-migrants.html>

“States find Ways to Resist Health Law,” The Washington Post, Sandya Somashekhar, August 28, 2013

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/states-find-new-ways-to-resist-health-law/2013/08/28/c63f8498-0a93-11e3-8974-f97ab3b3c677_story.html

“A Progressive Call to Arms: Laboratories of Democracy,” Harvard Political Review, Keeling Baker, December 3, 2020

<https://harvardpolitics.com/laboratories-of-democracy/>

“Devolution: Four Proposals to Empower States and Reduce Washington’s Political Strife,” Manhattan Institute, Brian Riedl, April 15, 2021

<https://www.manhattan-institute.org/proposals-empower-states-and-reduce-political-strife>

“Tale of two toss-up elections 16 years apart: the new 50/50 Wisconsin isn’t the same as the old 50/50 Wisconsin,” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Craig Gilbert, November 16, 2020

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/analysis/2020/11/16/election-results-wisconsin-remains-razors-edge-despite-big-shifts/6263180002/>

“Wisconsin’s unusual split election was driven by some familiar trends,” Craig Gilbert, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, November 10, 2022

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/analysis/2022/11/10/wisconsin-unusual-split-election-was-driven-by-familiar-trends/69633222007/>

“2006 Wisconsin gubernatorial election results map by county,” Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:2006_Wisconsin_gubernatorial_election_results_map_by_county.svg

“2022 Wisconsin gubernatorial election results by county,” Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022_Wisconsin_gubernatorial_election#/media/File:2022_Wisconsin_gubernatorial_election_results_map_by_county.svg

“Americans are fleeing to places where political views match their own,” John Burnette, NPR, February 18, 2022

<https://www.npr.org/2022/02/18/1081295373/the-big-sort-americans-move-to-areas-political-alignment>

“America’s Mass Migration Intensifies As ‘Leftugees’ Flee Blue States And Counties For Red,” Forbes, Chris Dorsey, March 17, 2021

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/chrisdorsey/2021/03/17/americas-mass-migration-intensifies-as-leftugees-flee-blue-states-and-counties-for-red/?sh=83bcf9831460>

“It’s the Economies, Stupid,” John B. Judis, Washington Post, November 29, 2018

https://cf.linnbenton.edu/artcom/social_science/clarkd/upload/It%27s%20the%20Economy%20Stupid--Judis.pdf

“Federalism Has Its Limits, and Abortion Will Soon test Them,” Discourse, Robert Tracinski, June 24, 2022

<https://www.discoursemagazine.com/ideas/2022/06/24/federalism-has-its-limits-and-abortion-will-soon-test-them/>

“Federalism can solve the abortion fight,” The Hill, William Watkins, Jr., September 3, 2019

<https://thehill.com/opinion/healthcare/459664-federalism-can-solve-the-abortion-fight/>

“Spurred by the Supreme Court, a Nation Divides Along a Red-Blue Axis,” NYT, Jonathan Weisman, July 2, 2022

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/02/us/politics/us-divided-political-party.html>

“Polls Show Americans Don’t Care that Much about Dobbs-and Won’t Base Their Vote on it,” Politico, Richard Lowry, Editor in Chief of National Review, July 14, 2022

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/07/14/roe-dobbs-wont-save-democrats-00045978>

New KFF Survey Finds Abortion Remains Key Issue for Voters with Democrats Holding a Sizeable Edge over Republicans; A Third of Women Say They’ll Only Vote for Someone Who Shares Their Views, KFF, May 26, 2023

<https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/press-release/new-kff-survey-finds-abortion-remains-key-issue-for-voters-with-democrats-holding-a-sizeable-edge-over-republicans-a-third-of-women-say-theyll-only-vote-for-someone-who-shares-their-views/>

“Analysis Reveals How Abortion Boosted Democratic Candidates in Tuesday’s Midterm Election, KFF, Nov. 11, 2022

<https://www.kff.org/other/press-release/analysis-reveals-how-abortion-boosted-democratic-candidates-in-tuesdays-midterm-election/>

“How abortion and the overturning of Roe v. Wade is shaping Wisconsin’s race for governor,” Molly Beck, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, October 5, 2022

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/10/05/what-know-how-abortion-shaping-wisconsin-election-races/8167491001/>

“No constitutional authority for a national abortion law,” Robert A. Levy, Opinion Contributor, The Hill, July 11, 2022

<https://thehill.com/opinion/congress-blog/3552965-no-constitutional-authority-for-a-national-abortion-law/>

“Graham’s abortion ban stuns Senate GOP,” Burgess Everett, Marianne Levine, Sarah Ferris, Politico, September 13, 2022

<https://www.politico.com/news/2022/09/13/grahams-abortion-ban-senate-gop-00056423>

“Congress can’t codify Roe: Here’s what it can do,” Alan B. Morrison, Sonia M. Suter, Opinion Contributors, The Hill, August 8, 2022

<https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/3592514-congress-cant-codify-roe-heres-what-it-can-do/>

“Catholic bishops spent big in Kansas abortion vote-and maybe lost bigger,” WaPo, Jack Jenkins, August 5, 2022

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2022/08/05/catholics-kansas-abortion-vote/>

“Follow the Money: Who is Funding Kansas Abortion Amendment Ads,” The Beacon, Miranda Moore, August 1, 2022

<https://flatlandkc.org/news-issues/follow-the-money-who-is-funding-kansas-abortion-amendment-ads/>

“The Ads That Won the Kansas Abortion Referendum,” Washington Monthly, Bill Scher, August 5, 2022

<https://washingtonmonthly.com/2022/08/05/the-ads-that-won-the-kansas-abortion-referendum/>

2022 Kansas Abortion Amendment Pro Yes Ads

#5 “Value Them Both”

#7 “Radical”

#8 “Facts”

#9 “Deceptive”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4CR_RXxZI8

“Ohio special election result shows the enduring power of abortion rights at ballot box, Sarah Burnett, Christine Fernado, PBS, August 9, 2023

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/ohio-special-election-result-shows-enduring-power-of-abortion-rights-at-ballot-box>

“Republicans must go on offense on abortion: Kellyanne Conway, anti-abortion chief,” Jared Gans, The Hill, August 25, 2023

<https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/4171065-republicans-must-go-on-offense-on-abortion-kellyanne-conway-anti-abortion-group-chief/>

Week #5, October 4: Pre-K-12 Education

Week #6, October 11: Pre-K-12 Education/ Begin Health Care

Week #7, October 18: Higher Education

Week #8, October 25: Health Care/ Medicaid

Week #9, November 1: Health Care (Covid)

Week #10, November 8: Criminal Justice
State/Tribal Affairs

Week #11, November 15: Environment

Week #12, November 22: No Class/Thanksgiving

Week #13, November 29: Energy/Sustainability

Week #14, December 6: Class Presentations

Week #15, December 13: Class Presentations