	Online Undergraduate Studies
	PBA 4041: ISSUES IN PUBLIC POLICY **3 units**
	Fall 2024 Q1

	Instructor title and name **Dr. Amy Nantkes**
Meeting days, times, and location: Online/Asynchronous	**Phone:** 619-849-2460
	Email: anantkes@pointloma.edu
	Office Hours: By appointment, reach out via email with two suggested days/times

PLNU MISSION: To Teach – To Shape – To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE MISSION

As followers of Christ, the Department of History and Political Science promotes wisdom and scholarship about historical contexts and political systems, so that graduates can become local and global leaders in the service of Christ and humanity.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar-format course is designed as an introduction to the study of public policy in the United States. Broadly, "public policy" is what we get after we have conducted elections and inaugurated representatives; under the most common definitions, policy is what Congress writes, the President approves, and the courts interpret. In this course, we will discuss theories of public policy, approaches to the policymaking process, and some of the present-day social problems that our legislators are struggling to address with substantive policy initiatives. In doing so, we'll look at the many institutions, structures, and people involved in policy design, implementation, and evaluation. Much of this conversation will occur through the lens of equality, liberty, and justice – in particular, we will ask: how can the policymaking process maximize these democratic ideals and produce a political system that

maintains America's democratic promise? Finally, this course will push us to move beyond policy theory and analysis and venture into the real world of policymaking and problem-solving.

THE BIG PICTURE: WHY DOES THIS ALL MATTER?

This course will have you actively applying – to real social problems – the theoretical concepts and approaches that dominate the field of American public policy studies. In doing so, the goal is to inspire you to become active political participants in the American policy process – as conscious observers, thoughtful commentators, dedicated problem solvers, and civil-minded activists. Whether or not you choose to pursue a career in public service, the goal is that you emerge from this course as an engaged citizen, eager to contribute to this country's democratic tradition of collective problem-solving. Still not convinced? Consider this – the qualities just mentioned make you not only an "ideal citizen" but also an ideal job candidate. Indeed, in a recent study of employers (business and non-profit leaders), 93% said that a college graduate's "demonstrated capacity to **think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems** is more important than [a candidate's] undergraduate major." In addition, more than 75% of employers said they "want *more emphasis* on 5 key areas including **critical thinking, complex problem-solving, written and oral communication, and applied knowledge in real-world settings**." This course aims to help you hone these skills and prepare you for the "real world" of messy politics, fuzzy policies, grayish laws, deepening partisan polarization, enduring social problems, growing inequities, changing demographics, and a slightly apathetic and cynical populace.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs):

You will:

- Interpret the theoretical foundations of the academic field of American public policy studies.
- Articulate how policy approaches, designs, and outcomes collectively impact the American political system.
- Analyze a contemporary policy issue through the lens of policy domain and framework knowledge.
- Develop a well-supported approach to policy advocacy.
- Apply a thoughtful, civil, and empirically based approach to discourse related to policy in the current American political system.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

Students who complete the public administration program will be able to:

- Demonstrate critical skills to lead and manage in public governance.
- Appraise pressing problems using critical thinking, ethical thinking, and analytics to consider solutions and apply best practices.
- Articulate and apply a public service perspective to their role in their institution.
- Evaluate the role of public administration officials as participants in the public policy-making and implementation process.
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse population with varying needs.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

NOTE: Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks **prior to the first day of class**.

Students are also encouraged to begin reading the books in preparation for the class as soon as possible.

All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other

All readings are required, and the textbook is available at the bookstore or you can rent directly from the publisher. Articles and other readings are available on Canvas.

1. Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2025). *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives* (Eighth Edition). Washington (D.C.): CQ Press. ISBN: 1071858416
2. Various articles, chapters, and media will also be assigned and posted on Canvas

ADDITIONAL READINGS

As budding public servants and participants in democracy, you should regularly follow current political events at the local, national, and international levels. Make it a habit now that continues throughout your lifetime – you wake up, grab a cup of coffee, and read the news (and no, your social media outlets do not count as "news"). Explore more sophisticated news outlets, such as the *New York Times, Wall Street Journal, NPR, The Economist, BBC News*, and *The Atlantic*. These sources will offer you in-depth analysis beyond clickbait headlines and bullet point details. I strongly recommend that you peruse these media outlets on a regular basis. Also, check out AllSides.com, which presents how different media outlets cover pressing issues. Most of these sources offer very inexpensive rates for university students (as low as $1.00 per week for unlimited access) and the PLNU Ryan Library offers free access.

COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3-unit class delivered over 8 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Student grades will be posted in the Canvas gradebook no later than midnight on Tuesday of each week beginning in Week Two of this course. It is important to read the comments posted in the gradebook as these comments are intended to help students improve their work. Final grades will be posted by the due date as posted in the Academic Calendar.

Grades will be based on the following:

Assignment Distribution by Percentage	
Weekly Interactive Lectures	20%
Weekly Policy Activity Discussion Boards	20%
Policy Advocacy Portfolio	40%
Policy Advocacy Project Sharing Discussion Board	15%
Introduction and Mid-Course Surveys	5%
TOTAL POSSIBLE	**100%**

Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentage of Points Earned				
A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-88	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F < than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly Interactive Lectures

In this task, you'll participate in interactive lectures with checkpoints to enhance your grasp of important public policy concepts. Each week, during a chosen lecture, you'll come across questions to assess your understanding. This activity will strengthen your learning and help you stay on track with the material.

Weekly Policy Activity Discussions

Another goal of this class is to familiarize students with how public policy is practiced. These weekly activities with corresponding class discussions allow you to apply course concepts to current events outside of our course readings.

Policy Project Sharing Discussion Board

Each week that you complete a portion of your Policy Advocacy Project, you will share briefly with your classmates on your progress and crowdsource ideas/resources for your next steps.

Policy Advocacy Project: Portfolio

Policy decisions important to you are made daily at the local, state, and national levels. Developing and using your knowledge, values, and skills to influence these policy decisions is an important part of your role as a student and future professional.

For this project, you will research a bill on an issue of your personal interest that is currently pending before the U.S. Congress, analyze the bill, articulate a comprehensive lobbying strategy, develop a legislative advocacy plan, and prepare professional-quality materials to support a successful effort towards effecting change.

Your work will be represented by a written **Policy Advocacy Portfolio Submission and Video Presentation**. Pieces of the project will be due at different points throughout the course.

Full instructions and rubric are posted under the assignment on Canvas.

Policy Advocacy Project: Presentation

You will prepare a 5-minute "elevator pitch" (with slides) of your issue, covering the most important points of your policy issue, solutions, and how your listener can directly get involved. This presentation will be a persuasive, accurate, succinct, and concise assessment of your issue. The purpose is to get someone's attention long enough for them to want to hear more.

Presentations will be posted to a discussion board for your classmates to view and comment on. Full instructions and rubric are posted under the assignment on Canvas.

Surveys (2)

Getting to Know You and Mid-Course Surveys help me to learn more about you and how you learn! Please take time to complete these as they appear in your course modules.

SPIRITUAL CARE

PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as a whole person. To this end, we provide resources for our Graduate and Adult Undergraduate students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. At the Mission Valley (MV) campus, an onsite chaplain is available during class break times throughout the week. If you have questions or want to meet or share any prayer requests with the onsite chaplain, you may email Dr. Sylvia Cortez Masyuk at scortezm@pointloma.edu.

In addition, on the MV campus, there is a prayer chapel on the third floor, which is open for use as a space set apart for quiet reflection and prayer.

STATE AUTHORIZATION

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on State Authorization to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

PLNU RECORDING NOTIFICATION

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the

professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students

and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication

of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly

prohibited.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted by the due dates posted and will be considered late if submitted after midnight Pacific Standard Time on the day they are due. If an assignment is submitted late, points possible for the assignment decreases 10% each day for four days after the due date.

Any assignment or deliverable submitted more than four days late will not be accepted.

Presentations, Exams, and Reading Responses cannot be "made up" and must be completed on the due date.

All deliverables for the course, including assignments, projects, presentations, papers, etc., must be turned in by 11:59pm on the last day of the course. No extensions or incompletes will be given to students to complete course requirements. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

If you believe you have an extenuating circumstance such as illness or family emergency, please send Dr. Nantkes an email as soon as possible so that we may speak about your options. With abundant notice, I'll be as accommodating as possible, as long as it does not compromise fairness for all.

CLASSROOM CIVILITY POLICY

Respect for the views and values of others is an essential characteristic of a thriving learning community. Although it is likely that we may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in our course, we will behave and express our viewpoints in a manner that is courteous professional. Disagreement and challenging of ideas in a respectful and profound manner is encouraged. Our emphasis will be on engaging in the mutual exploration of topics as presented in the course as scholars, using research and data to defend our assertions. We will develop Class Norms in Week 1 of the course and will keep each other mutually accountable to our commitment to productive and respectful discourse.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See Adult Undergraduate Academic and General Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

During the first week of class, you will be asked to submit an Academic Honesty Verification Statement. Submitting the statement is a requirement of this course. By submitting the Academic Honesty Verification Statement, you will be verifying all assignments completed in this course were completed by you. Carefully review the Academic Honesty Statement below.

Statement: "In submitting this form, I am verifying all the assignments in this course will be completed by me and will be my own work."

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

Students are not allowed to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. You may use tools such as Grammarly to conduct grammar/spelling checks and to help you gain skills to improve your writing. If you have any questions about using AI, please contact your instructor.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and

activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may

request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in

the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an

accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation

Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. The EAC makes accommodations available to

professors at the student's request.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each

semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are

not retroactive, so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive

academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e.,

ideally before the beginning of the semester) to ensure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It

is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that

because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who

may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any special accommodations.

LANGUAGE AND BELONGING

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars, we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice-free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND DISCRIMINATION

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students. If you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix or as shown in the PLNU Spiritual Care section of this syllabus.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

COURSE MODALITY DEFINITIONS

1. Online Courses: These are courses with class meetings where all instruction and interaction is fully online.
    1. Synchronous Courses: At least one class meeting takes place at a designated time.
    2. Asynchronous Courses: All class meetings are asynchronous.
2. Hybrid Courses: These are courses with class meetings that take place both in the classroom and online synchronously and/or asynchronously.
3. In-Person Courses: These are courses that meet in person with the instructor and students in a physical classroom setting. With approval by the area dean, this may include up to 25% of qualified class interactions through a Learning Management System (such as Canvas).

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. Therefore, regular attendance and participation in each course are minimal requirements.

If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

Students who anticipate being absent for an entire week of a course should contact the instructor in advance for approval and make arrangements to complete the required coursework and/or alternative assignments assigned at the discretion of the instructor. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the instructor and does not waive attendance requirements.

Refer to Academic Policies for additional details.

Online Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

Students taking online courses with no specific scheduled meeting times are expected to actively engage throughout each week of the course. Attendance is defined as participating in an academic activity within the online classroom which includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging in an online discussion
- Submitting an assignment
- Taking an exam
- Participating in online labs
- Initiating contact with faculty members within the learning management system to discuss course content

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the *Technology and System Requirements* information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers, microphone, or webcams compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams require a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible) to complete exams online.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

GPS ACADEMIC RESOURCES

PLNU offers the following free academic resources virtually for Graduate Professional Studies (GPS) Students. Visit myPLNU through the links below for more information.

- The GPS Writing Center offers:

- Zoom Writers Workshops offered each quad on a variety of helpful topics

- One-to-one appointments with the Writing Coach

- Microlearning YouTube Video Library for helpful tips anytime

- Research Help Guide to help you start your research

- The physical office is located on the third floor of the Mission Valley Regional Center off the student lounge

- Academic Writing Resources Course: Found on your Canvas Dashboard, this course is non-credit with 24/7 access, no time limits, and self-paced content. Watch a quick video run-through and take time now to explore!
- Grammarly: Students have unlimited FREE access to Grammarly for Education, a trusted tool designed to help enhance writing skills by providing real-time feedback, identifying areas for improvement, and providing suggestions. Grammarly's Generative AI is NOT available with our student accounts.
- Tutoring: Students have access to 24/7 live or scheduled subject tutoring through Tutor.com, including a Paper Drop-Off Service with feedback within 12 hours.

We are here to support you! Contact us anytime: GPSWritingCenter@pointloma.edu

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK #	TOPICS COVERED	ASSIGNED READINGS & MEDIA	ASSIGNMENTS

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WEEK 1	Course Introduction Public Policy and Politics Who Makes Policy?	*Required Reading/Media:* Kraft & Furlong Chapter 1 Kraft & Furlong Chapter 2 *Optional Reading/Media:* Podcast [Civics 101 Starter Kit: Legislative Branch](#) Article: Introduction to the Legislative Process (Heitshusen, 2018)	Getting to Know You Survey Class Introduction Discussion Weekly Interactive Lecture Policy Activity & Discussion Board
WEEK 2	Understanding Public Policymaking Policy Emphasis: Economic & Budgetary Policy	*Required Reading/Media:* Kraft & Furlong Chapter 3 Kraft & Furlong Chapter 7 *Optional Reading/Media:* [Fiscal Policy's Link to Inequality](#)	Policy Project Part 1 Choosing the Policy & Pre-Research Policy Project Sharing Discussion Board Weekly Interactive Lecture Policy Activity & Discussion Board
WEEK 3	Public Problems & Policy Alternatives Policy Emphasis: Health Care Policy	*Required Reading/Media:* Kraft & Furlong Chapter 5 Kraft & Furlong Chapter 8 Video: [Healthcare: is it a right or a luxury?	Tarik Sammour	TEDxAdelaide](#) *Optional Reading/Media:* [Podcast: Freakonomics Radio How to Fix the Hot Mess of U.S. Healthcare](#) (49 min)	Policy Project Part 2a Fundamentals of the Policy: Background of the Bill Policy Project Sharing Discussion Board Weekly Interactive Lecture Policy Activity & Discussion Board

WEEK #	TOPICS COVERED	ASSIGNED READINGS & MEDIA	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 4	Policy Analysis: An Introduction Policy Emphasis: Social Policy	***Required Reading/Media:*** Kraft & Furlong Chapter 4 Kraft & Furlong Chapter 9 Podcast: NPR Consider This [Could Universal Basic Income Help End Poverty?](#) ***Optional Reading/Media:*** Video: New York Times [Welfare and the Politics of Poverty](#)	Policy Project Part 2b Fundamentals of the Policy: Policy Alternatives & Analysis Policy Project Sharing Discussion Board Weekly Interactive Lecture Policy Activity & Discussion Board Midcourse Survey
WEEK 5	Assessing Policy Alternatives Policy Emphasis: Education Policy	***Required Reading/Media:*** Kraft & Furlong Chapter 6 Kraft & Furlong Chapter 10 ***Optional Reading/Media:*** Article: KQED California Report [California Struggles with Classroom Space for Transitional Kindergarten](#)	Policy Project Part 2c Fundamentals of the Policy: Arguments & Recommendation Policy Project Sharing Discussion Board Weekly Interactive Lecture Policy Activity & Discussion Board
WEEK 6	Advocating for Meaningful Change Part I Policy Emphasis: Environmental and Energy Policy	***Required Reading/Media:*** The Art of Advocacy Strategy p. 1-18 Kraft & Furlong Chapter 11 ***Optional Reading/Media:*** TED Radio Hour Podcast: [Circular Environmental Policy Ideas](#)	Policy Project Part 3 Communicating About the Policy Policy Project Sharing Discussion Board Weekly Interactive Lecture Policy Activity & Discussion Board

WEEK #	TOPICS COVERED	ASSIGNED READINGS & MEDIA	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 7	Advocating for Meaningful Change Part II Policy Emphasis: Foreign Policy & Homeland Security	***Required Reading/Media:*** The Art of Advocacy Strategy p. 19-34 Kraft & Furlong Chapter 12 ***Optional Reading/Media:*** Council for Foreign Relations Backgrounder on The Contentious U.S.-China Trade Relationship	Policy Project Part 4 Advocacy Strategy Policy Project Sharing Discussion Board Weekly Interactive Lecture Policy Activity & Discussion Board
Week 8	Policy and Public Service	***Optional Reading/Media:*** Video: The Hatch Act Illustrated and Explained (USDA- for Federal Employees) Resource: State, D.C., or Local Employee Hatch Act Information Resource: U.S. Office of Government Ethics	Policy Project Part 5 Completed Portfolio Policy Project Part 6 Video Presentation Policy Project Sharing Discussion Board Lessons Learned Personal Reflection