This seminar is designed to give students who are interested in the politics of policymaking a sense of how policies are adopted in the American political system. The focus is on the states, and mainly on executives and legislatures, the principal policymaking institutions.

In order to examine policymaking in the states, we will be looking at the principal political institutions in our separation-of-powers system, the individuals who play the major roles, the groups in which people are organized and through which they engage, and the processes by which policies are determined (including representation, lobbying, agenda setting, issue campaigning, etc.). Among the factors to be considered are: the personal characteristics and motivations of policymakers; the organization of policymaking institutions; agenda setting; the variation of institutions and processes from state to state; and the effectiveness of policymaking systems.

The course will take into account executives and legislatures throughout the nation. However, guest practitioners will give students a special look at policymaking in New Jersey.

In exploring the subject, we shall make use of: assigned weekly readings; seminar discussions; remarks and questioning of guest practitioners; case studies; videos; essays; and oral presentations.

The syllabus, further information, and notices will be on sakai.rutgers.edu

Requirements


Papers will be written on three topics and should be handed in by the dates specified. The paper assignments, which are indicated below, will also be discussed at a seminar session.

Attendance at the seminar sessions is essential. Part of the semester grade will be based on “participation”, which at the very least requires one’s presence. No more than two absences are permitted without a specific penalty; a third absence will result in the reduction of one grade, a fourth in a reduction of another grade.
The semester grade (assuming no more than two absences) will be based on the three essays (each of which counts as 25 percent), as well as seminar participation (which counts 25 percent).

All students in this seminar must abide by the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy (9/1/11), which can be found at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf>

Paper Requirements

Each student is required to write a paper on each of the topics listed below. In writing these papers, be sure to respond to what the specific assignment asks of you.

1. **Politicians and their careers.** For this assignment students will read one of five books (which are available on loan) and write an essay in response to the question with regard to that book.

   James Richardson, *Willie Brown* (1966). How did his personal characteristics and political skills contribute to and/or detract from Willie Brown’s effectiveness as Assembly speaker in California?


   Harriet Keyserling, *Against the Tide* (1998). In examining Harriet Keyserling’s career in the South Carolina house, discuss her greatest personal and political strengths and liabilities as a lawmaker.

   Tom Loftus, *The Art of Legislative Politics* (1994). Discuss the principal lessons about legislative leadership conveyed by Tom Loftus on the basis of his experience as assembly speaker in Wisconsin.

   Barbara Roberts, *Up the Capitol Steps* (2011). Discuss how factors over which she essentially had no control helped determine the political career of Barbara Roberts, and in particular her success with her agenda as governor.

   This paper should be 8-12 double spaced pages.

   **Due October 9.**

2. **The district office.** This essay entails each student visiting the district office of a legislator and interviewing the office manager or another member of the staff. The legislator may also be interviewed. The paper should focus on the staffing and operations of the office and the services provided by the office and by the legislator to constituents. In addition, report on how the legislator deals with individuals and groups in his or her constituency.

   This paper should be 8-12 double spaced pages.

   **Due November 6.**

3. **Gubernatorial “leadership” of the legislature.** Your task here is to compare the policymaking leadership of Governors Brendan Byrne and Thomas Kean in terms of how they related to and how they worked with the New Jersey Legislature during the course of their administrations. The
materials for this assignment are mainly in the archive of the Governor’s Program of the Eagleton Institute of Politics. The website for the program can be accessed at the Eagleton Institute website (www.eagleton.rutgers.edu) by clicking on “governors”.

For information on Byrne and the legislature, use the interviews with: Byrne; Richard Leone; Ray Bateman; Bill Hamilton; Al Burstein; and Harold Hodes. For information on Kean and the legislature, use the interviews with Kean; Lew Thurston; Michael Cole; Ken Merin; Gary Stein; and Edward McGlynn.

This paper should be 8-12 double-spaced pages.

**Due December 4.**

**Schedule of Seminar Discussions and Assigned Readings**

This class will not be meeting on September 4, the first day of the semester, because the Bloustein School is holding an orientation for first-year public policy students, a number of whom are in the class. It would be very difficult for other students to meet on another date that week, so Legislative Policymaking will begin a week later, on September 11.

- **Sept. 11** Studying policymaking in the American states
  - Policymaking as a political enterprise
  - People, institutions and processes
  - Approaches to an understanding of the subject
  - Objectives and methods of course
  - Course requirements
  - CBS Sixty Minutes “Mr. President” video

  **Reading:**


- **Sept. 18** How the public views politics, policy, and politicians and what difference it makes.
  - How representative democracy is practiced
  - How democratic politics are perceived
  - How the deck is stacked
  - Does it matter
  - Can anything be done about it

  **Reading:**

  Rosenthal, *Engines of Democracy*, pp. 8-29
  Grant Reeher, *First Person Political*, pp. 1-24

**Problem for breakout groups:**

Interpreting survey results of Knowledge Networks survey, conducted for National Conference of State legislatures

**Sept. 25 Characteristics and careers of the people who make policy**

What politicians are like as people
Why they run
How opportunities and resources count
How newcomers adapt
Why people quit
Costs and benefits of legislative life
What distinguishes governors from other people and from one another

**Reading:**

Grant Reeher, *First Person Political*, pp. 25-180
Ralph Wright, *Inside the State House*, pp. 1-67, 226-236

**Oct. 2 How people are represented in the policymaking process**

Representation by governors, legislators, parties, and interest groups
Legislative districts and how they vary
Serving their district’s interests
Expressing their district’s views
How well does representation work

Caucus New Jersey, “Working it Out,” video

**Reading:**


**Discussion Topics:**

Be ready to discuss the following questions

Why do legislators work hard to represent their districts
Do legislators go too far (or not far enough) in representing their districts
How do legislators manage to represent the views (on policy issues) of constituents (or don’t they manage)
Overall, how well do legislators carry out their representational job

**Oct. 9 How political parties play a role in the process**

Parties as membership groups
Parties as campaign organizations
Parties as managers of policymaking
Parties and redistricting

Reading:

“Politicians and their careers” paper due

Oct. 16  How interest groups and lobbyists participate in the process and the difference they make
The nature of interest groups
Lobbyists and their jobs
The effects of money on policymaking
Who has how much power

Reading:
Wright, *Inside the Statehouse*, pp. 141-155

Guests:
Melanie Willoughby, Senior Vice President, NJ Business and Industry Association
Dale Florio, Principal, Princeton Public Affairs
Ginger Gold Schnitzer, Director, Government Relations, NJ Education Association
John Leyman, Director, Government Affairs, Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield

Oct. 23  Ethical issues that confront people in the policymaking process and how they are handled
What is ethical and what isn’t
A short history of ethics regulation
What policymakers (legislators especially) have to keep in mind
Can legislatures oversee the ethics of their members

Reading:

Teaching Case:

Oct. 30  Staffing legislatures and governors
Staffing patterns in legislatures and governor’s offices
Partisan and nonpartisan staffing
What staff contributes to process and policy
“Staffing” as a career

Guests:
Andrew Hendry, Executive Director, Senate Democrats
James Harkness, Executive Director, Senate Republicans
William Caruso, Executive Director, Assembly Democrats
Rick Wright, Executive Director, Assembly Republicans
Albert Porroni, Executive Director, Office of Legislative Services

Nov. 6  What are the responsibilities of legislative leadership and how do the leaders do their jobs

Becoming a leader
Varieties of leadership
Brown, Engler, Loftus, Roberts and Wright as leaders
Challenges leaders face
How powerful they are they

Reading:
Rosenthal, Engines of Democracy, pp. 306-341
Wright, Inside the State House, pp. 96-140

Guests:
Donald DiFrancesco, former President of NJ State Senate and Governor
Joe Roberts, former Speaker of NJ Assembly

“District Office” paper due

Nov. 13  How governors and legislatures participate in policy making

Powers and circumstances
The process of formulation
Terms of engagement

Reading:
Rosenthal, The Best Job in Politics, pp. 24-192

Nov. 27  How governors and legislatures formulate and enact budgets

Guests:
Warren Descheneaux, Director, Office of Policy Analysis, Maryland General Assembly
David Rosen, Legislative Budget and Finance Officer, NJ Legislature
Dec. 4  Comparing the policymaking roles of the governor and the legislature in New Jersey

Discussion of gubernatorial policy leadership by Governors Byrne, Kean, Corzine, and Christie

**Guests:**

Richard Bagger, former Chief of Staff to Governor Christie
Bill Castner, former Chief Counsel to Governor Corzine

“Gubernatorial leadership” paper due

Dec. 11  How well does the system for policymaking work and how could it work better

How well do legislators, legislatures, and governors perform
What are the problems in the system
What remedies make sense

**Reading:**