

POLS 4650: State Politics

Spring 2017
MWF 1:25-2:15

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Course Description and Goals

State and local politics arguably play a more prominent role in the everyday lives of American citizens than that of the federal government. This course is designed as a broad survey in the study of state politics in which we will explore how states differ across varying institutions and what effect those differences have on governing as well as electoral and policy outcomes. Some topics that will receive particular emphasis include the following: state legislatures, governors, state courts, redistricting practices, elections, direct democracy, and policy diffusion.

Required texts

- *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*. 10th edition. Virginia Grey, Russell L. Hanson, and Thad Kousser. ISBN-13: 978-1608719983
- *Redistricting and Representation: Why Competitive Elections are Bad for America*. Thomas L. Brunell. ISBN-13: 978-0415964531

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the UGA Disabilities Services office will be accommodated according to university policy. If you have documentation for accommodations from Disabilities Services, please present it to me as soon as possible. For more information, contact Disabilities Services at 706-542-8719. If you cannot reach the classroom or my office, please notify me as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a core value of institutions of higher learning. All students, upon enrolling, must pledge: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism, cheating, and dishonesty. The university policy on academic integrity is posted at the [Academic Honesty page](#). To qualify the application of the policy in this course: tests and written assignments should be your own work, while studying and class preparation can (and should) be done with others.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Attendance	10 percent
Participation	10 percent
Writing Assignments	30 percent
Midterm	25 percent
Final	25 percent

Attendance: Each student will be granted 3 unexcused absences. After those are exhausted, the attendance grade will be a proportion of all classes attended. For example, a student who attends all classes will received all 10 points. A student who attended all but 3 classes will also receive all 10 points. A student who missed more than 3 classes but had a university-approved excuse for each class missed will also receive all 10 points. However, a student who used all “freebies” but also missed 10 percent of the classes without providing a university-approved excuse will only receive 90 percent of the available points, or 9 out of 10 points.

Participation: Each student is expected to arrive on time and to have completed the assigned readings beforehand. Students who are punctual, consistently attend class, demonstrate completion of the readings, contribute meaningfully to in-class discussion, and ask questions when things are unclear can expect to receive most, if not all, of the available points. A detailed rubric can be found on page 4.

Writing Assignments: Each student will be asked to write four 750-900 word papers that will be worth a total of 30 points toward their final grade. Each assignment will summarize one week’s readings, but full credit will be reserved for papers that provide a clear and concise summary and discuss how that week’s readings relate to other material previously covered. At least 2 of the 4 assignments should be completed and turned in before the midterm. Once a week has been covered in class, students can no longer turn in a paper on those readings. Papers should be typed using double spacing, 12 point Times New Roman font, and 1 inch margins. They should also be emailed to the instructor before the start of class. Spelling, grammar, formatting, and punctuation will all be factored into the paper’s grade. A detailed rubric can be found on page 4.

Midterm: There will be one midterm exam administered during the semester. This exam will consist of a small number of short answer prompts and will be related to readings and discussion from all previous class meetings. Make-up exams will only be given to students who provide university-approved excuses. Any potential conflicts should be cleared with the instructor as soon as possible.

Final: The final will be formatted similarly to the midterm and will only cover material since the midterm. Make-up finals will only be given to students who provide university approved excuses. Any potential conflicts should be cleared with the instructor as soon as possible.

Overall Grades

Grades are constructed to reflect the university standards posted online at [this page](#). Grades will be based on how many points you earn according to the following distribution:

A- = 90-93	A = 94-100	
B- = 80-83	B = 84-86	B+ = 87-89
C- = 70-73	C = 74-76	C+ = 77-79
D = 60-69		
F = 0-59		

How to Succeed in this Course

- Be respectful of your own and others' ideas
- Arrive on time
- Attend class consistently
- Keep up with the readings
- If something is not clear, ask a question
- Clarify expectations with the instructor
- Utilize all resources available to you

Student Resources

You can increase your chances of success in this course by using UGA's academic services. The Academic Resource Center offers tutoring in Study Strategies that can help with test preparation and in Writing. You can set an appointment at [this page](#). You also may check out opportunities at [the Miller Learning Center](#) and [the Writing Center](#).

Participation Rubric

- A Student attends every class while consistently demonstrating that he or she has completed and understands the assigned readings by participating in class discussion meaningfully.
- B Student only attends most class meetings while completing all readings and actively participating in a meaningful way.
- C Student has perfect attendance but regularly fails to demonstrate completion of readings or participate in any meaningful way.
- D Student only attends most class meetings and regularly fails to demonstrate completion of readings or participate in any meaningful way.
- F Student regularly arrives late or misses class entirely, does not complete assigned readings, does not engage in class discussion meaningfully, or is disruptive or disrespectful.

Writing Assignment Rubric

- A Student clearly and concisely summarizes each of the week's assigned readings. Additionally, he or she has discussed at length how the readings relate to one another, readings from previous weeks, and current events. The paper will be organized in a coherent manner, properly formatted, and will be free of any spelling and grammatical errors.
- B Student fails to meet one of the above criteria.
- C Student fails to meet multiple criteria listed above.
- D Student fails to meet any of the listed criteria.
- F Student fails to complete the assignment.

Course Schedule

Date	Reading
Jan. 6	Introductions & Syllabus
	Foundations
Jan. 9	U.S. Constitution
Jan. 11	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 1
Jan. 13	No Class: Professor at SPSA Conference
	Federalism
Jan. 16	No Class: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Jan. 18	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 2
Jan. 20	Federalist No. 44, 45, 46
	Elections
Jan. 23	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 3
Jan. 25	"The Effect of Registration Laws" Rosenstone & Wolfinger (1978)
Jan. 27	"The Historical Context of Photo-ID Laws" Davidson (2009)
	State Legislatures
Jan. 30	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 6
Feb. 1	"The Effects of Term Limits on State Legislatures" Carey et al. (1998)
Feb. 3	"Professional Legislatures and Ambitious Politicians" Maestas (2000)
	State Executives
Feb. 6	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 7
Feb. 8	"Do Governors Matter?" Barrilleaux & Berkman (2003)
Feb. 10	"Strategic Candidates, Campaign Dynamics, and..." Carsey et al. (2011)
	State Courts
Feb. 13	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 8
Feb. 15	"Electoral Politics & Strategic Voting in State Supreme Courts" Hall (1992)
Feb. 17	"Judicial Selection & Death Penalty Decisions" Canes-Wrone et al. (2014)
	Midterm Week
Feb. 20	TBD
Feb. 22	Midterm Review
Feb. 24	Midterm Exam
	Parties
Feb. 27	"Teams Without Uniforms" Schaffner et al. (2001)
Mar. 1	"Immigration Politics & Partisan Realignment" Monogan & Doctor (2016)
Mar. 3	"Effect of the Australian Ballot Reform on Split Ticket Voting" Rusk (1970)
	Spring Break
Mar. 6	No Class: Spring Break
Mar. 8	No Class: Spring Break
Mar. 10	No Class: Spring Break

Course Schedule Continued

Date	Reading
Lobbying & Interest Groups	
Mar. 13	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 4
Mar. 15	"Lobbying Across Venues" Jourdain et al. (2016)
Mar. 17	"Interest Group Influence in Policy Diffusion Networks" Garrett & Jansa (2016)
Direct Democracy	
Mar. 20	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 5
Mar. 22	"Ballot Initiatives and the Democratic Citizen" Smith (2002)
Mar. 24	"Legislative Response to the Threat of Popular Initiatives" Gerber (1996)
Redistricting	
Mar. 27	<i>Why Competition Elections are Bad for America</i> Ch. 1-4 Brunell (2008)
Mar. 29	<i>Why Competition Elections are Bad for America</i> Ch. 5-7 Brunell (2008)
Mar. 31	"Reevaluating the Effects of Redistricting" Carson et al. (2014) "The Gerrymanderers Are Coming!" Masket et al. (2012) "Institutional Control of Redistricting" Edwards et al. (2017)
Redistricting Game	
Public Opinion	
Apr. 3	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 14
Apr. 5	"Public Opinion and Policy Liberalism" Wright et al. (1987) "Public Opinion in the US States" Enns & Koch (2013)
Apr. 7	No Class: Professor at MPSA Conference
Policy Diffusion	
Apr. 10	"The Diffusion of Innovations among the American States" Walker (1969)
Apr. 12	"States as Laboratories" Morehouse & Jewell (2004)
Apr. 14	"Bottom-up Federalism" Shipan & Volden (2006)
Environmental Policy	
Apr. 17	<i>Politics in the American States</i> Ch. 15
Apr. 19	"Political Disaster" Reeves (2011)
Apr. 21	"Federalism and the Strategic Location of Air Polluters" Monogan et al. (2016)
Final Exam Schedule	
Apr. 24	TBD
Apr. 26	Final Exam Review
May 1	Final Exam: 12-3pm

All dates and assignments are subject to change.