

## PSCI 3061: State Government and Politics

Spring 2011

Instructor: Dr. Janet Donovan

Tues/Thurs 11-12:15 HLMS 241

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 1-2 or by appointment Ketchum 34B

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TA: Joby Schaffer

TA Office Hours: Mon/Weds/Fri 3-4 Ketchum 401

TA email:

Course description: In this course we will be learning about state governments and politics, the roles of state governments in the national political process, and the similarities and differences among state governments. We will focus in on state elections and political parties, and devote special attention to the state of Colorado.

### Course objectives:

- 1) Learn more about state government and politics through comparative analysis.
- 2) Examine different public policies across states and analyze the success of these policies.
- 3) Explore and understand the variations in election systems across the states.
- 4) Increase analytical and writing skills using political science ideas and concepts.

### Grading and Scale:

Midterm exam	25	93-100	A
Final exam	25	90-92	A-
Quizzes	14	88-89	B+
State constitutions paper	15	83-87	B
Group activities	10	80-82	B-
Attendance	11	78-79	C+
Total	100	73-77	C
		70-72	C-
		60-69	D
		≤ 59	F

### Required Texts:

Gray, Virginia and Russell L. Hanson. 2007. *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press. ISBN 978-0872893429.

Additional readings posted on CU-Learn

### Requirements:

**Midterm Exam:** All students must take the midterm exam in class on the scheduled date. The format is a combination of term identifications, a short essay question and a long essay question. The exam is worth 25 points of the final grade and is required to receive a passing grade in the course. Make-up exams will be given only in cases of documented medical or family emergency. If it is physically possible, the instructor must be notified in advance of such an emergency. All make-ups are at the instructor's discretion and would be in a different format than the original.

**In-class quizzes:** There will be 9 unannounced in-class quizzes over the course of the semester, worth 2 points each. The quizzes are designed to make sure students are doing the readings and taking appropriate notes on the readings. Each student's lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped. There are no make-ups on quizzes.

**State constitutions paper:** Students are required to read the Colorado Constitution and one other state constitution and write a 5-7 page, double spaced, 10-12 point font paper with 1-inch margins comparing and contrasting the state constitutions under study, using concepts and ideas from the course texts. Students are required to cite the course texts and the state constitutions being used within the paper, using parenthetical references, footnotes or endnotes. Students are also required to include a bibliography which does not count toward the page limit requirement. Substantial deviation from these format requirements will result in a reduced grade. More information on the state constitutions paper will be provided. The paper is due in class on the date assigned and is worth 15 points of the final grade. Students are also required to submit an electronic version via CU-Learn by 8pm on the due date. Late papers will receive a grade reduction of 1 point per day until received by the instructor. The paper is required to receive a passing grade in the course.

**Final Exam:** All students must take the final exam during the scheduled final exam period. Information on the format will be given later in the semester. The exam is worth 25 points of the final grade and is required to receive a passing grade in the course. Make-up finals will be given only in cases of documented medical or family emergency, or with documentation of a final exam time conflict in accordance with CU policy. Again, if it is physically possible, the instructor must be notified in advance of such an emergency. All make-ups are at the instructor's discretion and would be in a different format than the original.

**Group Activities:** We will engage in several group activities over the course of the semester. These activities will be announced a week in advance in class. Students are required to be in class to receive credit for the activities. No make-ups will be given, regardless of the reason for the absence. The group activities are worth 10 points.

**Attendance:** Students are required to attend class for the entire time each class period. Only documented medical and family emergencies will be excused, and the instructor should be notified in advance if physically possible that a student will be absent for a class period. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain notes or other materials from missed classes from another student in class. Attendance is worth 11 points of your grade.

#### Course policies:

**Contacting the Instructor:** Please feel free to contact me with questions about the course. The best ways to reach me are to come by office hours, or to email. I always answer email within 48 hours, so if you do not receive a reply, that means I did not get your email and you should try to contact me again. When addressing me, please address me in person or in email as Janet or Dr. Donavan.

**Course Etiquette:** Students are expected to come to class on time and stay the entire time. If it is necessary to come late or leave early, please let me know in advance. If your schedule does not permit you to be on time and in class on a regular basis, please take another course. Students are expected to be respectful of each other and of the instructor; lively debate is encouraged, but personal attacks are prohibited. The use of cell phones is prohibited during class for talking or texting. Students may use computers in class to take notes; if you are using your computer for other purposes, you will be prohibited from using a computer in class. These guidelines should be obvious, and they will help to make the course a more enjoyable experience for all! For more information on University requirements regarding classroom behavior please see <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student\\_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code).

**Honor code:** All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. In this course, students will receive a 0 on any assignment in which the honor code is violated. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode>

**Students with disabilities:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>.

**Religious observances:** Students with religious observances that conflict with course requirements will be accommodated whenever possible. In order to ensure such accommodation, students must notify me within the first 2 weeks of the course to allow time to make such arrangements. For more information on the University policy, please see [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html)

**Discrimination and harassment:** The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>

**Reading Schedule:** Readings are to be completed BEFORE the class date they are assigned.

**Week 1:**

Tues 1/11: Introduction to the course  
 Thurs 1/13: The states in context  
 Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 1

**Week 2:**

Tues 1/18: Comparing political cultures  
 Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 2  
 Thurs 1/20: Comparing political cultures (cont.)

**Week 3:**

Tues 1/25: Political parties and elections in the states  
 Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 3  
 Thurs 1/27: Political parties and elections in the states (cont.)  
 Readings: Re-districting reading (on CU-Learn)

**Week 4:**

Tues 2/1: Political parties and elections in the states (cont.)  
 Readings: Jewell & Morehouse (on CU-Learn)  
 Thurs 2/3: Political parties and elections in the states (cont.)  
 Readings: Jewell & Morehouse (on CU-Learn)

**Week 5:**

Tues 2/8: Interest groups in the states  
 Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 4  
 Thurs 2/10: Interest groups in the states (cont)

**Week 6:**

Tues 2/15: Legislating in the states: the initiative process  
 Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 5  
 Thurs 2/17: Legislating in the states (cont.)  
 Readings: Initiatives reading (on CU-Learn)

**Week 7:**

Tues 2/22: Legislating in the states  
 Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 6  
 Thurs 2/24: Legislating in the states (cont.)  
 Readings: State legislatures reading (on CU-Learn)

**Week 8:**

Tues 3/1: **Midterm exam in class**  
 Thurs 3/3: Executives in the states  
 Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 7

**Week 9:**

Tues 3/8: Judiciaries in the states  
 Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 8  
 Thurs 3/10: Judiciaries and rights in the states  
 Readings: State constitutional rights reading (on CU-Learn)

Week 10:

- Tues 3/15: State corrections policy  
Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 9
- Thurs 3/17: State health and welfare programs  
Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 11

Spring break, no course responsibilities March 21-25

Week 11:

- Tues 3/29: Fiscal policy in the states  
Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 10
- Thurs 3/31: Fiscal policy (cont.)  
Readings: Fiscal policy reading (on CU-Learn)

Week 12:

- Tues 4/5: Economic development and infrastructure policy  
Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 14
- Thurs 4/7: Natural resources policy in the states  
Readings: Natural resource reading (on CU-Learn)

Week 13:

- Tues 4/12: Economic and social regulation  
Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 13
- Thurs 4/14: Education policy in the states  
**State constitutions paper due in class**  
Readings: Gray and Hanson chapter 12

Week 14: State Constitutions paper presentations

Week 15: State Constitutions paper presentations

**Final Exam Monday, May 2 from 1:30-4:00 pm**