

**PSCI 3061: State Government and Politics**  
12:45 - 2:20 p.m. MTWRF in Visual Arts Complex (VAC) 1B88  
Summer 2011

Office: Sundial Plaza and Ketchum Hall 131A  
Office Hours: Daily from 11:30-12:30

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**Course Description:** While much attention is traditionally paid to the federal government and its branches, all too often the states, and their governments, are given secondary consideration. Mindful of this unfortunate reality, this class focuses upon the fifty U.S. states and their important contributions. And yet, the states do not exist in a vacuum, so the role of the states in relation to the federal government will also be an important theme. We will consider the central institutions of the states, including governors, legislatures and courts, as well as political parties, interest groups and the impact of direct democracy via initiatives. We will also examine several areas of public policy in which the states play a pivotal role, including education, corrections, health and welfare programs.

As we progress through the semester, it may be helpful to keep in mind the following three questions. First, how do the states differ from each other and how do these differences matter? Second, is the role of states and the nature of their institutions static, or is their role and nature evolving—have their capacities changed over time? Finally, how do the changes in institutions, and the ways in which institutions, parties and the public interact, affect public policy?

**Course Requirements:** The format of the course will include a mix of lecture and guided classroom discussions of the readings and topics assigned for each class session. It is imperative that each student be prepared in advance by doing the assigned readings. In light of that, each student will be responsible for preparing a certain number of discussion memos. Each exam will entail a combination of terms and concepts that you will be asked to define and explain, as well as longer essays.

**Discussion Memos:** Each student will be required to submit several 2 page (single-spaced) typed discussion memos periodically throughout the semester. These discussion memos are to be distributed to the class via email. A schedule will be arranged during the first week of class to assign when each student's memo will be due. *Memos are to be sent by 5:00 p.m. the day preceding the student's assigned day (e.g. students assigned to Monday shall send their memos by 5:00 p.m. on Sunday).* Discussion memos are designed to accomplish several things: (1) to encourage each student to think carefully about the topics and issues presented in the readings, (2) to help facilitate class discussions by identifying issues and questions that deserve deeper exploration (3) to be a resource for the entire class when preparing for exams.

The first half of the memo may consist of a summary of the readings for that day, but the remainder of the memo should critique the reading, draw connections between the reading and other readings assigned for that week, identify issues that the student believes were unclear and pose questions for the class to discuss during class. Memos that are a good faith attempt to comply with the above requirements will receive full credit. Memos submitted late, but prior to class, will be docked 25%. No credit will be given for memos that are not submitted prior to class, and with the exception of excused absences (such as a documented illness), discussion memos cannot be made-up.

**Grading Policies:** The overall grade for the course will be determined as follows:

In-class participation	10%
Discussion memos	10%
Quizzes	20%
Mid-term exam	25%
Final exam	35%

*However, each exam is required to pass the class—failure to complete any of the exams will result in failure of the course!*

Participation: Attendance and participation are *not* the same thing. Participation requires contributing to class discussions and asking questions. Attendance is being physically present in the classroom. Participating in class will contribute to that portion of your grade based on participation. Attendance is expected—failure to attend class will negatively impact your overall grade. In other words, failing to attend can hurt your grade, but to score higher than a D grade on the 10% of your grade constituting in-class participation, you must actively participate. Participation is especially important given this is a summer class with a relatively small class-size and no paper requirement.

Quizzes: Two scheduled quizzes are listed on the course outline below. If the class as a whole does the readings and comes to class prepared these will be the only quizzes throughout the course, and each will count for half of the quiz portion of your grade. If, however, it becomes apparent that the class is not well-prepared for discussion, then unannounced pop quizzes may be added to these two scheduled quizzes. Missed quizzes, with the exception of excused absences, cannot be made up—which is another incentive for regular attendance.

Re-grading: Instructors sometimes make mistakes in grading. For that reason, I will agree to re-grade any quiz or mid-term exam, subject to a few restrictions. Please wait 24 hours after an item is returned to you before requesting a re-grade, and use that time to re-read the material covered by the quiz or exam. (However, any request for a re-grade must be made within one week after the quiz or exam is returned to you, after which no regrading shall be done.) If, after re-reading the material, you feel that I overlooked or misunderstood a point you made, I ask that you prepare a one paragraph written statement with your request, detailing what you believe I have overlooked or how you feel the grade is unfair. I will never penalize a request for re-grade by lowering your grade.

For exams (or any other aspect of the course), you should be aware of the University's Disability Services. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner (no later than one week before the first exam) so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, [www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices)).

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. See policy details at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html). If you need an accommodation of any scheduled activity, due to a conflict with a religious holiday or observance, please let me know in writing (e.g. via e-mail) of the conflict during the first two weeks of the semester. I will be happy to work out a suitable accommodation.

I strongly encourage you to review the University's policies with respect to academic integrity. All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery and threatening behavior. Cheating is defined as using unauthorized materials or receiving unauthorized assistance during an examination or other academic exercise. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgment. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: failing to use quotation marks when directly quoting from a source; failing to document distinctive ideas from a source; fabricating or inventing sources; and copying, without attribution, information from the Internet. For additional information on the academic integrity policies of the University, see <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/acadinteg.html>. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (303-725-2273). In sum, the University's reputation depends on maintaining the highest standards of intellectual honesty. Also, please be aware that in this class cheating or plagiarism, of any sort, will result in a grade of zero on the item in question. During exams, all electronic devices, including cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, etc., must be turned off and completely stowed out of reach, along with any notebooks or papers.

This course tackles subjects that are sometimes viewed as controversial. It is incumbent on every participant in the class (instructor and students alike) to strive to maintain an environment that is conducive to learning. We should always remember that people bring differences with them into the classroom and that these differences should be respected. It is imperative that each of us maintain civility when asking questions and making comments. Likewise, questions and comments by others should be treated with civility at all times. If you prefer an alternate name or gender pronoun please advise me of your preference and I will be happy to honor your request.

Finally, the University of Colorado policy on Discrimination and Harassment, policy on Sexual Harassment, and policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises or create an environment that is hostile or offensive. For additional information see [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/sexual\\_misconduct\\_response.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/sexual_misconduct_response.html). Any student who believes that they have 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 at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Further information is available at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.



**Course Materials:** *This course involves a substantial amount of reading.* For each class session, students will be expected to read chapters from books that have been assigned for the course, court cases, articles in political science journals, law review articles, and/or other academic articles.

**Two books have been ordered for use in this course:**

Gray, Virginia and Russell L. Hanson. *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*. 9th ed. Washington: CQ Press, 2008.

Smith, Kevin B. *State and Local Government: 2010-2011 Edition*. Washington: CQ Press, 2011

### **Course Outline**

- **Tues. July 5:** Introduction to the course.
- **Wed. July 6: Socioeconomic and Political Context of States.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 1; also read Lieske, Joel. "Regional Sub-Cultures of the United States." *Journal of Politics*, 55 (1993): 888-913.
- **Thurs. July 7: State Constitutions.** read "State Constitutions" posted on CULearn.
- **Fri. July 8: State Constitutions cont.** May, Janice C. "Constitutional Amendment and Revision Revisited." *Publius*, 17(1) (Winter 1987): 153-159
- **Mon. July 11 Governors and Executive Branch.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 7; also read Smith, pp. 85-86 and chs. 7, 22-24.  
1<sup>st</sup> scheduled quiz
- **Tues. July 12 Legislatures.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 6; also read Squire, Peverill. "Historical Evolution of Legislatures in the United States." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9 (2006): 19-44.
- **Wed. July 13: Legislatures cont.** Smith, chs. 11, 13, 14 and 15; also read Carey, John M., Richard G. Niemi, Lynda W. Powell & Gary Moncrief "The Effects of Term Limits on State Legislatures: A New Survey of the 50 States." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 31(1) (2006): 105-34.
- **Thurs. July 14: Interest Groups.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 4; Smith, chs. 9 and 10
- **Fri. July 15: Parties and Elections.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 3; Smith ch. 12; also read "Redistricting Reform" posted on CULearn.
- **Mon. July 18: Initiatives.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 5; also read Gerber, Elisabeth. "Legislative Response to the Threat of Popular Initiatives." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(1) (1996): 99-128.

- **Tues. July 19: Federalism.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 2;  
read also **Federalist Papers #45 and 46 posted on CULearn**
- **Wed. July 20: Federalism cont.** Smith, Part I pp. 1-17 (including chs. 1-3)
- **Thurs. July 21: Mid-term exam**
- **Fri. July 22: Courts.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 9; Smith chs. 19 and 21.
- **Mon. July 25: New Judicial Federalism.** Brennan, William J. "State Constitutions and the Protection of Individual Rights." *Harvard Law Review*, 90(3) (1977)
- **Tues. July 26: Homosexual Marriage and Other State Constitutional Issues.**  
Gray and Hanson, ch. 13 (only pp. 397-403). **Also read** Smith ch. 35  
and *State v Varum* (Iowa 2009) posted on CU Learn.
- **Wed. July 27: Corrections Policy.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 9; Smith, ch. 6.
- **Thurs. July 28: Politics of Education.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 12;  
also read Sunderman, Gail L. and Gary Orfield. "Domesticating a Revolution:  
No Child Left Behind Reforms and State Administrative Response." *Harvard Educational Review* 76 (Winter 2006): 526-556.
- **Fri. July 29: Politics of Education cont.** Smith, chs. 4 and 33  
**2<sup>nd</sup> scheduled quiz**
- **Mon. Aug 1: Health and Welfare Programs.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 11
- **Tues. Aug 2: Fiscal Policy in the States.** Gray and Hanson, ch. 10;  
Smith, chs. 29-32, 34, 36-38
- **Wed. Aug 3: Fiscal Policy in Colorado.**  
**Bell Policy Center documents re: Colorado fiscal policy posted on CULearn**
- **Thurs. Aug 4: Regulation and Development.** Gray and Hanson, chs. 13 and 14
- **FINAL EXAM: FRIDAY, AUGUST 5**

*This syllabus is subject to revision at the discretion of the instructor by announcing the changes in class and posting an updated syllabus on CULearn. Reading assignments may be adjusted through in-class announcements. Additional required newspaper and magazine articles may be assigned via email.*

