

**STATE POLITICS
POLITICAL SCIENCE 3061
FALL 2017**

Instructor:

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Course Times:

Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00-3:15, Hellems 241.

Office:

128 Ketchum

Office Hours:

4:00-6:15, Tuesday and Thursday, or by appointment

Overview:

In this course, we explore the politics and policy processes of the American states. By virtue of its federal system of organization, the United States divides sovereignty between the federal government and state governments. We analyze how state governments operate and learn about how institutional structures at the state level compare to those at the federal level. Additionally, we look at the states comparatively and learn about their competitive and cooperative dynamics. At the end of this course, you will hopefully have a rigorous understanding of how the states coexist with each other and the federal government in the American political system.

Readings:

There are two books available for purchase at the CU Bookstore. The first (Donovan, Smith, and Mooney) is required; the second (Gray et al) is recommended. The books are:

Donovan, Todd, Daniel A. Smith, and Christopher Z. Mooney. 2012. *State and Local Politics: Institutions and Reform*. 3rd Edition. Stamford, CT: Cengage.

Gray, Virginia, Russell L. Hanson, and Thad Kousser. 2012. *Politics in the American States*. 10th Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Grades:

Your course grade is a function of four components: two closed-book midterm examinations (30 points together, or 15 points each), a closed-book final examination (30 points), an analytical paper due on the last day of class (25 points), and attendance (15 points). Exams

(midterm and final) use a combination of question-types including multiple choice and short answer. The final exam *is* cumulative. Additionally, the final exam day/time **cannot be changed** since this is determined by the University. Makeups for the midterm exam are only granted for a valid excuse (e.g. illness, a death in the family, or a religious holiday accompanied by a note from a doctor or other official), and the makeup is more time-consuming and thorough than the normal midterm exam.

The analytical paper exercise requires you to develop an argument and marshal evidence to answer a prompt that will be distributed to you approximately a month-and-half before the due date of the analytical paper. The paper may be **no longer than 6 pages, double-spaced**, should use proper citation procedures and should adhere to University rules regarding plagiarism. All instances of cheating **will be** reported to appropriate authorities. Also, the analytical paper **must be submitted in pdf form via D2L**.

Finally, the attendance policy is straightforward. **Each student is granted 5 FREE unexcused absences that may be taken for any reason** (excused absences may be taken for illness, a death in the family, religious holiday, or similar event and **MUST** be accompanied by a note from a doctor or other official). After a student uses these 5 free absences, each subsequent unexcused absence **reduces their attendance score by 1 point (out of a possible 15 points that count for attendance in the final course grade)**. Therefore, it is possible that missing too many classes can reduce your final grade substantially, as you would earn a course grade of 85% if you performed perfectly on the exams and paper but had 20 unexcused absences (corresponding to the 5 free absences plus 15 additional unexcused absences).

The grading scale is as follows:

93-100: A
90-92: A -
88-89: B +
83-87: B
80-82: B-
78-79: C+
73-77: C
70-72: C-
60-69: D
Less than 60: F

Course Outline:

The course is organized into weeks. All readings for a designated week should be finished by the end of the week for which they have been assigned.

Week 1: 8/29; NO CLASS on 8/31

- Introduction to the course.

Week 2: 9/5; 9/7

- Theoretical overview of politics, and an examination of the states as policy laboratories.
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 1 by the end of the week.

Week 3: 9/12; NO CLASS on 9/14

- Federalism
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 2 by the end of the week.

Week 4: 9/19; 9/21

- Public opinion and ideology
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 3 by the end of the week.

Week 5: 9/26; 9/28

- Direct democracy
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 4 by the end of the week.

Week 6: 10/3; 10/5

- Review and Midterm 1
- **Midterm 1 on 10/5**

Week 7: 10/10; 10/12

- Political parties and interest groups
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapters 5-6 by the end of the week.

Week 8: 10/17; 10/19

- State legislatures
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 7 by the end of the week.

Week 9: 10/24; 10/26

- Governors and bureaucracy
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 8 by the end of the week.

Week 10: 10/31; 11/2

- State courts
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 9 by the end of the week.

Week 11: 11/7; 11/9

- Review and Midterm 2
- **Midterm 2 on 11/9**

Week 12: 11/14; 11/16

- Fiscal policy

- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 10 by the end of the week.

Week 13: NO CLASS on 11/21 and 11/23. Happy Thanksgiving!

Week 14: 11/28; 11/30

- Local governments
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 11 by the end of the week.

Week 15: 12/5; 12/7

- Morality policy
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 13 by the end of the week.

Week 16: 12/12; 12/14

- Health and welfare policy and final review
- Read *Donovan Smith Mooney* chapter 14 by the end of the week.
- Review for final on 12/14
- **Analytical paper due via D2L in pdf form at beginning of class.**

Final exam on 12/19 from 1:30-4:00