

## **PSCI 3061 | State Government and Politics – Colorado Edition | Fall 2020**

### **Course Instructor**

**NAME:** JulieMarie A. Shepherd Macklin, Ph.D.

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**OFFICE HOURS:** This semester, office hours will be virtual and by appointment. Please email me to set-up a time to connect

### **Course Hours and Locations**

**Regular Meeting Pattern:** Mondays and Wednesdays 4:10-5:25pm

**Split course format:** Weeks 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, and 13 are scheduled to be held in person. During these weeks, students will only come to campus on their assigned day. The other class day, they will convene remotely for small group discussion and supplemental activities. During the other weeks not listed above, the full class will come together for synchronous class on Zoom. Please note that this schedule could change at any time per university or public health official guidance. Changes will be announced during class and on Canvas.

### **Course Description**

The primary objective of this course is to explore the institutions and mechanisms of government and politics at the state and local level. We will engage in this process of inquiry by using a Colorado lens. As students at a state public institution of higher education (and possibly voters, taxpayers, etc.) you have a vested interest in understanding Colorado political structures and institutions. Some of the main themes explored in this course include:

- The unique social, political, and historical history of Colorado.
- Citizen legislatures.
- State fiscal policy (how it is enacted along with some of the modern day challenges).
- Tax and expenditure limitations such as TABOR.
- Direct democracy (its use and consequences).
- The 2020 elections (presidential and Colorado-specific)

By the end of the course, you should have a better understanding of key aspects of state government and politics and be more knowledgeable about Colorado government.

### **Required Reading Materials**

There are no required textbooks for this course. Instead course reading materials (to include academic readings, book excerpts, news stories, podcasts, short videos, etc.) will be made available on Canvas in the modules tab (organized by course week). Please be sure to check Canvas for regular updates and announcements.

### **Course Structure**

This is not a “sit-and-get” style lecture course. You are expected to be active contributors to and designers of your own learning, growth and development. It is therefore expected that you will

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attend class consistently and show up prepared. This means completing readings/viewings ahead of class as well as keeping tabs on current events. Given the nature of our course, there are daily updates and happenings related to state and local politics and government. Students are encouraged to be following the news and bring questions and observations to class for further discussion.

### **A few notes to set you up for success in this course**

#### **Attend class regularly**

Attendance at each class meeting is expected and required. Each student is granted a total of three absences during the semester. These absences are to be used at students' discretion and there is no distinction between excused or unexcused. The only exceptions to when these absences can be used: exam days, guest speaker days (will be announced in class), and student presentation days. If there are extenuating circumstances regarding class attendance (such as prolonged illness, family emergency, etc.), please be proactive in communicating with the course instructor and we will address the situation as needed. Class engagement points missed from an absence cannot be made up.

Any absences beyond the allowable three absences, or an absence on a required attendance day (exams, guest speakers, student presentations) will result in a 1% deduction (per instance) off the top of your final course grade.

#### **Come to class prepared to be present and actively engaged**

Preparation is expected. This course is designed for the course instructor and students all to act as contributors to classroom learning. The goals of the course warrant thorough preparation and wholehearted, active participation. Your preparation and knowledge of the subject material are critical to our discussion-based format. Showing up for class without being properly prepared and with hopes of just getting by, or keeping a low profile, does not advance your growth or learning.

#### **Practice professionalism**

Given the nature of our course subject, we will likely engage in discussion that may be controversial or sensitive in nature. Discussions of politics and government can strike at the core of someone's identity and values. While we will strive to frame our conversations as social scientists and not cable news moderators, there may still be times when heated debate occurs, or emotions run high. It is imperative to remain respectful and to know the difference between attacking an argument or claim versus attacking a person – the latter will not be tolerated.

Treat everyone (fellow classmates, the course instructor, and other guests) with respect and assume positive intention. If you have a concern or critique, be proactive about sharing feedback and expressing opinions in a respectful and constructive fashion.

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### Regularly Monitor Canvas and CU Email

Canvas will be updated throughout the semester with important information regarding this course. Students should regularly check Canvas for course updates, assigned and readings, supplemental materials, and assignments and rubrics.

Final drafts of assignments will be submitted via Canvas. Please note that submissions are automatically scanned for plagiarism. When you submit your assignment, you will be able to see immediately the percentage of your assignment that is original work vs. potentially plagiarized. If you have questions or concerns, please discuss with your CA and/or the course instructor. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.

Please use your official colorad.edu email address when communicating with the course instructor and your CA. Any official course information and correspondence will come to this email address. Remember that grade information cannot be provided via email.

### What Not to Do

**Audio and/or video recording** of any portion of class is prohibited except when approved in accordance with university policy regarding accommodations. Any instances should be discussed in advance with the instructor.

### Technology use During Class

You are encouraged to be wise users of technology during class. I believe that technology enhances our ability to conduct research, find information, organize notes and ideas, etc. When in the physical classroom on campus, please be mindful and respectful of your technology use.

Given that some of our class time will be online, I understand students will be relying on their devices for course engagement. However, I will not tolerate the use of electronic devices for other purposes (homework for other classes, social media, surfing the web, shopping etc.). This limits your ability to be actively engaged and present and is a sign of disrespect to others in our Zoom classroom space.

### GRADING SCALE

A	94% to 100%	B-	80% to 82.9%	D+	67% to 69.9%
A-	90% to 93.9%	C+	77% to 79.9%	D	63% to 66.9%
B+	87% to 89.9%	C	73% to 76.9%	D-	60% to 62.9%
B	83% to 86.9%	C-	70% to 72.9%	F	Below 60%

**Extra Credit:** A limited number of extra credit opportunities *may* be offered. The number of extra points allowed and to which grade category they might apply is at the discretion of the instructor.

## Graded Assignments

Assignment/Project	Percentage of Total Grade
<b>Election Tracking Assignment</b> More details will be shared in class. Assignment includes a written deliverable (15%) and an in-class (over Zoom) presentation (5%) during week 14.	20%
<b>Remote Group Work</b> <i>During weeks 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, and 13 class attendance will be split. The day you do not come to class you will be responsible for completing individual and small-group assignments. These are worth 2.5% each and will be graded pass/fail based on the level of effort and whether or not a serious attempt was made to complete the work. If you miss a remote work assignment due to an absence, it cannot be made-up and no points will be awarded.</i>	20%
<b>Active Class Engagement and Completion of Mini-Assignments</b> <i>Mini-assignments may include short written responses, discussion questions, or completion of other task during in-person or all class Zoom sessions. These will be graded pass/fail based on the level of effort and whether or not a serious attempt was made to complete the work. If you miss a mini-assignment due to an absence, it cannot be made-up and no points will be awarded.</i>	15%
<b>Exams</b> <i>Three non-cumulative exams, each worth 15%. Exam I week 6; Exam II 4 Nov; Exam III during assigned final time</i>	45%

[University of Colorado Standard Policies and Procedures](#)

### CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the policies on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements, and public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Required safety measures at CU Boulder relevant to the classroom setting include:

- maintain 6-foot distancing when possible,
- wear a face covering in public indoor spaces and outdoors while on campus consistent with state and county health orders,
- clean local work area,
- practice hand hygiene,
- follow public health orders, and

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- if sick and you live off campus, do not come onto campus (unless instructed by a CU Healthcare professional), or if you live on-campus, please alert [CU Boulder Medical Services](#).

Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to [Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#). For more information, see the policies on [COVID-19 Health and Safety](#) and [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#). If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please see the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

Before returning to campus, all students must complete the [COVID-19 Student Health and Expectations Course](#). Before coming on to campus each day, all students are required to complete a [Daily Health Form](#).

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for or had symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home and complete the [Health Questionnaire and Illness Reporting Form](#) remotely. In this class, if you are sick or quarantined and will be absent from class, please make an effort to notify me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements. Because of FERPA student privacy laws, please know you are not required to state the nature of their illness when notifying me.

### ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

### PREFERRED STUDENT NAMES AND PRONOUNS

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

### HONOR CODE

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating,

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fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

### **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND/OR RELATED RETALIATION**

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, or protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](#), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#).

Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, stalking, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, please notify me as soon as possible (preferably at the beginning of the semester) regarding any religious observance conflicts and we will make arrangements for attendance and assignments. Please see [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

### **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I recognize that the University of Colorado Boulder sits upon land within the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho peoples. Further, I acknowledge that [forty-eight contemporary tribal nations](#) are historically tied to the lands that make up the state of Colorado.

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*\*\*Please note that this schedule is subject to change. Announcements will be made during class and on Canvas.\*\**

### WEEK 1 | 24 & 26 AUG | INTRODUCTION

#### Monday Zoom for All: Course welcome and introduction

- Introductions
- Expectations
- Logistics

#### Wednesday Zoom for All: Introduction to Social Sciences

- Social science and political science: approaches and challenges
- What does it mean to *be a* social scientist?
- What does it mean to *do* social science?

### WEEK 2 | 31 AUG & 2 SEPT | COLORADO HISTORY

#### In-Person Class (come only on your assigned day):

- An overview of key points of Colorado's social, political, and economic history and the forces that have shaped the centennial state over time.

### WEEK 3 | 9 SEPT | TABOR

**\*\*No class Monday in observance of Labor Day Holiday\*\***

#### Wednesday 9 September Zoom for All:

- An introduction to state tax and expenditure limitations
  - TABOR

### WEEK 4 | 14 & 16 SEPT | TABOR CONTINUED AND FISCAL POLICY

#### In-Person Class (come only on your assigned day):

- Continued discussion of TABOR
  - Implications
  - Governing under TABOR
  - Reform efforts
- Other key elements of Colorado's fiscal policy
  - Constitutional amendments

### WEEK 5 | 21 & 23 SEPT | GOVERNED BY CITIZEN LEGISLATURE

**In-Person Class (come only on your assigned day):**

- What is a citizen legislature?
  - What are the implications of having a citizen legislature?
- A look at Colorado's legislative body

**WEEK 6 | 28 & 30 SEPT | EXAM 1**

**In-Person Class (come only on your assigned day):**

- Exam 1 will be given in class (come on your assigned day)
  - The first exam will cover content from weeks 1-5

**WEEK 7 | 5 & 7 OCT | SPECIAL DISTRICTS**

**In-Person Class (come only on your assigned day):**

- What are special districts?
- Examples of special districts: why they are created, how they are used, and the revenue they generate.

**WEEK 8 | 12 & 14 OCT | GOVERNING VIA THE BALLOT**

**In-Person Class (come only on your assigned day):**

- Examine the role of direct democracy and its use in Colorado
- Why is Colorado's constitution so lengthy?

**WEEK 9 | 19 and 21 OCT | HOT TOPICS IN COLORADO**

**No class meeting Monday 19 October**

**Wednesday 21 October Zoom Class for All:**

- Based on class input – we will have an open discussion on 1-2 hot topics in Colorado politics.

**WEEK 10 | 26 & 28 OCT | COLORADO'S INFLUENCE ON THE NATIONAL STAGE**

**Monday 26 October Zoom Class for All:**

- A discussion of Colorado's role and prominence on the national stage
  - 2020 US Senate Race
  - Redistricting efforts

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### Wednesday 28 October Zoom Class for All:

- Continued discussion of Colorado's role and prominence on the national stage
  - Faithless electors – Supreme Court Case
  - National popular vote reforms

### WEEK 11 | 2 & 4 NOV | EXAM 2

#### Monday 2 November Zoom Class for All

- TBD

#### Wednesday 4 November Zoom Class for All

- Exam 2 will be administered via Canvas in real-time (4:10-5:25pm).
  - The second exam will cover content from weeks 7-12.

### WEEK 12 | 9 & 11 NOV | ELECTION RECAP AND ANALYSIS

#### In-Person Class (come only on your assigned day):

- Recap key Colorado races (candidates and ballot questions)

### WEEK 13 | 16 & 18 NOV | COLORADO'S HEAVY HITTERS

#### In-Person Class (come only on your assigned day):

- An exploration of key interests that shape Colorado politics including but not limited to: oil and gas, agriculture, energy, defense.

### WEEK 14 | 23 & 25 NOV | PRESENT ELECTION WRITE-UPS

#### Monday 23 November Zoom for All

- Students will share-out election write-ups in breakout rooms on Zoom

#### Wednesday 25 November Zoom for All

- TBD

### WEEK 15 | 30 NOV & 2 DEC | POLITICS OF EDUCATION IN COLORADO

#### Monday 30 November Zoom for All

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- P-12 education in Colorado
  - A general overview of the p-12 education landscape in Colorado
  - Funding and governance of public education in Colorado (bond and mill elections, the school finance act, school boards, the state department of education)

### Wednesday 2 December Zoom for All

- Higher education in Colorado
  - A general overview of the higher ed landscape in Colorado
  - Focus on the University of Colorado's unique budget and governance structure

## WEEK 16 | 7 DEC | FINAL THOUGHTS

### Monday 7 December Zoom for All

- Know what, so what, now what?
  - The future direction of Colorado government and politics

### **\*\*FINAL EXAM TBD\*\***

- The third exam will cover content from weeks 12-16
  - This exam will take place during the university scheduled final exam time for PSCI 3601. Check your Buff portal for date and time. It will be administered online via Canvas.