

Winthrop University
Spring 2018
Political Science 202-001: State and Local Government
Tuesday/Thursday 3:30-4:45 PM, Owens 202
Three credit hours
Turnitin.com class number 18709170, enrollment key holder202

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Office Hours: MW 12:15-1:30, TR 2:00-3:15, or by appointment.

Required Materials:

Thomas R. Dye and Susan A. MacManus, *Politics in States and Communities*, 14th ed., Pearson, 2012. (Abbreviated in the syllabus as D&M; available for purchase or rental in print or e-book format at the Winthrop University Bookstore, or through online sources)

J. Eric Oliver, *Local Elections and the Politics of Small-Scale Democracy*, Princeton, 2012. (Available at the Winthrop University Bookstore)

Additional Readings, available through course Webpage:

Holley H. Ulbrich, Donna S. London, and Melinda A. Lucka, "Local Governments and Home Rule in South Carolina [/] A Citizen's Guide," Clemson University, Jim Self Center for the Future, 2011.

CQ/Roll Call, "How to Track State Legislation"

Additional readings may be added throughout the semester.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND COURSE GOALS

The United States Constitution divides and shares power not only among the three branches of the Federal Government, but also between the governments of the nation and the states. The states then further share power with cities, counties, townships and other local entities. Perhaps contrary to popular belief, state and local governments frequently affect most Americans' day-to-day lives far more than does the government in Washington, D.C. This course will address a number of questions: What is the relationship between Washington and the states? How are the states similar, and how are they different, in their structures, processes, and philosophies of government? How do the political systems of the states resemble each other, and how do they differ? What policy issues are significant for state and local governments? How are the states similar, and how are they different, in the way they carry out policies and provide services such as welfare and education? What difference does it make if a policy is made and carried out in Washington, as opposed to Columbia, Raleigh or Honolulu? And how is the federal government "better" or "worse" than the state governments at making policy and providing services? We

will also examine the role which city, county, town and other local units of government play in all of the above.

South Carolina is an ongoing topic in the class, but not the primary focus. (Winthrop occasionally offers a distinct Special Topics class on South Carolina government and politics.) While relevant examples from this state will be used, the emphasis here is on issues that affect all 50 states, and on a comparative analysis of how all the states do things. As is true of any other state, South Carolina is typical of the rest of the nation in some respects, but unique in others, and how things are (or are not) done here is certainly of interest, but not necessarily relevant to a study of the larger issues involved in state and local government.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course objective is not only to increase your understanding of state and local government and politics, and the relationships among those institutions and their counterparts on the federal level, but also to develop your understanding of a number of public policy issues with critical importance to state and local governments and to American society, including education, welfare, civil rights, economic development, environmental policy, and health care. You will explore a topic of your choice related to one of these issues in your research paper.

This class contributes to student mastery of Winthrop University Level Competency 1: Winthrop graduates think critically and solve problems. The course includes an extensive discussion of contemporary policy problems facing state governments, including issues of education, health care, welfare and other current issues as events warrant. You will be required to analyze a policy issue of your choice which is pertinent to an individual state which you are randomly assigned at the beginning of the semester. As a result, you must think critically and solve problems, and you will be assessed accordingly.

University Level Competency 2: Winthrop graduates are personally and socially responsible. You will learn a significant amount of detail about a state other than your own. This seeks to give you a broader perspective on the government, politics, and culture of a part of the United States with which you are not yet familiar. You will also learn how other states perceive the role of government in solving policy problems and address many normative political issues such as same-sex marriage, health care as a right, and access to education. This will help you think about what it means to be a personally and socially responsible citizen as you think through complex political and moral issues not just as individual choices but as policy prescriptions.

University Level Competency 3: Winthrop graduates understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which they live. While the course focuses almost entirely on governments within the United States, you will learn about how state policy decisions affect other states. For example, states compete with each other to recruit jobs. Pollution does not stay within state lines. One state's adoption of a lottery can be seen to increase political pressure on its neighbors to adopt lotteries as well. Understanding the interconnected nature of state policies is an important aspect of the course.

University Level Competency 4: Winthrop graduates communicate effectively. Given that this class attracts large numbers of Mass Communication and Political Science majors, there is a

great deal of emphasis on written description and analysis of state governments and their policy issues, including the major paper at the end of the semester.

GRADING SCALE

The course will use Winthrop University's +/- grading system. Final grades will be assigned as follows:

93-100 = A

90-92 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-

67-69 = D+

63-66 = D

60-62 = D-

59 or below = F.

STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

On the first day of class, you will randomly draw a state. (All states used for this project this semester have governor's elections this November.) You will become the class expert on that state for the semester. You will complete a worksheet on your state's government and politics early in the semester. Throughout the semester, you will monitor news, political and legislative developments in the state, through the Websites of the state government, the newspapers in the capital or largest city, and other sources. This will help you develop an understanding of the state's politics and important policy issues. Your paper will be on the impact of a specific policy in your state. You will be expected to contribute your knowledge of ongoing issues in your state to class discussion.

State Worksheet: This will be a brief exercise in which you will research the partisan composition of your state's legislature, its political culture, methods by which certain officials are named to office, and current political issues. This will be graded pass/fail. Failure to complete this exercise will result in a reduction of your semester grade by one increment (e.g., from A to A-).

Research Paper, 30%: The research paper will be a 7-10 page analysis of a research question of your choice related to a current public policy issue in your state.

Examples of a research question would be, for example, "Do laws requiring photo identification for voting effectively prevent voter fraud, or do they unfairly disenfranchise citizens?" "How have the requirements of the federal Affordable Care Act affected health care expenditures by state governments?" or "Did the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act improve educational outcomes in [your state]?" I will be happy to discuss possible topics and research questions with you. I would encourage you to begin thinking about the paper as early as possible,

rather than waiting until we actually discuss these issues in class late in the semester. This paper must be uploaded to turnitin.com by the beginning of class on Thursday, Nov. 29.

Two midterm exams (20% each); Final exam (30%): The midterm exams will be in class on Tues., Sept. 27, and Thurs., Oct. 25. The final exam will be on Fri., Dec. 7, 3:00-5:30 PM. The exams will include a combination of short answers/definitions, and essay questions. The final exam is not cumulative, but assumes knowledge of material covered on the midterm. A review guide for each exam will be posted approximately one week in advance, and the last class before each exam will include time for review.

Makeup exams will not be given without documentation of extenuating circumstances. Winthrop University policy does not allow the rescheduling of exams (including taking an exam earlier than the scheduled time) due to travel plans.

Administrative Announcements:

Class cancellations, changes in schedule, guest speakers, etc., will be announced via the class listserv, to which you will be automatically subscribed through your winthrop.edu e-mail address. If you need to subscribe to the class listserv, go to:

http://www.winthrop.edu/technology/default.aspx?id=7081&ekmense1=bfef63b6_489_491_7081_1.

The class number is PLSC202001. Check your WU e-mail frequently. You may use the listserv for discussion or to share information with classmates, review for exams, or ask questions about course material. The e-mail address is plsc202001@class.winthrop.edu. Note that anything you post to the listserv will be seen by everyone in the class.

Attendance:

Attendance will be taken by means of a sign-in sheet circulated at the beginning of each class meeting. In accordance with Winthrop's attendance policies, if you are absent without excuse from one-quarter of the class meetings or more (in this case, seven), you will receive an N or an F, as appropriate. In this class, signing in an absent classmate is considered an act of academic dishonesty. I do not require documentation for absences except for exams.

Technology:

You are welcome to use a computer to take notes in class. However, this class follows the College of Arts and Sciences policy on use of technology in the classroom. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic communication devices during class meetings. If you need to leave your phone on during a particular class for emergency reasons, please let me know in advance. The use of any kind of electronic device, including a phone, iPod or Internet access, during an exam constitutes academic dishonesty.

<http://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/artscience/AppropriateUseOfHandHeldWirelessTechnologyApprovedPolicyMar2010.pdf>

Academic Honesty and Integrity:

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Any act of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the class. This class follows the policies of Winthrop University and the Department of Political Science, which are linked below, on academic misconduct and

plagiarism. Please be aware of these policies and abide by them. In addition to the failing grade imposed by the instructor, academic misconduct of any kind will result in referral to the Dean of Students for possible additional sanctions.

Political Science Department policy statement:

<http://www.winthrop.edu/cas/politicalscience/default.aspx?id=19401>

Office of Academic Affairs policy statement:

<http://www2.winthrop.edu/public/policy/fullpolicy.aspx?pid=252>

Schedule of Topics and Reading Assignments

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. In particular, I expect to invite guest speakers.

Tues., Aug. 21: Introduction to the Course; state selection.

Thurs., Aug. 23: Overview of State and Local Government (D&M, Ch. 1).

Tues., Aug. 28: Federalism and State Constitutions (D&M, Chs. 2-3).

State Government Websites

Links to State Constitutions

Thurs., Aug. 30/Tues., Sept. 4: State Legislatures (D&M, Ch. 6).

Thurs., Sept. 6/Tues., Sept. 11: Governors and Executive Branches (D&M, Chs. 7-8).

Thurs., Sept. 13/Tues., Sept. 18: State Judicial Systems and Criminal Justice (D&M, Ch. 9).

State worksheet due Thurs., Sept. 18.

Tues., Sept. 20: Review for first exam.

Thurs., Sept. 27: *First Exam*.

Week of Oct. 2: Local Government (D&M, Chs. 10 and 12).

Week of Oct. 9: State & Local Political Parties and Elections (D&M, Chs. 4, 5, 11; Ulbrich, online.)

Week of Oct. 16: Oliver, Introduction, Chs. 1-4.

Tues., Oct. 23: Oliver, Chs. 5 and 6. Review for second exam.

Thurs., Oct. 25: *Second Exam*.

Week of Oct. 30: Economic and Environmental Policy (D&M., Chs. 13 and 14); Civil Rights Policy (D&M, Ch. 15).

Tues., Nov. 6: *No Class – Election Day. Vote! Follow the results in your assigned states.*

Thurs., Nov. 8/Tues., Nov. 13: Education Policy (D&M, Ch. 16). Discussion of state election results.

Thurs., Nov. 15/Tues., Nov. 20: Welfare Policy (D&M, Ch. 17).

Thurs., Nov. 22: *No Class – Thanksgiving Break*.

Week of Nov. 27: Health Care Policy (readings TBA).

Thurs., Nov. 29: Last Class. Papers due. Class evaluations will be administered online. Please bring an Internet-capable device to class. Review for final exam.

Fri., Dec. 7, 3:00-5:30 PM: *Final Exam*.

Winthrop University Resources

Students with Disabilities/Need of Accommodations for Access:

Winthrop University is committed to providing access to education. If you have a condition which may adversely impact your ability to access academics and/or campus life, and you

require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact the Office of Accessibility (OA) at 803-323-3290, or, accessibility@winthrop.edu, as early as possible to discuss your concerns.

OA Staff (located on the third floor of the Bancroft Annex):

- Tina Vires – Program Director, extension 6174; virest@winthrop.edu
- Shardae Nelson– Assistant Coordinator, extension 6188; nelsons@winthrop.edu
- Hope Williams – Administrative Specialist, extension 3290; accessibility@winthrop.edu, Bancroft 307
- From off campus – 803/323-3290

Winthrop's Office of Nationally Competitive Awards (ONCA) identifies and assists highly motivated and talented students to apply for nationally and internationally competitive awards, scholarships, fellowships, and unique opportunities both at home and abroad. ONCA gathers and disseminates award information and deadlines across the campus community, and serves as a resource for students, faculty, and staff throughout the nationally competitive award nomination and application process. ONCA is located in Dinkins 222A. Please fill out an online information form at the bottom of the ONCA webpage www.winthrop.edu/onca and email onca@winthrop.edu for more information.

Winthrop's Academic Success Center (ASC) is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu or www.winthrop.edu/success.

Winthrop's Office of Victims Assistance (OVA) provides services to survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking as well as educational programming to prevent these crimes from occurring. The staff assists all survivors, regardless of when they were victimized, in obtaining counseling, medical care, housing options, legal prosecution, and more. In addition, the OVA helps students access support services for academic problems resulting from victimization. The OVA is located in 204 Crawford and can be reached at (803) 323-2206. In the case of an after-hours emergency, please call Campus Police at (803)323-3333, or the local rape crisis center, Safe Passage, at their 24-hour hot-line, (803)329-2800. For more information please visit: <http://www.winthrop.edu/victimsassistance/>