

## PSCI 215 – Federalism, State and Local Politics, Spring 2019

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Tuesdays 3:00-4:00pm

Wednesdays 2:00-4:00pm

Thursdays 3:00-4:00pm

and by appointment

State and local politics are distinctive in the U.S. because of federalism, the division of power between the national government and the state governments. Like federalism itself, state and local governments are often relegated to the fringes of the study of American politics. This is unfortunate, given the remarkable number and variety of state and local government systems in this country. Many interesting questions, therefore, remain to be fully addressed: How do the roles of state and local governments differ from those of the national government? Which types of public policies should we expect state and local governments to implement and how do they (or should they) implement them? What can the study of state and local governments teach us about politics in general?

In this course we consider these and many other questions. We begin with an examination of the origins of and theoretical justification for federalism and proceed to study how state and local governments conduct themselves in the modern United States. The states of Vermont, New York, and California will receive detailed consideration; two because of their proximity, the other because of its undeniable importance.

Evaluation this term will be based on a 1000-point scale (900 is an A-, 800 is a B-, etc.), distributed as follows. 1) Regular participation in class, 250 points. 2) Low-stakes quizzes and website assignments, 75 points. 3) Four two-page response papers based on assigned readings, 300 points; 4) Final, 375 points. There are two options for the final. Option one: students may take a standard written final, including essay questions and identification of key terms. Option two: Students may write a 15-page “policy paper” that presents an in-depth account of a policy area relevant to state and local governments, and relates this policy area to important theoretical arguments that we have discussed in class.

Participation – Just as you should expect thorough preparation from me, I expect the same from all of you. Therefore, it is important that all members of the class *do the readings and come to class prepared to discuss them*. Our conversations will suffer along with your grades if you fall behind. The readings for this course are available online at nb.mit.edu, a web-based interface that allows members of the class to comment on PDFs. Comments on this site count as a form of participation. Comments should be brief and collaborative. Take note of your classmates’ comments and respond to them if appropriate.

Low-Stakes Quizzes – Recent research on education has found that information retention is greatly enhanced by “retrieval practice” – in other words, testing. You can do this yourself using simple flashcards. We will also be doing it in class through a series of low-stakes quizzes. We’ll have a brief quiz in class once every week or two. You get credit for taking the quiz – not for getting everything (or anything) right. Everything in the course is fair game for a quiz: readings, lectures, online discussions, material from early in the course, material from later in the course.

Web Assignments – There are two assignments I’m calling “web assignments” because you will post on the nb site on the web to prove that you’ve completed them. First, by February 28, watch a recent (2019 if possible) “state of the state” address by a U.S. governor or a “state of the city” address by a mayor and post a brief summary on nb (details of what to post will follow separately). Second, by April 18, watch a movie related to federalism, state and local politics, and post a brief review on nb. I will provide a list of possible films and will place some on reserve at the library, but I am open to your suggestions about what films might be relevant.

Together, the low-stakes quizzes and web assignments count for 75 points.

Response Papers – Response papers should be based on a reading or readings *assigned for the day students hand them in* (although I encourage you to incorporate insights from other readings as well) – **you are not expected to do outside research for these short papers!** You are free to choose what to write about, although papers should make an argument (more than one argument is probably too much for a short paper). You may choose when to write these papers, but you must write at least two by the last class before spring break (March 21). I will grant extensions only in cases of serious emergencies beyond a student's control, as verified by a dean's excuse; late papers drop 4% of the grade for each day, or portion thereof, that they are late. (If two response papers aren't handed in by spring break, they count as late papers.)

Final – There are two options for the final. *Option One:* Students may take a final exam consisting of short essay questions, a longer essay question, and identification of key terms. I will distribute a previous version of the final near the beginning of the semester, and will give you a list of potential ID terms near the end of the semester, so you know what to expect. *Option Two:* Students may write a 15-page policy paper about a policy area that has something to do with federalism, state, and/or local politics. The paper should describe the policy area and relate it to a political science theory or theories that we have read about and/or discussed in class. Again, these papers ought to contain a clear and well-structured argument. Examples of types of arguments that would be appropriate might include the following. “Policy area X shows us how useful theory A is in explaining the world.” “Policy area X shows us that, in the theoretical dispute between proponents of theory A and theory B, theory A does a better job of explaining things.” “Policy area X shows us that there are elements of theory A and theory B that are both true. I propose a new theory, theory C, that combines the most useful parts of each theory.” Students should choose option one or option two by the first class after spring break: April 2. At that time, if you are writing the paper, let me know what you think your topic will be.

All reading material is available on nb.mit.edu, a web interface that allows commenting on PDFs. I will send you an invitation to this website via email.

## Introduction

Tuesday, February 12

## Theory and History of (National) Federalism

Thursday, February 14

- *Articles of Confederation*
- *Constitution of the U.S.*
- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1660), Chapter 29: “Of Those Things that Weaken or Tend to the Dissolution of a Commonwealth”
- *Federalist Papers 9, 10, 37, 46*

## Federalism

Tuesday, February 19

- *Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions* (1798)
- “Replies of Vermont to the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions of 1798,” *Records of the Governor and Council of the State of Vermont* (1876)
- John C. Calhoun, “The Fort Hill Address” (“Address on the relation which the States and General Government bear to each other”) *Reports and Public Letters of John C. Calhoun* (1831).
- Donald F. Kettl, “The New Nullifiers: Democrats,” *Governing*, April 2017.

Thursday, February 21

- William Riker, “Federalism” in *American Intergovernmental Relations* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), Lawrence O’Toole, Ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1993), pp. 89-96.
- Mark Carl Rom, “Social Welfare Policy,” *The Oxford Handbook of State and Local Government*, ed. by Donald P. Haider-Markel (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 691-712.
- Julie Lays, “Top 10: These challenges will keep lawmakers busy as legislatures reconvene this year” *State Legislatures Magazine*, January/February 2019.

Tuesday, February 26

- *Gonzalez v. Raich* 545 U.S. 1 (2005) (excerpts)
- *National Federation of Independent Businesses et al. v. Sebelius* 567 U.S. 519 (2012) (excerpts)
- Lesley Kennedy, “Supreme Court Roundup: From Kavanaugh to Liquor Sales to One Enormous Cross,” National Conference of State Legislatures Blog, December 21, 2018.

## State Politics

Thursday, February 28 - Watch a “state of the state” or “state of the city” address by today

- Daniel Elazar, *American Federalism: A View from the States*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (New York: Thomas Crowell Company, 1972), Chapter 4, “The States and the Political Setting,” pp. 84-104.
- Michael Sherman, Gene Sessions, and P. Jeffrey Potash, *Freedom and Unity: A History of Vermont*, (Barre, VT: Vermont Historical Society, 2004), Chapter 10: “Another 250,000 People,” pp. 585-616.

## MONDAY MARCH 4 – MIDDLEBURY TOWN MEETING

Tuesday, March 5

- V.O. Key, Jr., *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1984 [1949]), Chapter 1: “Of the South,” pp. 3-12.
- Merle Black and Earle Black, “Deep South Politics: The Enduring Racial Division in National Elections” in Charles S. Bullock and Mark Rozell, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Southern Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Thursday, March 7

- Daniel W. Stearns and Jeffrey M. Stonecash, “The Legislature, Parties, and Resolving Conflict,” Chapter 6 in *Governing New York State*, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, ed. by Robert F. Pecorella and Jeffrey M. Stonecash, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), pp. 143-170.
- Alan Ehrenhalt, “Uniquely Unicameral,” *Governing*, January 2006.
- Karl Kurtz, “Who We Elect: The Demographics of State Legislatures,” *State Legislatures*, December 2015.

Tuesday, March 12

- Alan Rosenthal, *The Best Job In Politics: Exploring How Governors Succeed as Policy Leaders* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2013), Chapter 6: “Strategies and Tactics of Engagement” pp. 151-193.
- Jeffrey Toobin, “The Albany Chronicles: How Andrew Cuomo Gets His Way,” *The New Yorker*, February 16, 2015.

Thursday, March 14

- Joe Mathews and Mark Paul, *California Crackup* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), Chapter 2: “History and the Constitution,” pp. 16-34.
- Peter Schrag, *California: America’s High Stakes Experiment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), Chapter 2: “Dysfunction, Disinvestment, Disenfranchisement,” pp. 89-129.

Tuesday, March 19

- Steven P. Erie, Vladimir Kogan, and Scott A. MacKenzie, *Paradise Plundered: Fiscal Crisis and Governance Failures in San Diego* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), Chapter 3: “Paradise Insolvent,” pp. 61-100.

Thursday, March 21 – *Write at least two response papers by today*

- Brian DiSarro and Wesley Hussey, “California: Brown’s Last Budget Hurrah” *California Journal of Politics and Policy* 11:1 (2019).
- Tad Friend, “Gavin Newsom, the Next Head of the California Resistance,” *The New Yorker*, November 5, 2018.

**SPRING BREAK**

## City Politics

Tuesday, April 2 – *Choose final option by today (policy paper vs. exam)*

- Edward Banfield and James Q. Wilson, *City Politics*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), Chapter 2, “The Political Function” pp. 18-32.
- Charles M. Tiebout, “A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures,” *Journal of Political Economy* 64:5 (1956) pp. 416-424.

Thursday, April 4

- Paul Peterson, *City Limits*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) Chapters 1 & 2, pp. 3-38 (skim from page 30 on).
- Brian Alexander, “The Problem with Courting Amazon,” *The Atlantic*, January 18, 2018.

Tuesday, April 9

- David Thacher, “The Local Role in Homeland Security,” *Law and Society Review* 39:3 (September 2005), pp. 635-676.

Thursday, April 11

- Peter Dreier, John Mollenkopf, and Todd Swanstrom, *Place Matters: Metropolitcs for the Twenty-First Century*, Third Edition, Revised (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2014), Chapter 2: “The Facts of Economic Segregation and Sprawl,” pp. 29-58.
- Daniel C. Vock, J. Brian Charles, and Mike Maciag, “Houses Divided,” *Governing*, January 23, 2019.

Tuesday, April 16

- Marion Orr, Domingo Morel, and Emily M. Farris, “Managing Fiscal Stress in Providence: The Election and Governance of Mayor Angel Taveras,” Chapter 8 in Marion Orr and Domingo Morel, eds. *Latino Mayors: Political Change in the Postindustrial City* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2018), pp. 225-245.
- Thomas Wheatley, “With mass resignations and peek into City Hall’s checkbook, Keisha Lance Bottoms aims to start defining her time as mayor,” *Atlanta Magazine*, April 16, 2018.
- Steve Fennessy, “There’s still an enormous amount of racial distrust in Atlanta,” *Atlanta Magazine*, April 3 2018.

Thursday, April 18 – *Watch a film about federalism, state and local politics by today*

- Alan Altshuler and David Luberoff, *Mega-Projects: The Changing Politics of Urban Public Investment* (Washington DC: Brookings, 2003), Chapter 4: “The New Politics of Highways,” pp. 76-123.
- Michelle Baruchman, “A look back at the Alaskan Way Viaduct as its demise – and the new Highway 99 tunnel – draw near,” *Seattle Times*, January 7, 2019.

Tuesday, April 23

- Nathan L. Clough and Robert M. Vanderbeck, “Managing Politics and Consumption in Business Improvement Districts: The Geographies of Political Activism on Burlington, Vermont’s Church Street Marketplace,” *Urban Studies* 43:12 (November 2006), pp. 2261-2284.
- Church Street Marketplace District Commission, “Church Street Marketplace Non-Profit Tabling License, Rules and Regulations 2015,” and “Parade, Walk, Rally, Vigil and/or Event Application”

### **Town & Neighborhood Politics**

Thursday, April 25

- Frank M. Bryan, *Real Democracy: The New England Town Meeting and How it Works* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), Chapters 1-3.

Tuesday, April 30

- Frank Bryan, *Real Democracy* Chapters 11, 12.

Thursday, May 2

- Ellen Shiao, Juliet Musso, and Jeffrey Sellers, “City Fragmentation and Neighborhood Connections: The Political Dynamics of Community Revitalization in Los Angeles,” Chapter 6 in Clarence N. Stone and Robert P. Stoker, *Urban Neighborhoods in a New Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 131-154.

### **Policy**

Tuesday, May 7

- Bryan D. Jones, Herschel F. Thomas III, and Michelle Wolfe, “Policy Bubbles,” *Policy Studies Journal* 42:1 (February 2014), pp. 146-171.
- Thomas Birkland and Sarah Waterman, “Is Federalism to Blame for Policy Failure in Hurricane Katrina?” *Publius* 38:4 (Fall 2008), pp. 692-714.

Thursday, May 9

- Teresa Garcia-Milà, Therese J. McGuire, and Wallace E. Oates, “Strength in Diversity? Fiscal Federalism among the fifty states,” *International Tax and Public Finance* 25:4 (August 2018), pp. 1071-1091.
- Martha Derthick, “Up-to-Date in Kansas City: Reflections on American Federalism” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 25:4 (1992), pp. 671-675.

**FINAL EXAM <OR> FINAL PAPER DUE: Monday, May 20, 7:00pm-10:00pm**