

Political Science 171

American State Politics and Public Policy

Tues/Thurs, 9:30am - 11:00am, CHASS North 1002

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Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 12pm - 1pm

Syllabus is subject to change as course develops

Course Description: This course introduces students to the study of State Politics and Policy. We will investigate variation and similarity between the 50 states in areas such as the legislative process, legislative design, the usage of ballot initiatives and direct legislation, estimating state-level public opinion, mass media, party organization, executive functions, the courts, and public policy processes and outcomes. All the while we will remain cognizant of the role federalism plays in producing unique outcomes in the states and how states are often laboratories of democracy and public policy.

Teaching Philosophy:

I begin with the premise that each student enrolled in this course is highly intelligent and capable and we have high expectations for both your academic commitment and personal behavior. You are responsible for your success in this course and the course is designed such that if you work hard you will do quite well. The course has all the ingredients necessary to engage and challenge you. I expect students to refrain from engaging in any distracting or disruptive behavior such as, but not limited to, using cell phones, texting, surfing the web, taking pictures, and talking to classmates. I will not tolerate any disruptive behavior and will refer egregious cases to Student Judicial Affairs.

Required Text(s): *State Politics and Policy*

Author(s): Niemi, Richard and Dyck, Joshua

Please note: A few copies of N&D will be placed on reserve at Rivera library. Please be careful with them.

Course Requirements:

First, students must attend lectures and come to class having completed the assigned readings. While attendance is not recorded each time, it is required. Please consult the course website for updates and assignments: <https://www.collingwoodresearch.com/posc-171.html>

If you have any questions about the lecture or reading materials, or if you have scheduling or personal problems, please come by my office hours or contact me via email (although see below). If the question is more pressing or involves significant questions please visit me in my office hours.

See below for a list of important deadlines. There will be an in-class midterm examination, a term paper, and a final examination. See the course website for paper topics. Students will select one topic, and write a **6-page paper**. **Paper must be submitted in class or by 5pm in my office or in my box, and on safe assign, on the due date.** A study guide will be posted approximately one week before each exam, but any material from the readings or the course presentation may appear on the exams. Exams will be a mix of true – false, and multiple-choice.

Email/Office Hours Policies:

- Give a greeting when writing an email (e.g., Hi Professor Collingwood, Hi Professor, etc.)
- Logistical questions found on syllabus won't be answered via email. That is, I won't respond to your email.
- Substantive questions should be addressed in office hours or in class (e.g., a concept)
- Email me within a week of the beginning of class if you have standing conflict with office hours
- Please afford up to 24 hours for email response.
- Emails within 24 hours of an exam will not necessarily be given a response
- During office hours, if I'm talking with someone a while, feel free to pop in and remind me you're there. I don't want you having to wait around if you don't have to.
- Don't ask, "Are you busy?". I'm always busy.
- Please come speak to me during office hours, I want to hear your views about the course, and politics in general. I often learn a great deal from my students.

Grading:

Grading for the course is based on two exams, a paper (12 point font, 1 inch margins, double-space 6 pages, no silly stuff with title pages counting, be an adult), and participation.¹ The total number of points is 100.

¹Students needing assistance with their writing should visit the Writing Center (<http://arc.ucr.edu/tutoring/tutoringservices.html>). Note that one must make an appointment prior to visiting so plan to write your paper at least a week in advance of the due date.

Grades for each assignment will be posted to i-learn (as a percent) once the grading is complete, and a grade distribution is posted to the course website. With midterms this is usually about a week. With papers, two weeks. Participation is primarily centered around lecture (included but not limited to asking questions).

Participation	10%
Midterm Exam (bring green scantron, the one with like 50 qs on each side)	20%
Final Exam (bring green scantron)	35%
Final Paper	35%

Letter Grade Distribution:

>= 94	A	74 - 76	C
90 - 93	A-	70 - 73	C-
87 - 89	B+	67 - 69	D+
84 - 86	B	64 - 66	D
80 - 83	B-	60 - 63	D-
77 - 79	C+	<= 59	F

- Grades in the **C** range represent performance that **meets expectations**; Grades in the **B** range represent performance that is **substantially better** than the expectations; Grades in the **A** range represent work that is **excellent**.
- Late Assignments are NOT ACCEPTED without both prior approval and documented evidence of a University Approved Excuse (e.g., medical emergency, etc.).

Re-grading and other relevant Policies:

- Any student wishing to challenge a paper/exam grade must complete a one page single spaced argument before I will consider a challenge within one week of receiving the grade. You must specify why you think the grading was unfair. The specific areas will then be re-examined with the possibility of the grade going down.
- If you have an existing time conflict regarding my office hours please email me and let me know the first week of class.
- Concerns related to credit and graduation circumstances will not be taken into consideration in evaluating performance in this class
- Student athletes please let me know about any conflicting dates. I am more that happy to work with you but expect the same out of you as anyone else (I was one myself...humblebrag).

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct:

This section is taken from the Academic Integrity Brochure for Students (<http://conduct.ucr.edu/>).

“At the University of California, Riverside (UCR) honesty and integrity are fundamental values that guide and inform us as individuals and as a community. The academic culture requires that each student take responsibility for learning and for producing work that reflect their intellectual potential, curiosity, and capability. Students must represent themselves truthfully, claim only work that is their own, acknowledge their use of others’ words, research results, and ideas, using the

methods accepted by the appropriate academic disciplines and engage honestly in all academic assignments. Misunderstanding of the appropriate academic conduct will not be accepted as an excuse for academic misconduct. If a student is in doubt about appropriate academic conduct in a particular situation, he or she should consult with the instructor in the course to avoid the serious charge of academic misconduct.”

Plagiarism is the “copying of language, structure, or ideas of another and attributing (explicitly or implicitly) the work to one’s own efforts. Plagiarism means using another’s work without giving credit. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Copying information from computer-based sources, i.e., the Internet
- Allowing another person to substantially alter or revise your work and submitting it entirely as your own.”

Other forms of academic dishonesty include cheating by “copying from another student’s examination, quiz, . . . or homework assignment.” Note that the definition of cheating also includes “submitting for academic advancement an item of academic work that you have previously submitted for academic advancement” without prior authorization from the faculty member supervising the work. “Unauthorized collaboration” is also considered inappropriate.

If I suspect you have committed an act of academic misconduct, I will discuss it with you and file a report with the Student Conduct & Academic Integrity Programs (SCAIP). You may receive a zero on the assignment and an “F” for the course. Further disciplinary action may also be taken by SCAIP. If you ever have a question about plagiarism or other academic conduct, please ask me before you turn in any work that may be problematic.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a physical, psychiatric, emotional, medical, or learning disability that may impact your ability to carry out assigned coursework, I urge you to contact the staff in Student Special Services (<http://specialservices.ucr.edu/>), who will review your concerns and determine, with you, what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation are confidential. I will sign the necessary documentation during my office hours.

Tentative Course Outline:

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class. Usually I run behind.

Week	Content
Week 0/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions; Federalism• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 1-2
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federalism• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 3-4• Speaker Research Presentations
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elections and Voter Participation• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 5-6
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elections and Voter Participation• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 7-8, 23• Class cancelled: Thursday, 10/25• Midterm study guide available online Thursday, 10/25, COB
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parties, Interest Groups, Media• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 9-10• Midterm on Thursday, 11/1, green scantron
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislatures• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 13-17
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Branch• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 18-19
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Courts• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 20-22• Class Cancelled: Thursday 11/22, T-Giving
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Policy• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 24-27• Final Paper Due in print, by 5pm, and on safe assign, Tuesday, 11/27
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Policy• Niemi & Dyck Ch. 28, 30, 32• Final study guide available online, 12/6
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finals Week• Final Thursday, December 13, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., same room, green scantron