

State Politics Midterm Study Guide
POSC 171

This is a rough study guide, anything in the text, which the course slides cover, may possibly be on the exam. Any content related to the slides may also be on the exam.

Chapters 1-4, Federalism

Enumerated vs. implied powers

Evolution of federalism

Cooperative federalism, Conflicts in federalism

Supreme Court's role in deciding conflicts between the federal gov't and states, and states and states

How does fed gov't get states to act as it wishes? Think sticks/carrots

Block grants vs. categorical grants – do states prefer one or the other?

What is partial preemption?

Role of electoral college and helping states get what they want? Think Iowa, corn, etc.

State control of election administration

State Constitutions – amendments, number of them, is there much variation? Why?

How similar are state constitutions to federal constitution?

What about protection of rights under state constitutions?

Term-limits – know about these

Political cultures – know difference between 5 dimensions of culture

How does this vary by geography, what role does personality play?

Is culture used as an explanation for people voting against their own economic self-interest?

What are the politically relevant cultural forces in the U.S. today, and does it vary by state? Can this explain state policies, or at least some (think death penalty, same-sex marriage, immigration restrictive policies, etc.)?

Racial/ethnic/partisan distribution across the U.S.

Horizontal federalism

Legal equality between the states

What are the four provisions for interstate interaction: i.e., clauses

Three forms of interstate interaction: cooperation; competition; conflict

State relationship to local gov't: Dillon's Rule and Home Rule; Second-Order devolution – know that state has ultimate authority

Chapters 7-8, Elections and Voter Participation

Ch. 7

Election Administration –

What is HAVA? NVRA (Michigan, incubator?). Have these things increased voter turnout, a lot, marginally, or had no impact?

What's Election Day registration (EDR)? Which states have it, what are the effects? Why is it good/bad. Would you want it in California, or not, why?

What's Motor Voter Act of 1993

Know about felon and ex-felon voting. Which state is really good at disfranchising black men? How many states reinstate felon voting after serving time? Why is felon voting/issues with it so important? (Think incarceration rates)

What's the deal with college student registration? How is it similar to residency requirements for attending out-of-state schools, etc.?

Know about the various forms of convenience voting. Does it help or hurt voter turnout/participation?

Are most changes to voter eligibility enabling or constraining to the electorate?

What's with Voter ID laws? Is there a history here? Make a case for Voter ID requirements, why might voter id laws be bad? Why do Republican governors try to limit early voting, whereas Democratic governors/administrations tend to do the opposite?

What's the Australian ballot? Good-day mate!

Ch. 8

Who runs for office – what is the model of who runs for office?

What's the approximate percentage of state legislative seats that go uncontested?

What's a "sacrificial lamb"?

Difference between VEP and VAP

Does turnout vary between midterm and presidential election years? Why?

What are coattails?

What predicts voter participation?

Vote Choice: Role of party identification? Role of the economy – what is retrospective voting? What about national context and wave elections?

What role does a competitive Senate or Gubernatorial/Presidential election have on downballot turnout/voting? What is downballot voting anyways?

Incumbency advantage – how big is it in state legislative races?

Chapters 9-10

What's the golden age of political parties – generally how did the process work? Think Thanksgiving turkey.

What are the roles of the different party organizations? What about cooperation between them?

Know broadly about political reform, and the decline of the party era; candidate-centered campaigns

Candidate recruitment

What are campaign assistance programs?

What role do interest groups play?

Key interest groups: corporations and business firms; trade associations; labor unions; professional associations; governmental associations (municipal leagues, police interests); citizen groups (i.e., NOW, NRA)

-What are electoral goals of tactics of these interest groups?

-Do they have PACS? What are PACS? Why might some states pass strict gun-control legislation whereas other states do not?

-Targeting resources

-Grassroots lobbying, is this effective?