

State Politics Midterm Study Guide
POSC 171
Exam Date: 5/4/17

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 5-8, Elections and Voter Participation

Ch. 5 [Not covered much in class]

Alternative measures of state public opinion. What are these, how are they different?

How does public opinion influence policymaking?

Why do some issues have more sway in the nexus between public opinion and policy responsiveness?

Ch. 6 [Most not covered in class]

Initiative and referendum: Where did they start, when did they start, why did they start?

What's the deal with the Progressive Era?

What's the tax revolt of the 1970s?

What geographic region is direct democracy most used?

Do you think marijuana will be legalized in California in the next 10 years, why or why not?

How does direct democracy affect the policy process, policy responsiveness?

Are electorates/voters different in states without direct democracy than states with it? Turnout, political knowledge, efficacy, other effects

What are some of the criticisms of direct democracy? What is majority tyranny?

What's the deal with prop-187? What role to special interests play in direct democracy?

Ch. 7

Election Administration –

What is HAVA? NVRA (Michigan, incubator?). Have these things increased voter turn-out, 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?