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PSC 344.01: State and Local Government

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PSCI 344 / State & Local Government Syllabus

PSCI 344 / Fall Semester 2009

T/R 4:40 - 6 p.m. / Location: LA 105

Professor: Jeffrey Greene

TEXTS

Primary: *State and Local Government, The Essentials* 4/e (Ann Bowman and Richard Kearney)

Supplements: *The State of The States* 4/e (Charles Van Horn)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

State Government is one of the most exciting areas in political science. This course examines the evolution and development that has taken place in the states since the founding period. It focuses on the basic institutions as well as a broad spectrum of public policy issues that affect governing in the states. The theme of this course is built on one primary question: *Has there been a resurgence of the states?* That is, *have states increased their capacity to govern, manage change, and innovate in various areas of public policy?*

The primary objective of the course is to acquaint students with the complexities of state government and state politics. Local government is not covered in the summer version of the class. Upon successful completion of the course students should acquire considerable knowledge about comparative state government and politics in the states. Assessment is based on students' performance on a comprehensive exam. Additional learning objectives are provided at [PSCI 344 Learning Objectives](#).

GRADE WEIGHTS

Exam35% (Thursday, November 19) *Covers Chapters 1-12 in Bowman and Kearney*

Paper.....35% (December 8)

Presentations.....35% (Presentations will begin on Tuesday, November 24)

PROFESSOR: Jeffrey D. Greene

OFFICE: LA 356 **Telephone:** 243-6181 **E-mail:** jeffrey.greene@umontana.edu

Office Hours: 3:30 - 4 p.m. (Mondays); 2 – 2:30 p.m. (Tuesdays and Thursdays)

The **University of Montana** now uses a version of the **Plus/Minus** grading system and a **Credit/No Credit** system (the CR/NCR replaces the Pass/Fail system used in the past). To accommodate the Plus/Minus system the grading scale shown below will be used. In **PSCI 344** grades will be assigned based on the following grading scale. This scale and system is more complex than the system used in the past but rewards *As* only to those students whose performance in the class is "exceptional."

Grade	Point Scale	Point Range	GPA
A	93-100	8 points	4.00
A-	90-92	3 points	3.67
B+	87-89	3 points	3.33
B	83-86	4 points	3.00
B-	80-82	3 points	2.67
C+	77-79	3 points	2.33
C	73-76	4 points	2.00
C-	70-72	3 points	1.67
D+	67-69	3 points	1.33
D	63-66	4 points	1.00
D-	60-62	3 points	.067
F	59 or lower	N/A	0.00

REQUIREMENTS: There is **ONE** exam, which will be given in class. Students are expected to take the exam during the scheduled time. The exam will be subjective (terms and essays). All students will be expected to write a 10 page research paper **and** make a 10-12 minute oral presentation on a topic related to state and local government and provide a written bibliography. *Typically, public policy areas are the most popular.* All topics must be approved by the instructor. The last weeks of class will be used for presentations. A sign-up sheet will be passed out in class. All papers are due the last day of class prior to exam week.

EXAM: This year there will be only one, comprehensive exam on November 19. This exam is comprised of four parts: Part I is terms and concepts (very short answers); Part II is a required essay about federalism in the states (a long essay); Part III provides a choice of a number of short essays (students only have to answer one of these essays); and, Part IV is extra credit items (this section is optional for students).

Political Science 300 or 400: Students can take this class as PSCI 300 or PSCI 400 -- *the writing class option*. You do not have to be a political science major to take PSCI 300 but you **MUST** be a political science major to take PSCI 400. This is a one credit hour class that can be used to fulfill the university writing requirement. *PSCI 300 is the lower division class; PSCI 400 is the upper division class.* If you opt to sign up for PSCI 300 or 400, you must get the approval of the instructor; fill out the appropriate paperwork, then turn the completed paperwork to the department secretary in LA 350 during the first week of class. It is the discretion of the instructor to allow more than 10 PSCI 300 or PSCI 400 students in any political science class. The requirements to complete PSCI 300 or PSCI 400 are described below.

All students using PSCI 344 as a writing class must be properly signed up for PSCI 300 or PSCI 400. Students taking this option are required to write a 10 page research paper for PSCI 300 (*a 10 to 12 page paper for PSCI 400*) on a topic related to state and local government. The topic must be approved by the instructor in advance (*before beginning the paper*). These papers will be graded more rigorously than for students not taking PSCI 300 or 400. Students will be allowed one re-write for their research papers. There is not a universally accepted writing style format to follow; writing styles vary from discipline to discipline. The political science department tends to use Kate Turabian's, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. You do not have to use this writer's manual for this class, but you will likely have to use it for other writing classes with other professors in the political science department. Thus, it is advisable to use the Turabian model. All papers are expected to contain a cover sheet, a bibliography, and appropriate citations.

The **first draft** of the paper is due on **Tuesday, November 24**. The papers will receive two letter grades; one for content (the quality of the research) and separate grade for writing (composure, grammar, writing style, and clarity). The second grade is a technical grade and the standard that will be used is based on the technical writing style of social science research. That is, sentence structure should be clean, clear, and concise. *The goal is to write a short, well-crafted, organized paper that is easy to read.* After the first draft is graded, the papers will be returned and students will make any corrections and re-submit the paper by the **last day of regular classes** (*the last day prior to exam week, which is December 10*). The papers will be re-graded. The final grade for PSCI 300 or 400 will be based solely on the average of the content/writing grade for the final paper. For example, if the final grade on the paper is A/C (92/75), the student will receive a grade of a "B" (the average is 83.5).

ATTENDANCE: Students are encouraged to attend class. Poor attendance may affect one's final grade. Students are expected to miss no more than five (5) classes. Missing more than five days may result in a drop of one letter grade.

WEB PAGE: Students can visit the **Political Science Department** Web Page at: <http://www.cas.umt.edu/polsci>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University requires that this statement be placed on all syllabuses at the University of Montana.

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University.

*All students need to be familiar with the **Student Conduct Code**. The Code is available for review online at:*

<http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>

Autumn 2009 Semester Dates

August 24 (Monday) - Classes Begin

September 7 (Monday) - Labor Day, Holiday

November 11 (Wednesday) Veterans Day Holiday
November 25-26-27 (Wednesday-Thursday-Friday) - Thanksgiving Vacation
December 7- 11 (Monday-Friday) – Last week of classes
December 14-18 (Monday-Friday) – Final Exam Week

COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS

Introduction (August 25)

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 1

Van Horn: Chapter 1, "Power, Politics, and Public Policy in the States," by Van Horn

Political Culture

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 1

Federalism

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 2

Van Horn: Chapter 2, "The Role of the States in American Federalism," by R. Nathan.

State Constitutions

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 3

Participation in the States and Elections

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 4 [Link to current map of Montana's legislative districts](#)

Van Horn: Chapter 2, "The State of State Elections," by Dautrich and Yalof

Political Parties and Interest Groups in the States

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 5

Van Horn: Chapter 4, "The Transformation of State Electoral Politics," by Salmore and Salmore.

State Legislatures

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 6

Van Horn: Chapter 3, "Legislators and Legislatures," by Rosenthal.

Governors

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 7

Van Horn: Chapter 4, "Being Governor," by Beyle.

The Bureaucracy

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 8

Van Horn, Chapter 6, "Accountability Battles in State Administration," by Gormley.

The Judiciary

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 9

Van Horn: Chapter 5, "State Courts and Their Political Environment," by Lawrence Baum.

State-Local Relations

Bowman and Kearney: Chapter 10

Local Government

Bowman and Kearney, Chapter 11 [Link to a map of Montana's counties](#)

Taxing, Spending, and State and Local Finances

Bowman and Kearney, Chapter 12

Van Horn: Chapter 11, "State Government Finances," by Coleman

Optional: If time permits, we will be able to discuss some policy areas in the state. Students should read the following chapters in Van Horn: Chapters 8, 9, and 10 (Education Policy, Welfare Policy, and Health Policy).

Exam – November 19 (Thursday)

Presentations will begin on **Tuesday, November 24 through December 10**. Please note that Thanksgiving break occurs during this period. All students must prepare a presentation. Students are encouraged to use PowerPoint or some presentation software or use transparencies. The room (LA 105) does not contain built-in technology. A projector that works with laptops will be provided but students must provide their own laptops. Students may also opt to use transparencies. An overhead projector will be available.

Class Materials and Transparencies

Study Guide Exam (A study guide will be handed out in class and posted here one week prior to the exam)

[Federalism Time Line Transparency](#) (Adobe Acrobat format. This version is *printer friendly*)

[Learning Objectives](#)

[Link to the Montana State Constitution](#)

[History of Federalism](#) (Link to website at the University of South Carolina; this is an outstanding website about federalism)

Link to [Governing.com](#), one of the best sources of information about the state and local arena available.

[Council of State Governments](#), the leading professional organization for the states.

Link to [City Journal](#), one of the most interesting sources about urban politics and issues.

Some additional links to materials

[ELITE AND PLURALISM MODELS](#) (In Microsoft Word)

[SOCIAL STRATIFICATION MODEL](#) (In Adobe Acrobat format)

[SOURCES OF VALUES](#) (In Adobe Acrobat format)

New Orleans, the Gulf Coast, and Hurricane Katrina dominated the news in 2005 and continue to be important issues about federalism. Many claimed that it was a perfect example (and case study) about the weaknesses of federalism and intergovernmental relations. Below is an interesting article about New Orleans before and after Hurricane Katrina.

This article, from *City Journal*, is an interesting account of New Orleans. It is called "Who is killing New Orleans," by Nicole Gelinas. [Click here](#) for a copy of the article in Adobe Acrobat, or click this link to go directly to the article at *City Journal*. http://www.city-journal.org/html/15_4_new_orleans.html

Another very interesting website is located in Montana. It is called [Project Vote Smart](#). It contains detailed information about candidates in all 50 states at the national and state level.

Houghton Mifflin (now owned by Cengage) provides excellent online resources for the Bowman and Kearney text, including exams, outlines, and many links to state-local web sites. [Click here to access these resources](#). (If asked for a username and password, the username/password needed to access certain parts of this website is government/rules). You will find this time line useful for the final exam's major essay. Also, [Stateline.org](#) is a great website dedicated entirely to news and information about the states and their local governments. Another website is [Piperinfo.com](#), which contains information about state and local governments.

Since state nicknames are often mentioned in class as trivia, [click here](#) to read more about the origin of the Tar Heel State (North Carolina). State mottos are also interesting. For example, the state motto for North Carolina, "*Esse Quam Videri*" is Latin for "to be rather than to seem." [Click here](#) for a humorous version of the 50 state mottos. [Click here](#) for a list of official state slogans and official nicknames.

PSCI 344, State & Local Government, was PSC 364 until the Fall 2009 Semester.