

POLS 613/913: Comparative U.S. State Politics

Spring 2023

Section # 55741

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Department of Political Science

University of Kansas

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Purpose and Goals of the Course

This course covers a variety of topics related to state government and politics. We will examine the fundamental institutions of state government, the policy making process of state governments, and social science theory and tools for understanding state politics and policy. We take the perspective that the states are laboratories: we can explore theories of politics and policy across the states because the states are more similar than countries, but different enough to isolate how differences between states shape political and policy outcomes. I expect students to obtain a working knowledge of state political institutions, processes, and policies. I also expect students to be able to think critically about political and policy questions from a theoretically grounded comparative perspective using subnational government as a unit of analysis.

Grading and Responsibilities

Class Participation and Reading Assignments:

The reading assignments are listed below in the course outline. All students are expected to *complete the required readings prior to each class Week*. I am also providing a list of supplemental readings that students can use for their research. Note that I will occasionally supplement our discussion with newspaper articles that will be sent to you via e-mail; students are encouraged to tie these articles into our discussion. I also strongly recommend that students regularly read and view national news.

I have also assigned several **films for viewing**. All students are required to view these films. I would urge you to take notes while viewing the films.

I have links to several useful websites on the Canvas page. These are for your reference and are not required viewing.

The following book is required:

Donovan, Todd, Daniel A. Smith, Tracy Osborn, and Christopher Mooney. 4th ed. 2015. *State and Local Politics: Institutions and Reform*. Cengage Learning.
<http://www.cengagebrain.com/shop/index.html>

In addition there are articles on the Canvas site you'll need to read for most class weeks.

Exams: There will be one long exam at midterm covering all the material up to that point and a final exam covering the material from the midterm forward.

Note that the main textbook website has sample quizzes for each chapter to prepare you for the exams.

Capstone Research Paper: Each student will be required to write an 8-12 page final essay/research paper on some aspect state politics and/or policy. In short, in this paper you will incorporate theoretical perspectives from other social science courses with those introduced in this course to write a research paper as follows:

The paper can use portions of the course readings but you must make use of sources not covered in the course but do come from other social science courses. I will provide you with more detailed instructions concerning content and format early in the semester. You will be provided with a list of possible research topics but you are free to choose a topic on your own. ***Each student is required to clear a research topic with me.*** Citations must include author and year of publication. Citations must include the page number if you are quoting.

Final Grades will be determined on the following basis:

Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	35%
Capstone Project	35%

Missing assignments, exams, etc. will normally be counted as zero. However, based on the situation, I may allow late assignments/papers to receive some credit. In such a case points will be deducted on a daily basis. Only serious emergencies, such as a student or family long-term illness, constitute grounds for an incomplete. If you face a significant emergency during the semester you should contact me as soon as possible. You should also contact me as soon as possible if you think you will be late on any assignment *for any reason*.

Students with Disabilities

Any student who has a disability that may prevent him/her from fully demonstrating her/his abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we

can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate the educational opportunity.

Professor Availability

Students wishing to meet with me can do so before or after class, during office hours (listed at top of first page), or by appointment. My time is flexible and I can arrange to meet with you on your schedule. Remember I am available to you as a resource--*take advantage of it*. Please be aware that the easiest way to reach me is via e-mail -- I check my e-mail several times a day. I will be gone at a few points during the semester, but I'll inform you of these dates as they approach.

Non Academic Misconduct

The scope and content of the material included in this course are defined by the professor in consultation with the responsible academic unit. Although the orderly exchange of ideas, including questions and discussions prompted by lectures, discussion sessions and laboratories, is viewed as a key part of the educational environment, the professor has the right to limit the scope and duration of these interactions. Students who engage in disruptive behavior, including persistent refusal to observe boundaries defined by the professor regarding inappropriate talking, discussions, and questions in the classroom may be subject to discipline for non-academic misconduct for disruption of teaching or academic misconduct, as defined in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (CSRR), Article 22, Section C, and the University Senate Rules and Regulations, Section 2.4.6. Article 22 of CSRR also defines potential sanctions for these types of infractions.

Plagiarism and Related Copyright Issues: The issue of digital plagiarism has raised concerns about ethics, student writing experiences, and academic integrity. Please be aware that by enrolling in this class you are agreeing to submit any written assignments for this course to the professor through a specified electronic format. The professor has permission to include your paper in databases such as Turnitin™ so that your paper can be checked against web pages and databases of existing papers. Although you may never have engaged in intentional plagiarism, many students do incorporate sources without citations, which is still plagiarism and a form of academic misconduct.

Intellectual Property Issues

Course materials prepared by the professor of this course, including the course syllabus, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the professor are the property of the professor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the professor is prohibited. On request, the professor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making

the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the professor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course. Any individual or organization violating the professor's copyright on course materials and lectures could be subject to charges of academic misconduct and/or to civil action for copyright violations.

Concealed Carry

Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns **are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with [state and federal laws](#) and [KU weapons policy](#)**. Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier.
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier's custody and control.
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an un-cocked position
- Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber.

Students who choose to carry a concealed handgun in a purse, backpack, or bag must review and plan each day accordingly, and are responsible for making alternate arrangements as necessary. The university does not provide appropriate secured storage for concealed handguns.

Classroom safety

To protect all of us, **everyone must wear a mask in the classroom if required** by the [Protect KU Pledge](#) and by University policy. If you face challenges to fully participating at any time during the semester, please let me know, and please contact me if you expect to miss class. I am available and ready to support your success. Additionally, if you need to report an extended illness or serious accident, please contact Student Support and Case Management at course-adapt@ku.edu or 785-864-4060. A case manager will send email notifications to your instructor(s) on your behalf. When you are able, you will need to follow up with your professors to coordinate a temporary arrangement regarding missed instruction and coursework.

Course Outline and Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Jan 17 and 19

No Required Readings

Week 2: Socioeconomic and Political Context of the States

Jan 24 and 26

Objectives: Students will develop a working knowledge of differences and similarities in state history, political culture, socioeconomic conditions, and basic rules of the game, including state constitutions.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 1

Film: For a Better Future, Live in a Red State: A Debate 1:34:06

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu/login?URL=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=104680&xtid=58354>

Reading Packet (Canvas)

Hero, Rodney E., and Caroline J. Tolbert. 1996. "A Racial/Ethnic Diversity Interpretation of Politics and Policy in the States of the U.S." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(3):851-871.

Hopkins, Daniel J. 2010. "Politicized Places: Explaining Where and When Immigrants Provoke Local Opposition". *American Political Science Review*, 104(1):40-60.

Lupia, Arthur, Yanna Krupnikov, Adam Seth Levine, Spencer Piston, and Alexander Von Hagen-Jamar. 2010. "Why State Constitutions Differ in their Treatment of Same-Sex Marriage." *The Journal of Politics* 72(4):1222-1235.

Week 3: The Intergovernmental Context

Jan 31 and Feb 2

Objectives: Students will be able to explain and think critically about the role of subnational governments in the American federalist system, the relationships between local, state, and national governments, and the historical ebbs and flows of these relationships.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 2

Film: Can the States Do It Better? (1996, 56 min.)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/login?URL=http://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?aid=9363&xtid=6551>

Reading Packet

Welch, Susan, and Kay Thompson. 1980. "The Impact of Federal Incentives on State

Policy Innovation.” *American Journal of Political Science* 24(4):715-729.

Kelly, Nathan J., and Christopher Witko. 2012. “Federalism and American Inequality.” *The Journal of Politics* 74(2):414-26.

Week 4: Institutions: Legislative Branch

Feb 7 and 9

Objectives: Students will be expected to understand how state legislatures operate, what their roles are in state government, how they differ as institutions from each other and other state institutions, trends in the institutional development of legislatures, who runs for these seats, and what the job of state legislator entails.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 7

Film: Lawmakers (1995, 20 min.)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/login?URL=http://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?aid=9363&xtid=6186>

Film: Lawmaking (1995, 30 min.)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/login?URL=http://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?aid=9363&xtid=6185>

Film: The Law (FULL VIDEO) (19:52)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu/login?URL=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wid=104680&xtid=6187>

Reading Packet

Haider-Markel, Donald P. 2007. “Representation and Backlash: The Positive and Negative Influence of Descriptive Representation.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 32(1):107-134.

Preuhs, Robert R., and Eric Gonzalez Juenke. 2011. “Latino U.S. State Legislators in the 1990s: Majority-Minority Districts, Minority Incorporation, and Institutional Position.” *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 11(1):48-75.

Week 5: Institutions: Executive Branch

Feb 14 and 16

Objectives: Students will be expected to understand how executive offices operate, what their roles are in state government, how they differ as institutions from each other and other state institutions, trends in the institutional development of executive branches, who runs for these seats, and what the job of Governor entails.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 8

Reading Packet

Ferguson, Margaret Robertson. 2003. "Chief Executive Success in the Legislative Arena." *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 3(2):158-182.

Barrilleaux, Charles, and Michael Berkman. 2003. "Do Governors Matter? Budgeting Rules and the Politics of State Policymaking." *Political Research Quarterly* 56:409-17.

Week 6: Institutions: The Courts

Feb 21 and 23

Objectives: Students will be expected to understand how state and local courts operate, what their roles are in state government, how they differ as institutions from each other and other state institutions, trends in the institutional development of state courts, and the methods for selecting judges.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 9

Reading Packet

Gann Hall, Melinda. 2001. "State Supreme Courts in American Democracy: Probing The Myths of Judicial Reform." *American Political Science Review* 95(2): 315-330.

Brace, Paul. and Brent D. Boyea. 2008. "State Public Opinion, the Death Penalty, and the Practice of Electing Judges." *American Journal of Political Science.*" 52(2)360–72.

Week 7: Institutions: Bureaucracy and Administration

Feb 28 and Mar 2

Objectives: Students will be expected to understand how state bureaucracies operate, what their roles are in state government, how they differ as institutions from each other and other state institutions, and trends in the institutional development of state bureaucracies.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 8 (rest)

Reading Packet

Smith et al. 2008, "Chapter 9: Bureaucracy"

Potoski, Matthew. 2002. "Designing Bureaucratic Responsiveness: Administrative

Procedures and Agency Choice in State Environmental Policy.” *State Politics And Policy Quarterly* 2(1):1-23.

Dometrius, Nelson C. 2001. “Gubernatorial Approval and Administrative Influence.” *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* 2(3):251-267.

Week 8: Political Parties and Interest Groups

Mar 7 and 9

Objectives: Students will be expected to understand how political parties and interest groups operate in the states, what their roles are in state politics, how they differ in power and influence across the states, and their role with national party and group organizations.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 5

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 6

Film: Moyers & Company: United States of ALEC-A Follow-Up (FULL VIDEO) (56:49)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu/login?URL=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=104680&xtid=55002>

Reading Packet

Calfano, Brian Robert. 2010. “The Power of Brand: Beyond Interest Group Influence In U.S. State Abortion Politics.” *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 10(3):227-47.

Conger, Kimberly H. 2010. “A Matter of Context: Christian Right Influence in U.S. State Republican Politics.” *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 10(3):248-69.

Week 9: Spring Break, No Class

Week 10: Campaigns, Elections, and Direct Democracy

Mar 21 and 23

Objectives: Students will be expected to understand how elections are held in the states, who runs for office, who participates in elections, campaign financing in the states, and trends in state electoral politics. Additionally, students will learn about the different forms of direct democracy in the states, which states have which forms of direct democracy, the influence of direct democracy on government and policy, and how direct democracy has been used over time.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 3

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 4

Film: The Youngest Candidate (2008, 90 min)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/login?URL=http://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?aid=9363&xtid=44636>

Reading Packet

Joslyn, Mark R., and Donald P. Haider-Markel. 2000. "Guns in the Ballot Box: Information, Groups, and Opinion in Ballot Initiative Campaigns." *American Politics Quarterly* 28(3):355-78.

Lewis, Daniel C. 2011. "Bypassing the Representational Filter? Minority Rights Policies Under Direct Democracy Institutions in the U.S. States." *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 11(2):198-222.

Week 11: The Politics of Taxing and Spending

Mar 28 and 30

Objectives: Students will be expected to obtain a working knowledge of subnational government revenue and spending processes and differences across the states, as well as how states use these policies to pursue policy goals.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 10

Film: Bill Moyers Journal: Privatizing Government Services / State Budget Woes (2009, just watch segments 5, 6, 7, & 8)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/login?URL=http://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?aid=9363&xtid=40139&loid=63019>

Reading Packet

Berry, Frances, and William D. Berry. 1992. "Tax Innovation in the States: Capitalizing on Political Opportunity." *American Journal of Political Science* 36(3):715-42.

Week 12: Crime Politics and Policy

Apr 4 and 6

Objectives: Students will be expected to obtain a working knowledge of subnational government criminal justice policy, including how policies are adopted, the primary objectives of criminal justice, differences in state policy, and central issues, including costs and effectiveness.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 9 (rest)

Film: \$100 a Day: Justice and Reparation in California's Legal System (2009, 34 min)
<http://www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/login?URL=http://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?aid=9363&xtid=40583>

Film: The Legacy: Murder and Media, Politics and Prisons (1999, 77 min)
<http://www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/login?URL=http://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?aid=9363&xtid=9126>

Film: Abolish the Death Penalty: A Debate(FULL VIDEO) (01:36:39)
<http://www2.lib.ku.edu/login?URL=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wid=104680&xtid=110292>

Film: The Trayvon Martin Case Sparks New Debate Over Race, Guns, and Laws (FULL VIDEO) (12:06)
<http://www2.lib.ku.edu/login?URL=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wid=104680&xtid=53408>

Reading Packet (only)

Smith et al. 2008, "Chapter 14: Crime and Punishment"

Donohue, Laura K., and Juliette N. Kayyem. 2002. "Federalism and the Battle Over Counterterrorist Law: State Sovereignty, Criminal Law Enforcement, and National Security." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 25:1-18.

Haider-Markel, Donald P. 1998. "The Politics of Social Regulatory Policy: State and Federal Hate Crime Policy and Implementation Effort." *Political Research Quarterly* 51(1):69-88.

Mooney, Christopher Z., and Mei-Hsien Lee. 1999. "The Temporal Diffusion of Morality Policy: The Case of Death Penalty Legislation in the American States." *Policy Studies Journal* 27(4):766-80.

Chamberlain, Robert, and Donald P. Haider-Markel. 2005. "Lien On Me": State Policy Innovation in Response to Paper Terrorism." *Political Research Quarterly* 58(3):449-460.

Week 13: Education Policy

Apr 11 and 13

Objectives: Students will be expected to obtain a working knowledge of subnational government education policy, including how policies are adopted, the primary

objectives of education policy, differences in state policy, and central issues, including costs and effectiveness.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 15

Reading Packet

Howell, William G., Patrick J. Wolf, Paul E. Peterson, and David E. Campbell. 2001. "Effects of School Vouchers on Student Test Scores." In *Charters, Vouchers, and Public Education*. Eds. Paul E. Peterson and David E. Campbell. Washington, DC: Brookings Institute. Pp. 136-159.

Week 14: Welfare, Health, and Environmental Politics and Policy

Apr 18 and 20

Objectives: Students will be expected to obtain a working knowledge of subnational government welfare, health, and environmental policy, including how policies are adopted, the primary objectives of these policies, differences in state policy, and central issues, including the role of federalism.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 12

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 14

Film: Fighting for a Community's Legal Right to say "No" to Development: Thomas Linzey and Mari Margil (FULL VIDEO)(01:31:16)

http://fod.infobase.com/p_ViewVideo.aspx?xtid=75067&tScript=0

Reading Packet

Konisky, David M. 2007. "Regulatory Competition and Environmental Enforcement: Is There a Race to the Bottom?" *American Journal of Political Science* 51(4): 853–872.

Reingold, Beth, and Adrienne R. Smith. 2012. "Welfare Policymaking and Intersections of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in U.S. State Legislatures." *American Journal of Political Science* 56(1):131–147.

Week 15: Social Regulation and Civil Rights

Apr 25 and 27

Objectives: Students will be expected to obtain a working knowledge of subnational government social regulation and civil rights, including how policies are adopted, the primary objectives of these policies, differences in state policy, and central issues,

including the role of federalism and the (unique) nature of the debate over family, reproductive, and civil rights issues.

Book, Donovan, Smith, Osborn, and Mooney, 2015, Chapter 13

Film: After Stonewall: America's LGBT Movement (FULL VIDEO) (01:26:03)

http://fod.infobase.com/p_ViewVideo.aspx?xtid=65987&tScript=0

Reading Packet

Haider-Markel, Donald P. 2001. "Policy Diffusion as a Geographical Expansion of the Scope of Political Conflict: Same-Sex Marriage Bans in the 1990s." *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 1(1):5-26.

Karch, Andrew. 2012. "Vertical Diffusion and the Policy-making Process: The Politics Of Embryonic Stem-Cell Research." *Political Research Quarterly* 65(1):48-61.

Lax, Jeffrey R., and Justin H. Phillips. 2009. "Gay Rights in the States: Public Opinion and Policy Responsiveness." *American Political Science Review* 103(3): 367–86.

Week 16: Hot Issues: Political Science and the Study of States

May 2 and 4

Objectives: Students will be exposed to frontiers in social science research on the states and be expected to have a working knowledge of the relationship between public opinion and state policy as well as in how the policy choices of subnational governments shape the choices of citizens.

Film: The State of Arizona (FULL VIDEO) (01:24:25)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu/login?URL=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=104680&xtid=58661>

Film: Northern California's Secession Movement (FULL VIDEO) (05:46)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu/login?URL=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=104680&xtid=65275>

Film: Government Surveillance and Oakland, CA's "Domain Awareness Center" (FULL VIDEO) (07:27)

<http://www2.lib.ku.edu/login?URL=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=104680&xtid=65939>

Reading Packet

Lax, Jeffrey R., and Justin H. Phillips. 2012. "The Democratic Deficit in the States."

American Journal of Political Science 56(1):148–166.

Abrams, Samuel J., and Morris P. Fiorina. 2012. "The Big Sort" That Wasn't: A Skeptical Reexamination." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 45(2):203-210.

Capstone Paper Due by 5:00 pm May 9