

Pols 312

Dr. Randolph C. Horn

Spring 2006, Updated 1-23-2006

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Class meetings: TTh 1-2:50, DBH208

State and Local Government

Phone : 726-2179

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Office Hours: MWR 3-4:00

& by appointment

Course Description

Most of American public life takes place in the arenas of state and local politics. While national institutions receive the lion's share of attention, state and local governments touch citizens' lives more directly. In recent years we have witnessed the shifting of many functions of the national government to state and local governments and the centralization of others. This course represents a study of the structure and functions of state and local governments, paying special attention to Southern state politics.

Required Readings

Alan Rosenthal 2004 *Heavy Lifting: The Job of the American Legislature*. Washington, D. C. CQ Press.

Virginia Gray and Russell L. Hanson 2003 *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*, 8th edition. Washington, D. C. CQ Press.

Any Daily newspaper, read Front and Metro/State pages. Some are available online:

<http://www.al.com/> For the Birmingham News, Mobile Register, and Huntsville Times

<http://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/NEWS/indexMontgomery.htm> For Montgomery Advertiser

<http://www.ajc.com/> For the Atlanta-Journal Constitution

<http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/> Miami Herald

Try Googling your favorite paper from your state

Other readings assigned by the instructor are on reserve at the library or online.

Course Requirements

1) This course combines lecture, discussion, and student research. Students must be prepared for class, completing readings before class meetings. Students must participate in class discussions. Online requirements may be found in the classes WebCT area:

<http://webct.samford.edu>

2) Attendance is required. Students are allowed three cuts. Additional cuts will result in a five point reduction in the student's final grade. Three tardies count as one cut.

3) Cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable. Any student who represents the work of another as his or her own is guilty of plagiarism and will be subject to the penalties outlined in the Student Handbook, including expulsion from the course and the University.

4) Students will be evaluated on their performance on quizzes, homework, class participation, research, a presentation, a midterm and a final exam.

Presentations	10%
Quizzes	10%
Research Project	20%
Class Participation	10%
Homework	10%
Midterm	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

Grades, in ascending order:

greater than 60%= D-	greater than 63.3%= D	greater than 66.6%= D+
greater than 70%= C	greater than 73.3%= C	greater than 76.6%= C+
greater than 80%= B-	greater than 83.3%= B	greater than 86.6%= B+
greater than 90%= A-	greater than 93.3%= A	

Research project: Students will write a research papers on topics chosen in consultation with the instructor. The paper will be 10-15 double-spaced typed pages long. A proposal and bibliography are due March 28th. Papers are due 25 April and will be evaluated on grammar, style, spelling, diction, punctuation, and content.

Presentations: Each student will make a presentation to the class of his or her research.

Participation: Students are responsible for full participation in the class. This includes making thoughtful contributions to class discussions. A tally of positive contributions made by each student will be used as an aid in calculating participation grades. Those who are reticent about public speaking may gain points via electronic mail.

Quizzes: The quiz grade will equal the average of quiz scores. Quizzes may not be made up. Quizzes missed because of excused absences will not be used in calculating grades. If there are fewer than two quizzes, other grade components will count proportionally more in determining the final grade.

Late assignments: Late assignments are penalized one letter grade for each day late. All work must be completed by 5/10.

Class Schedule

Week/Topic	Reading Assignment
Week 1 01/25 -- Introductions	
Week 2 01/30 – Constitutional Frameworks	U. S. Constitution, any complete State Constitution http://www.law.cornell.edu/statutes.html Reserve: Tarr, Ch 1-2

Week 3 02/06 -- Federalism	Gray Ch. 1-2
Week 4 02/13 -- Elections	Gray Ch. 3, 5
Week 5 02/20 -- The States in Transition	Reserve: Gimpel Chapters I, II, XV + one state chapter

Midterm to be scheduled at the end of Week 5 or beginning of Week 6.

Week 6 03/06 Legislative Representation	Rosenthal Ch. 1-3, Gray 6
Week 7 03/8 Lawmaking I	Rosenthal Ch. 4-5
Week 8 03/13 Lawmaking II	Rosenthal Ch. 6-7, Gray 4
Week 9 03/20 -- Spring Break	No Class
Week 10 03/27 Executive Power?	Rosenthal Ch. 8-9; Gray Ch. 7, 9
Week 11 04/03 Leadership and Performance	Rosenthal Ch.10-11
Week 12 04/10 The Role of the Courts	Gray Ch. 8 No Class 04/13
Week 13 04/17 Policy Potpourri I: Health Welfare and Education	Gray Ch. 11-12. Attend Larry Diamond Lecture 04/24, approx. 7:30
Week 14 4/24 Policy Potpourri II: Taxing questions	Gray 10, 13-14
Week 15 05/01 Student Research	Student Projects
Week 16 5/08 Student Research	Student Projects; all written work due 5/10

Final Exam: Monday 05/15, 10:30 am

Samford University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations must make their request by contacting Disability Support Services, located in Counseling Services on the lower level of Pittman Hall (telephone number: 726-4078 or 726-2105). A faculty member will grant reasonable accommodations only upon written notification from Disability Support Services.