

The George Washington University  
PPPA 6085 – State Politics and Policy  
Wed. 6:10 - 8:00 p.m. 1957 E 111

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### Required Texts/Readings

Virginia Gray and Russell Hanson, Thad Kousser, eds. 2013. *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition (Sage). Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester.

### Objectives

The purpose of this course is to introduce the important concepts of state politics and government with a particular emphasis on how those concepts affect the formulation and implementation of policy. The student will become familiar with the functions of state government and the political, economic, and legal issues that lead to state public policies. At the conclusion of the course, the student will be able to identify the varied internal and external influences on state government policy, including but not limited to political parties and interest groups. The student will also know, generally, how policy options are considered, evaluated, and implemented at the state level.

### Course Requirements/Grading

Students have the option of completing a research paper or a take home exam. Both the paper and exam are due May 2. If you are contemplating the paper, you should read: Sean Nicholson-Crotty and Kenneth Meier. 2002. *Size Doesn't Matter: In Defense of Single-State Studies*. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 2,4: 411-422.

Grades will be based on the following:

Class participation	20%
Exam/paper	80%

Class 1, Jan 13

### **Introduction to Studying the States**

Gray, Chapter 1; PSN, Why States Matter,  
<http://www.progressivestates.org/node/685/why-states-matter>

The following articles are suggested reading, particularly if you are completing a research paper. Malcolm E. Jewell. 1982. The Neglected World of State Politics. *Journal of Politics* 44:638-57; Paul Brace and Aubrey Jewett. 1995. The State of State Politics Research. *Political Research Quarterly* 48: 643-81.

Class 2, Jan 20

### **Federalism and the States**

Gray, Chapter 2; The Federalist Papers: 28, 39: 45, 46, 51.  
Gamkhar and Pickeril. 2012. The State of American Federalism 2011-2012, *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 42: 357-386; Paul Posner. 2007.

Class 3, Jan 27

### **POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS**

Gray, Chapter 3; Gerald Wright and Brian Schaffner (2002). The Influence of Party: Evidence from the State Legislatures. *American Political Science Review* 96,2: 367-379; Shannon Jenkins. 2008. Party Influence on Roll Call Voting: A View from the U.S. States. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 8,2: 239-282; Lonna Rae Atkeson and Randall W. Partin. 1995. Economic and Referendum voting: A Comparison of Gubernatorial and Senatorial Elections. *American Political Science Review* 89: 99-107.

Class 4, Feb 3

### **STATE LEGISLATIVE POLITICS AND POLICY**

Gray, Chapter 6; James Coleman Battista. 2004. Re-examining Legislative Committee Representativeness in the States. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 4,2: 161-180; Cherie Maestas. 2000. Professional Legislatures and Ambitious Politicians: Policy Responsiveness of State Institutions. *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 25,4: 663-690; William Berry and Michael Berkman. 2002. Legislative Professionalism and Incumbent Reelection: The Development of Institutional Boundaries. *APSR* 94: 859-874; Cynthia Bowling and Margaret Ferguson. 2001. Divided Government, Interest Representation and Policy Differences: Competing Explanation for Gridlock in the Fifty States. *Journal of Politics* 63,1: 182-206.

Class 5, Feb 10

### **STATE LEGISLATIVE POLITICS AND POLICY (II)**

Andrew Gelman and Gary King. 1994. Enhancing Democracy Through Legislative Redistricting. *American Political Science Review* 88,3: 541-559; Gerald Wright, Tracy Osborn, John Winburn, and Jennifer Hayes Clark. 2009. Patterns of Representation in the American States and Congress: [http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/political\\_science/state\\_politics/conferences/2009/papers/36.pdf](http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/political_science/state_politics/conferences/2009/papers/36.pdf) ;

Richard Forgette, Andrew Garner and John Winkle. 2009. Do Redistricting Principles and Practices Affect U.S. State Legislative Electoral Competition? *SPPQ* 9,2: 151-175; Gerald C. Wright. 2007. Do Term Limits Affect Legislative Roll Call Voting *SPPQ* 7,3: 256-280; Anne Marie Cammisa and Beth Reingold. 2004.

Class 6, Feb 17

### **INTEREST GROUPS IN THE STATES**

Gray, Chapter 4; David Lowery, Virginia Gray and James Monogan. 2008. The Construction of Interest Group Communities: Distinguishing Bottom Up and Top Down Models. *Journal of Politics* 70,4: 1160-1176; Anthony Nownes and Krissy Walker DeAlejandro. 2009. Lobbying in the New Millennium: Evidence of Continuity and Change in Three States. *State Politics and Policy Research* 9: 429-455; Virginia Gray, David Lowery, Matthew Fellows and Andrea McAtee. 2004. Public Opinion, Public Policy and Organized Interests in the American States. *Political Research Quarterly* 57,3: 411-420; and Louay M. Constant. 2006. When Money Matters: Campaign Contributions, Roll Call Votes, and School Choice in Florida. *State Politics and Policy Research* 6,2: 195-219.

Class 7, Feb 24

### **GOVERNORS**

Gray, Chapter 7; James King and Jeffrey Cohen. 2005. What Determines a Governor's Popularity? *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 5,3: 225-247; Margaret Ferguson. 2003. Chief Executive Success in the Legislative Arena. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 3,2: 158-182; Alan Greenblatt. 2009. *The Job of a Lifetime. Governing Magazine. June. 24-30*; Kousser, Thad, Justine Phillips. 2009. "Who Blinks First? Legislative Patience and Bargaining with Governors." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34(1):55-86.

Class 8, Mar 2

Gun Control

Readings to be assigned.

Class 9, Mar 9

## **DIRECT DEMOCRACY\**

Gray, Chapter 5; Daniel Smith and Caroline Tolbert. 2007. The Instrumental and Educative Effects of Ballot Measures: Research on Direct Democracy in the American States. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 7,4: 416-445; Kevin Arceneaux. 2002. Direct Democracy and the Link Between Public Opinion and State Abortion Policy. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 2,4: ;372-87; Shaun Bowler and Todd Donovan. 2004. Measuring the Effect of Direct Democracy on State Policy: Not All Initiatives are Created Equal. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 4,3: 345-363; Shaun Bowler and Todd Donovan. 2002. Democracy, Institutions and Attitudes about Citizen Influence on Government. *British Journal of Political Science* 32: 371-390; Edward Lascher, Michael Hagen and Steven Rochlin. 1996. Gun Behind the Door? Ballot Initiatives, State Policies and Public Opinion. *Journal of Politics* 58: 760-775; Justin H. Phillips. 2008. Does the Citizen Initiative Weaken Party Government in the U.S. States? *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 8,2: 127-149.

Class 10, Mar 23

## **DIFFUSION AND INNOVATION**

Frank Baumgartner. 2006. Jack Walker and the Diffusion of Innovation. *American Political Science Review* Nov. p. 672; Andre Karch. 2007. Emerging Issues and Future Directions in State Policy Diffusion Research. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 7,1: 54-80; Charles Shipan and Craig Volden. 2008. The Mechanisms of Policy Diffusion. *American Journal of Political Science* 52,4: 840-857; Nicholson-Crotty, Sean. 2009 The Politics of Diffusion: Public Policy in the States. *Journal of Politics* 71,1: 192-205.

Class 11, Mar 30

## **Health and Education Policy**

Gray, Chapters 11-12; Peterson, *The Price of Federalism* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1995), pp. 175-195 (handout); McColl, "Tough Call: Is NCLB Constitutional?" *Phi Delta Kappan* (April 2005), pp. 604-610; DOE. *Race to The Top Summary*, (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/executive-summary.pdf>); Jim Taylor, *Seven Reasons I really Dislike Education Reform* (available at SFGATE.com), Diane Ravitch, *Obama's Race to The Top Will Not Improve Education* (available on HuffingtonPost.com).

Class 12, April 6

## **FISCAL POLICY AND BUDGETS**

Gray, Chapter 10; E&Y/COST, State and Local Business Tax Burden (available online at [www.cost.org](http://www.cost.org)); National Association of State Budget Officers, Budget Processes in the States, Summer 2008 (available at [www.nasbo.org](http://www.nasbo.org)).

Class 13, Apr 13

**State Economic Development Policy**

Gray, Chapter 16. Additional readings will be assigned.

Class 14, Apr 20

**Recap Exams Distributed**