The George Washington University  
PPPA 6085 – State Politics and Policy  
Wed. 6:10 - 8:00 p.m. Monroe 451

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Required Texts/Readings

Virginia Gray and Russell Hanson, Thad Kousser, eds. 2013. Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis, 10th 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 distinct aspects of politics and governments in the states. 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 and policies 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 6. 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 16

**INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE STATES**

Class 2, Jan 23

**FEDERALISM AND THE STATES**

Class 3, Jan 30

**POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS**

Class 4, Feb 6

**STATE LEGISLATIVE POLITICS AND POLICY**
Class 5, Feb 13  

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

Class 6, Feb 20

**INTEREST GROUPS IN THE STATES**

Class 7, Feb 27

**GOVERNORS**
Gubernatorial Policymaking

Direct Democracy

Diffusion and Innovation

Policy Choice and Implementation

Class 12, April 10  
**FISCAL POLICY AND BUDGETS**  
Gray, Chapter 10; (Brunori, State Tax Policy, a Political Perspective, Chapters 1-5 (this book is available in the library and as an ebook from the Urban Institute Press); E&Y/COST, State and Local Business Tax Burden (available online at www.cost.org); National Association of State Budget Officers, Budget Processes in the States, Summer 2008 (available at www.nasbo.org).

Class 13, Apr 17  
**STATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY**  
Gray, Chapter 16. Additional readings will be assigned.

Class 14, Apr 24  
**STATE HEALTH AND EDUCATION POLICY**  
Gray, Chapters 11-12; Additional readings will be assigned.