

**POS 3114**  
**Issues in State and Local Government**  
**Spring 2013**  
**Tuesday and Thursday 4:30pm – 5:45pm**  
***Building 2, Room 1018***

Dr. Michael Binder

**Office Hours:** 11:00am to 1:30pm Tuesday and Thursday or by appointment

**Office:** Building 51, Room 2108

**Office Phone:** (904) 620-1205

**Email:** m.binder@unf.edu

**Objectives:**

The course examines the political power structures of state and local governments and the related policy outcomes in terms of resource allocation and service delivery. The material also focuses on the consequences of these issues for citizens.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Communication

- Possess the verbal and writing skills needed to communicate clearly and effectively, make persuasive, professional presentations and convey information essential to the discipline in an orderly and understandable manner.

Content

- Understand the various forms of structure in government and relate specific governmental forms to political and policy outcomes.
- Understand the role of public policy, the policy-making process, the political and environmental factors that affect its development and its effects on political events, actors, and institutions.

Critical Thinking

- Be able to effectively apply critical thinking and problem solving skills to political issues.
- Understand and be able to use tools gained in the course to run an effective reelection campaign.

**Required Text:**

Donovan, Todd, Christopher Mooney and Daniel Smith. *State and Local Politics Institutions and Reform*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning (referred to as **DMS**)

**Course Resources:**

Course resources such as the syllabus, assignments, selected readings, etc. are available on Blackboard. Not all functions of Blackboard will be used for the course, but Blackboard does contain readings and other information about this course and is used extensively. Communications over Blackboard are official course communications and

you are responsible to for checking the email associated with Blackboard on a regular basis.

## **Graded Assignments**

### **Attendance:**

Attendance is taken regularly and accounts for 10 points of the final course grade.

### **Participation:**

This is a course that requires engagement with class readings and the ability to communicate your interpretation of them; therefore 30 points of the final course grade will come from in class participation. Remember it's impossible to participate if you are not present.

### **Exams:**

During the semester there will be two exams, the first is worth 45 points and the second is worth 50 points. The second exam is cumulative, though it will focus more on the second half of the semester. Make-up exams will only be given if the student notifies the professor PRIOR to the exam and provides *documented evidence* of a valid University approved excuse, i.e. University sponsored event, etc. It is the student's responsibility to contact the professor and arrange for a make-up exam.

### **Calling Center:**

You are required to do one evening of telephone surveys for the Public Opinion Research Laboratory. Public opinion plays a vital role in the democratic process, and experiencing firsthand how public opinion gets measured provides an understanding of the process that goes beyond the classroom. Attending the training session and completing one evening (4:30pm – 9:00pm) of calling successfully (between February 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>) will earn you 15 points.

### **Paper – Solve a Budget Problem:**

You will put yourself in the shoes of a state or local executive (governor or mayor) and propose a budget for your constituency. In this paper you will lay out how the current budget is allocated, where the current revenue streams come from, any long-term potential problems (i.e. pensions, booming Medicaid payments, etc.) and statutory or constitutional requirements (i.e. balanced budget, percentage requirements for education, etc.). You will then create your budget plan for that entity (state or city). You will specifically indicate where the revenue comes from, how it gets allocated and highlight any differences between your budget plan and the current budget for that location. Finally, propose a realistic plan for working your budget plan through the current legislature of your state or city. Obama had a very tidy budget plan that he ran on during the 2012 general election, it became much messier once the John Boehner led House of Representatives got involved. You need to be aware of on the ground political realities.

## Late Assignments

Late assignments are NOT accepted under any circumstances and all assignments not handed in on time (i.e. your initial location selection and the paper) will receive a grade of zero. If you suspect you may have difficulty getting an assignment in on a certain date, please feel free to turn it in early.

## Plagiarism/Cheating/Academic Integrity:

Blackboard includes a tool called “Safe Assign.” This is a plagiarism checking device you may use for this course. If you submit a draft to Safe Assign and find that you have plagiarized, please come see me for assistance. You will not be penalized for plagiarism in a draft. You will be penalized for plagiarism in a final assignment. Please note that Safe Assign is a limited tool; it does not find all forms of plagiarism. You remain responsible for any form of plagiarism found in your final assignment, even if you have used Safe Assign.

Because students have the opportunity to learn about, check for, and avoid plagiarism prior to turning in the final paper, I have to assume any plagiarism I find in final papers is intentional. ***There are no “second chances.” The same is true for other violations of academic integrity.*** That you “didn’t mean to” or “didn’t know” are not excuses for plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity. I am available to assist you; please see me if you have any questions about avoiding plagiarism *before* turning in your final papers!

In addition, all sources of reference from which students take quotations, major theories or concepts must be properly cited. Submitting plagiarized work or any other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and such actions will result in ***failure of the course*** and potentially expulsion from the University. The University’s policy on plagiarism can be found at [http://www.unf.edu/registrar/forms/misconduct\\_policy.pdf](http://www.unf.edu/registrar/forms/misconduct_policy.pdf).

	Course Grade	Due Date
Attendance	10	Everyday
Participation	30	Everyday
Calling Center	15	February 4 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup>
Exam I	45	February 21 <sup>st</sup>
Budget Paper Constituency Selection	5	January 31 <sup>st</sup>
Budget Paper	45	April 18 <sup>th</sup>
Final Exam	<u>50</u>	April 25 <sup>th</sup> 3:00pm
	Total Points	200

## Grade Scale:

185 – 200 = A	165 – 172 = B	139 – 152 = C
179 – 184 = A-	159 – 164 = B-	119 – 138 = D
173 – 178 = B+	153 – 158 = C+	118 or less = F

Tentative Schedule  
 Due to Change at Professor's Discretion

DMS – Donovan, Mooney  
 and Smith text  
 (BB) – available on  
 Blackboard

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Due by date shown below</u>
1/8	Introduction & Overviews	Reading and Analyzing (BB) Summary Sheet (BB)
1/10	State and Local Politics	DMS 1
1/15	State and Local Politics	Tiebout 1956 (BB)
1/17	Florida	Weissert & Crew (FL Module w/ DMS) Interlocal Agreement 1982 Interlocal Amendment 1996
1/22	Federalism	DMS 2 Federalist 17 & 45 (BB) Birkland & Waterman 2008
1/24	Obamacare	DMS 14 Obamacare Readings
1/29	Participation & Elections	DMS 3
1/31	Call Center Training <b>Submit Locality for Budget Paper</b>	Survey Research Reading
2/5	Calling Center <i>NO CLASS</i>	
2/7	Calling Center <i>NO CLASS</i>	
2/12	Voting	Gronke, et al. 2007 (BB) Brady & McNulty 2011 (BB) Davidson (2009) Herron & Smith 2012 (BB)
2/14	Direct Democracy	DMS 4
2/19	Direct Democracy Effects	Matusaka 2010 (BB) Binder et al. 2011 (BB) Childers & Binder 2012 (BB)
2/21	<b>EXAM 1</b>	

2/26	Political Parties	DMS 5
2/28	Parties	Schaffner, Streb & Wright 2001 (BB) Schaffner, Streb & Wright 2007 (BB) Feirria & Gourko 2007 (BB)
3/5	Legislatures	DMS 7
3/7	Legislatures in Practice	Gamm & Kousser 2010 (BB) Binder, Kogan & Kousser 2011 (BB) Clark 2012 (BB)
3/12	Executives	DMS 8
3/14	Executives in Action	Kousser & Phillips 2009 LSQ (BB) Bradbury & Waechter 2009 (BB)
3/19 & 3/21	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
3/26	Fiscal Policy	DMS 10
3/28	Budget Paper Q & A	
4/2	Morality Politics	DMS 13
4/4	Same Sex Marriage in the States	SC Hearings Audio Online Same Sex Marriage Readings Lax & Phillips 2009 SC Case Briefs
4/9	Interest Groups	DMS 6
4/11	Interest Groups in Action	Anzia 2011 Hartney and Flavin 2011 Tandberg 2010
4/16	Land Use	DMS Feiock 2004 Lubell, et al 2009 Nadler & Diamond 2008
4/18	<b>Papers Due</b> Review for Final	
4/25	<b>Final Exam 3:00pm – 4:50pm</b>	