

State and Local Politics

PSI 323 - 3 credits

Doane College – Summer Term

May 25, 2016 to July 20, 2016

Course Description:

An analysis of political processes and behavior in state, metropolitan, and local governments. Required for Public Admin majors. Fulfills one Doane Plan Contemporary Issues requirement or one Doane Plan Liberal Learning requirement for everyone except Public Admin majors.

Location and Times:

Doane College – Lincoln Wednesdays, 6pm to 10pm

Instructor:

Jason W. Hayes, Adjunct Professor

Cell: 402-304-9414

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Textbook Materials:

Required: Gary Moncrief, *Why States Matter: an Introduction to State Politics*, Rowman & Littlefield (1st Ed. 2013). ISBN: 978-0-7425-7038-2

Foundational Area of Knowledge and Course Objectives:

The student, after completing the course instruction should have a heightened awareness of the following subject materials, representing the course goals and objectives:

- (1) The structure of political institutions within NE state and local subdivisions.
- (2) The legislative process concerning city ordinances and state statutes.
- (3) The executive, legislative, and judicial office functions within state government.
- (4) The political process as it relates to campaigns and policy decisions in Nebraska.
- (5) Economic and financial issues pertaining to state and local government.

Description of Learning Strategies:

The following strategies will be utilized during the course to accomplish each of the course objectives outlined in the Foundational Area of Knowledge Section:

- (1) Lecture
- (2) Discussion
- (3) Exercises and Simulations involving students
- (4) Guest Speakers (if available)
- (5) Readings
- (6) Assignments to students

Assessment of Student Performance and Grading:

Students will be able to obtain a total of 300 points from assignments, discussions and examinations conducted during the course. The number of points that a student will be able to earn, is as follows:

Final Exam	200
Government Project	100

Summary of Examinations and Assignments:

Final Examination: A final take home exam may consist of essays, multiple choice and short answer questions that will cover the entire content of the course.

State and Local Government Project: Each student will complete a project on either a local political subdivision or a specific piece of legislation before the Nebraska Legislature. This project will involve attending a public meeting outside of or during the class meeting times.

Course Policies:

Attendance: Student attendance at all class meetings is expected. If a student will be unable to attend a class meeting, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor and perform any necessary makeup or additional assignments given to the student by the instructor. Students should obtain class notes from a fellow classmate, and the absent student is responsible for all material covered on the day of the absence. Two or more unexcused absences may result in a failing grade.

Grading Scale: The grading scale is based on a nine point, A, B, C, D, F scale, as follows:

A+	100 – 96	C	74 – 70
A	95 – 90	D+	69 – 65
B+	89 – 85	D	64 – 60
B	84 – 80	F	59 – below
C+	79 – 75		

Late Assignments: Assignments that are turned in late during the duration of the course are downgraded by one letter grade. For each additional week the assignment is late, an additional letter grade is reduced off the original score given. All assignments must be completed and handed in by July 20, 2016 to receive any credit.

Academic Integrity: The Doane College Academic Integrity Policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and tests will represent your own work. Any use of others' ideas and words without proper citation of sources is plagiarism and will result in penalties to be determined by the instructor and/or the dean of undergraduate studies.

Format of Writings: It is suggested that all writing assignments to be completed outside of class should be typed, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and using a font no larger than 12 pt. in Times New Roman, Arial or Courier. If you have any questions regarding this requirement, please contact your instructor.

Course Schedule and Readings:

May 25	Chapter 1:	Making a Case for the States
June 1	No Class.	
June 8	Chapter 2:	States and the Federal System
June 15	Chapter 3:	The Policy-making Environment of the States
	Chapter 4:	The Policy-making Capacity of State Government
June 22	Chapter 5:	Public Policy and the Role of States in a Changing Federal System
June 29	No Class.	
July 6	Chapter 6:	Elections and Political Parties
July 13	Chapter 7:	State Fiscal Systems
	Chapter 8:	Why States Matter Now
	<i>State and Local Government Project Due</i>	
	<i>Final Exam handed out</i>	
July 20	No Class.	
	<i>Final Exam Due</i>	