
POLI 242 State and Local Government (In Person)University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, Spring 2022

Instructor	Dr. Saemyi Park
Class Location & Time	12:30 PM – 1:45 PM @ SCI D224
Office Hours	In Person: 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM (T/TH) & 2 PM – 3: PM (TH) @ SCI D33 Online: 2 PM – 4 PM (M) via Zoom or by appointment
Email	spark@uwsp.edu
Important Note	Please keep in mind that this syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, is subject to change. Any changes will be clearly noted in a course announcement in Canvas and through email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

While many people are somewhat familiar with the issues, institutions, and actors that define our national government and politics, many are unaware of what goes on at the state and local levels. It is at these lower tiers of the American federal system where the majority of decisions that most directly affect our daily lives are made. In POLI 242, students will learn how the state and local political framework is structured within the American federal system and how it functions as a system comprised of various individual and group interests. This course examines political institutions, actors, and issues within American state and local governments. Among other topics, our class will discuss federalism, political culture, state campaigns and elections, public policies, constitutional provisions, and state government branches (legislative, executive, and judicial). At some points, we will closely look at the politics that are relevant to the state of Wisconsin, while at other times we will examine political matters in other states. Overall, this class introduces students to a plethora of important concepts and theories relating to sub-national governments.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- LO1: Explain the constitutional division of powers between the federal government and the state government, and the evolution of that relationship over time
- LO2: Analyze the structure and functions of the institutions of state and local government
- LO3: Identify the varying roles of the decision-makers at each level of government
- LO4: Explain key issues that consistently impact the activities of state and local government
- LO5: Measure factors to explain variations in policy-making process across the states

Students will meet the outcomes listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Complete readings and learning materials (all LOs)
- Take two exams (all LOs)
- Participate in the class discussion (LO1, LO4 & LO5)
- Complete a variety of activities to analyze the data covering the topics
- Conduct the research project & Deliver the oral presentation on the research (LO3, LO4 & LO5)
- Write an analytic paper (LO1, LO3, LO4 & LO5)

REQUIRED READINGS

The following books have been ordered at University Bookstore for textbook rental:

- Title: ***“Governing States and Localities”*** (7th Edition)
- Authors: **Kevin B. Smith and Alan Greenblatt**
- Year: **2019**
- Publisher: **Sage & CQ Press**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	Weight	Due Date
Midterm Exam	25%	March 10 (TH)
Final Exam	25%	May 17 (T)
Film Analysis Paper	15%	April 30 (Sat) by 11:59 PM
Research Project & Presentation	25%	On your assigned date (b/w 4/12-5/10)
Attendance & Participation	10%	Every class
Total:	100%	

Note: **Students MUST complete all required work** in order to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. **You do NOT have the option to “take a zero” on each assignment.** Not submitting all required work will result in either an F for the course or in a final grade of incomplete until the work is submitted (however, this option is rarely permitted to students). Late submission is not accepted unless you receive permission from the instructor in advance. Please read the attendance policy on **pages 4-5** for more information about the excusable absence.

GRADING SCALE

Outstanding	A	94-100	A-	90-93		
Above average	B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
Average	C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
Below average	D+	67-69	D	63-66		
Unsatisfactory	F	Below 62				

Grades will be determined according to the university's standard scale. There is no curve, so you receive what you earn.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

A. Exams (25% each)

There are TWO ONLINE exams, which will take place on the course site in Canvas. Each exam will be open at 9 AM and close at 11:59 PM on the scheduled exam day. You will be given two hours to take the test. Once you start the test, you are not allowed to take a break for return. If you are given the accommodation for the exam, please talk to me with your DATC letter (Disability and Assistive Technology Center) as soon as possible. The midterm exam covers the first part of subjects, and the final exam will cover the topics addressed in class after the first exam. That is, the exam is **NOT cumulative**. The format of exams is a combination of multiple-choice questions, true-or-false questions, fill-in-the-blank questions, and short-answer questions. **A study guide** will be distributed one week before each exam, and I will provide a review session before each exam.

	Review Session	Exam Day
Midterm Exam Week	March 8 (T)	March 10 (TH)
Final Exam Week	May 12 (TH)	May 17 (T)

Because it is an online exam that is open for a day, students would NOT have a make-up exam opportunity. Only extraordinary circumstances can excuse your absence on the exam day. You must have instructor approval BEFORE the exam. Please keep in mind that it is extremely rare for students to have a make-up exam opportunity. A make-up exam will be all essay questions, and you need to take it on the last day of class in my office. It will be much harder to complete the make-up test.

B. Film Analysis Paper (15%)

You will watch the film in light of the lecture materials and assigned readings for this course. You are free to write on any topic related to State and Local Government addressed in the films, as long as they are able to incorporate and demonstrate your thorough understanding of the

different assigned course readings. Please keep in mind that this assignment is NOT a film review. You should NOT discuss if you like or dislike the film. Instead, you will find the theme that is relevant to our class topics and develop the thesis statement to lay out your thoughts on many pressing questions about State and Local Government.

	Showing Dates	Paper Deadlines
Film Presentation	April 5 - <i>in class</i>	April 30 (Sat) by 11:59 PM

We will watch the film *in person* during class time in April 5. Your paper should be submitted to the course site in Canvas. A separate worksheet will be distributed in class for more details, but an important tip for the paper is that you will earn extra 5 points if you get help from the UWSP Writing Center. More information will be provided in the paper guideline.

C. Research Project & Oral Presentation (25%)

You are asked to conduct in-depth research on one of the topics covered in the latter half of classes. You will apply the concepts, theories, and perspectives to analyze what is happening in two or more states you choose. Comparison analysis is the main method of research. On the second week of the semester, you will sign up for up to two topics and I will try to respect your preference when assigning your presentation topic/date. For each assigned date, 7 students are invited to present their research projects. You are not required to write a paper, but you must present PowerPoint slides. Your presentation should not be longer than 7 minutes. You have to upload the slides to the course site two days before your presentation date. The complete guideline will be shared by the second week of February.

Topics	Lecture Day	Research Presentation
Political Attitudes and Participation	4/7	4/12
Health and Welfare Policy	4/14	4/19
Education Policy	4/21	4/26
Crime and Punishment	4/28	5/3
Environmental Policy	5/5	5/10

D. Attendance and Participation (10%)

You are required to attend all class sessions. It is in your best interest too. Students who regularly attend class generally enjoy the course more, learn more, and get the most out of their education with higher grades. In addition, you are expected to enrich the learning experience of fellow students and teachers through regular attendance and active participation in class. For most class times, you will be invited to complete a brief activity that help you better understand the topic of American Politics. These activities will promote in-depth class discussion and will be graded.

We will have about 30 class sessions throughout the semester. Please keep in mind that only few cases are considered as the excusable absences:

1. UWSP-sponsored activities (sport game, organization events, etc.)
2. The university-recognized religious holidays
3. The serious and extraordinary circumstances of your medical issues or your immediate family members

In the above-mentioned cases, you are required to submit the proof of evidence to the instructor in advance. For the 1st and 2nd case, you are supposed to know the schedule already or by the beginning of the semester. Please check your schedule and the course calendar to see if any conflicts occur. Make sure to submit the official documents (letters, emails from the coach, etc.) by the second week of February. For the 3rd case, you should inform your instructor immediately and provide the documentation within 48 hours of the event occurs. I reserve the right to review the document and determine if your absence is excusable. If you are simply sick or under the weather, that is not considered excusable.

COURSE POLICIES

Readings: Students are required to complete each week's required readings before that lecture. You need to bring your book, assigned readings, and lecture notes to each class.

Assignments: online submission through Canvas is required for writing assignments. Late submission or email submission is NOT accepted except for a very rare case as written in the previous section. You must faithfully follow the instruction regarding the format, style, and length of these assignments.

Excused Late Work: for extremely rare cases, your late submission may be excused without penalty. As I explained, all activities will be open in advance so that you will have enough time to complete them. Nonetheless, you may not be able to complete the module activities in advance if university-sponsored activities (ROTC, UWSP athletic teams, etc.) are recurring events. If you have MAJOR medical treatments/surgery that requires an extensive recovery time, you may not be able to complete the module activities in advance. If it is the case, you must explain what happens and request a make-up opportunity in writing with proof of document. Then, I will verify your request on a case-by-case basis and notify you of my permission for a late submission. If your proof of document contains private information when you encounter unforeseen medical and/or personal emergencies, you may want to contact UWSP DATC and/or the Dean of Student to submit your document. Then, the office will verify your excuse for me. Then, I will determine if you will be granted excused late submission. There is NO exception for this policy.

Unexcused Late Work: I understand that you may encounter unforeseen circumstances that prevent you to complete the module activities on time. To ease your burden with the dues, I will

accept your late submission **within 5 days from its original deadline**. Unexcused late submission of course work will incur a **10% deduction** per day. Nonmajor sicknesses that do not require your surgery and/or hospital admission will be an example of unexcused late submission. In this case, I will NOT require proof of document so that you can simply complete the module activity when it is possible within 5 days from its original due.

Canvas: This course will have a site on Canvas. The site will be used to share course materials including, but not limited to, lecture note, and additional readings. Make sure that you check this site before every class.

Lectures: Before we begin a topic in class, I will post an outline of the lecture material on the course website. The outlines give you the framework of the lecture but do not give you the entire script. If you wish, you can print these outlines and bring them with you to class to use as a base for note taking. You will learn and remember better when you write things down yourself. Regarding note taking, make sure you take notes that will be meaningful to you later when you are reviewing your notes, rather than focusing only on transcribing the slides verbatim.

Office Hours: I will have regular office hours in two different ways. I will be in my office (Science Building D335) on every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM as well as every Thursday from 2 PM to 3 PM. And, you can reach out to me via Zoom on every Monday from 2 PM to 4 PM. Please utilize this opportunity for your study. If my regular office hours do not work for you, you can certainly schedule a meeting for the different time and date. Just email me to set up the appointment. The Zoom link will be post in the course site.

- **In-Person:** 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM (T/TH) & 2 PM - 3PM (TH) @ SCI D335
- **Online:** 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM (W) via Zoom

Technology Policy: Technology devices are NOT allowed to use in class. Out of respect for your fellow students, your professor, and the educational process, all technology devices (iPad, Kindle, cell/smartphones, Laptop, etc.) must be powered down and put away, not on the desk or in your hoodie pocket, or on your lap, during class. If texting, using social media, and attending to tasks other than the class material are more important than paying attention for 75 minutes, please do not come to class. If you feel you have an emergency situation that requires your phone to be on vibrate, please clear this with the professor before class begins. Students who disregard the policy will be asked to leave class.

Email Communication: Email is a convenient way to continue contact between professor and student outside of class. Email is best for 1-2 sentence responses, and conceptual questions do not lend themselves well to email. If you have any questions regarding your papers, please visit my office hours for an in-depth consultation. I will NOT consult on your written assignment via email. While students should take advantage of this email communication opportunity with me, you should also do so in a professional manner. I will NOT reply to emails that do not include a salutation (“Dear Prof. ...” or “Hello Dr. ...”) and please avoid calling me by the first name or “hey”.

When you email me, please follow **the professional email format** shown in the picture below:

The image shows a screenshot of an email composition window. On the left is a 'Send' button with a paper plane icon. To the right are fields for 'To', 'Cc', and 'Bcc'. The 'To' field contains the email address 'spark@uwsp.edu'. Below these is a 'Subject' field containing '[POLI242] Questions about the Midterm', which is highlighted with a red rectangular box. The body of the email starts with 'Hi Dr. Park,' followed by a red arrow pointing to the comma. Below that, the text reads 'My name is [your name] in POLI 242 State and Local Government. I have questions about....'

In parenthesis,
include the course
number and a brief
topic of your inquiry
in the subject line

A proper salutation

Indicate your name

Brief contents

I will also NOT respond to emails that ask for answers to questions that can easily be found on the syllabus or the lecture notes. If you have a question regarding lectures or assigned material that you just cannot seem to master, then ask a question in class, or come to me during office hours. I will only respond to questions about coursework or academic requirements, and I will not respond to questions of a personal nature. I will do my best to respond to your email within 2 hours during weekdays (not weekends), but please email me again if you do not receive my response within 48 hours.

Respect: I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. I am intolerant of disruptive behavior in the classroom, including talking during lectures, reading newspapers, frequently going to use a restroom, and especially playing with digital devices. Students engaging in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom in order to preserve the learning environment for other students. Class discussions are expected to be civil, rational, and respectful of others' opinions. Please do not intimidate, patronize, or ridicule anyone else during the course of classroom activities. This course is open to a variety of ways of interpreting history, theories, and policies. Students are encouraged to share their questions and ideas in lectures. Since there will be differences and disagreements, students are expected to show respect to the comments and positions of fellow students and me.

Honesty: Any instance of academic misconduct will be taken seriously and may result in failure of the course. Misconduct will result in notification to the Dean of Students. If you are having a problem, it is much better to talk to me about it. Do not struggle by yourself. I want you to learn and do well in this course, not punish you with a lower grade. Talk to me if you are having a problem so I can try to help you work out a solution. In addition, there is a great resource for your study in the campus. The Tutoring-Learning Center provides a variety of services to support your needs such as Writing Lab and One-On-One Assistance for Study Skills. Please contact Learning Resource Center (715-346-3568 & tlctutor@uwsp.edu & www.uwsp.edu/tlc) for more information.

Academic Coaching: if you feel you need help with any of the following skills - time management strategies, note-taking, study skills, communication on campus, or preparing for mid-terms, please consider scheduling an appointment with an Academic Coach on campus or virtually. They are here to help you be successful in your online courses when you feel you need extra support. Email **Kari Van Den Elzen** (kvandene@uwsp.edu) to schedule an appointment or use the Navigate student app by selecting Tutoring Learning Center. You can meet as many times as you need. Coaches are also available to review campus technology platforms with you. (Canvas, AccesSPoint, Office 365, Navigate, etc.)

Course Calendar

(Topics, readings, films, and schedule are subject to announced change by instructor.)

Topic	Dates	Readings
Introduction	1/25	None
Introduction to State and Local Government	1/27	Ch. 1
Federalism	2/1 & 2/3	Ch. 2
Constitutions	2/8 & 2/10	Ch. 3
Legislatures	2/15 & 2/17	Ch. 7
Governors and Executives	2/22 & 2/24	Ch. 8
Courts	3/1 & 3/3	Ch. 9
Review Session I	3/8	
Midterm Exam	3/10	
Finance	3/15 & 3/17	Ch. 4
Spring Break	3/22 & 3/24	
Local Government	3/29 & 3/31	Ch. 11
Film Presentation	4/5	
Political Attitudes and Participation & Research Presentation #1	4/7 & 4/12	Ch. 5
Health and Welfare Policy & Research Presentation #2	4/14 & 4/19	Ch. 15
Education Policy & Research Presentation #3	4/21 & 4/26	Ch. 13
Crime and Punishment & Research Presentation #4	4/28 & 5/3	Ch. 14
Environmental Policy & Research Presentation #5	5/5 & 5/10	Ch. 16
Review Session II	5/12	
Exam III	5/17	