

**PSC 568 American State Politics**  
**Professor Joshua J. Dyck**  
**M 9:00 – 11:50, 502 Park Hall**  
**Fall 2009**

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This course is a tour-de-force of the literature on American State politics. In this course, we are interested in evaluating the current state of theory and empirical research in this field. The course combines a healthy mixture of the “so-called” classics and cutting edge research.

This is a research seminar, which means that students are primarily responsible for motivating and engaging in discussion of assigned readings, with the helpful assistance and direction of the professor. This may sound somewhat hokey, but this course will only be as good as the collective effort that students put into it. The goals of this course are to: (1) learn about how to do political science, (2) attain and retain a grasp of the State politics literature, (3) evaluate and critique the current literature, and ultimately (4) to develop new theories and tests to evaluate these theories.

The vast majority of literature that is now published in the subfield takes the form of quantitative empirical research motivated by theory (just pick up a copy of SPPQ if you don't believe me). Therefore, the class will be training to contribute to this literature. This means that even if your long term career aspirations as a political scientist are not to read, write and contribute to the empirical state politics literature using data and statistical methods, your short term goal for this class in this semester will be to do exactly that.

**Required Texts:**

The following texts are required reading for this class. Besides the V.O. Key book, all are available at the University bookstore, although you may have better luck finding used copies online.

Erikson, Robert S., Gerald C. Wright and John P. McIver. 1987. *Statehouse Democracy: Public Opinion and Policy in the American States*. Cambridge University Press.

Jewell, Malcom E. and Sarah Morehouse. 2001. *Political Parties and Elections in American States, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed.* Washington D.C.: CQ Press.

Key, V.O. Jr. 1956. *American State Politics: an Introduction*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Squire, Peverill, and Keith Hamm. 2005. *101 Chambers: Congress, State Legislatures, and the Future of Legislative Studies*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press.  
CD-Rom for \$10 - <http://www.ohiostatepress.org/index.htm?books/book%20pages/squire%20101.html>

## **Course Expectations/Grading**

This is a difficult and demanding class. Please review all due dates very carefully; they are, except in very rare cases, non-negotiable. Late assignments will be graded down at my discretion. As a general rule, I do not give incompletes and will not accept any work for the class after December 12<sup>th</sup>. If you cannot make office hours, I will make myself available at other times. Please plan to talk to me early in the semester if you are struggling with any part of the course.

### **Participation (25%):**

Each student is responsible for reading each assigned reading, but participation only begins with completion of the assigned reading. Students are expected to engage the material, be able to identify research questions, theories, hypotheses, and methods and offer thoughtful comments about the impact of the research, the quality of the design, and potential extensions or improvements over the current work on any piece of assigned reading. Showing up to class means that you are prepared for me to call on you to discuss any assigned reading for that week of class. A large part of your participation grade is based on the cumulative impact that you have had on the quality of the class.

Students will be asked to act as point person for an article (or set of articles) about once every two-three weeks (but sometimes more or less frequently depending on the number of readings). The point person will introduce the piece and offer a series of questions for discussion about the article. Let me reiterate, however, that each student is responsible for reading each assigned reading.

**Short Assignments (20%):** Students will complete 2 of 3 short assignments over the course of the semester, each worth 10% of your final grade. The assignment will consist of a series of questions provided by the instructor that draw upon fundamental constructs discussed in class and in the course readings (you will choose one to answer). Answers should be about 5-7 pages, double spaced 12 point times New Roman font. A reference list should be included, which does not count against your page limit; please use standard citation guidelines of APSA (e.g. Key 1956). These assignments are meant to be completed individually. You are not to discuss answers, strategies for answering questions or share completed answers with other students.

**Research Design/Data Collection (50%):** Students in this class will design a piece of original research relating to state politics and collect data to test the hypotheses generated from the design. Students will ask an interesting question, develop a theory, derive testable hypotheses, and collect data to test the hypotheses. The goal of the paper is making the step toward crafting a piece of research which might appear in scholarly print, even though many of you are just beginning to learn the methods necessary to complete the research process.

I understand that students have varying levels of familiarity with data analysis; I expect you to make the paper as methodologically sophisticated as you can. For first year students, your goal should be developing a sound theory, writing a literature review, thinking in terms of what data would be needed to test your hypothesis, and going through the process of collecting your data: lack of methodological training/confidence is not an excuse for failing to collect data. For second year students and beyond, my expectation is that since you have gone to the trouble of collecting data, you really should analyze the data in a results and discussion section. This is not required for the course, per se, but if you are serious about graduate study in political science, your curiosity should get the best of you once you have gone to the trouble of collecting the data.

The paper grade will be divided into three parts.

*Project Outline (5%):* On September 28th, an initial outline of your paper is due. The outline should include (1) your research question, (2) justification of the theoretical import of your research question (including at least 5 citations of scholarly work on the subject), (3) your theory, (4) your hypothesis (or hypotheses), and (5) what data is required to test your hypothesis (or hypotheses). Please meet with me prior to turning this in if you are unsure what this entails.

*Revised Project Outline (5%):* On October 26th, a revised project outline is due. You should hand in a paper restating (1) your research question, (2) your theory, (3) your hypotheses, (4) what data you are using/how the data was collected or is being collected.

*Final Paper (40%):* Your final research design/paper and dataset must be handed in by Friday, 12/11 at 4:00 pm. Hard copies or e-mail are both acceptable forms of submission.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 (8/31): Course introduction, etc.

### Week 2 (9/7): No Class – Labor Day

Jewell, Malcom E. and Sarah Morehouse. 2001. *Political Parties and Elections in American States*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.

### Week 3 (9/14): Origins

Key, V.O. Jr. 1956. *American State Politics: an Introduction*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

#### Articles:

- Brace, Paul and Aubrey Jewett. 1995. “The State of State Politics Research.” *Political Research Quarterly* 48:643-81.
- Morehouse, Sarah and Malcom Jewell. 2004. “States as Laboratories: A reprise.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 7:177-203.

#### Recommended:

- Key, V.O. Jr. 1949. *Southern Politics*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Current subscription to *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* (if you are really interested in State Politics, I highly recommend subscribing to SPPQ – they have a very reasonable rate for students).
- Gimpel, James. G. 1996. *National Elections and the Autonomy of American State Party Systems*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

### Week 4 (9/21): Political Culture

Elazar, Daniel J. 1984. *American Federalism: A View From the States*. New York: Harper & Row. **Chapters 5 and 6 only.**

#### Articles:

- Sharkansky, Ira. 1969. “The Utility of Elazar’s Political Culture: A Research Note.” *Polity* 2:66-83.
- Nardulli, Peter F. 1990. “Political Subcultures in the American States: An Empirical Examination of Elazar’s Formulation.” *American Politics Quarterly* 18:287-315.
- Lieske, Joel. 1993. “Regional Sub-Cultures of the United States.” *Journal of Politics* 55:888-913

- Hero, Rodney E. and Caroline J. Tolbert. 1996. "A Racial/Ethnic Diversity Interpretation of Politics and Policy in the States of the U.S." *American Journal of Political Science* 40:851-71.
- Lieske, Joel. 2009. "The Changing Regional Subcultures of the American States and the Utility of a New Cultural Measure." Forthcoming at Political Research Quarterly (available as "online first" document)

**Week 5 (9/28): Democracy in the States – Opinion and Policy Linkages**

**\*\*\*Note – Class time will be at 6:00-9:00 pm in the evening\*\*\***

Erikson, Robert S., Gerald C. Wright and John P. McIver. 1987. *Statehouse Democracy: Public Opinion and Policy in the American States*. Cambridge University Press.

Articles:

- Jones, Bradford S. and Barbara Norrander. 1996. "The Reliability of Aggregated Public Opinion Measures." *American Journal of Political Science* 40:295.
- Berry, William D. et. al. 1998. "Measuring Citizen and Government Ideology in the American States." *American Journal of Political Science* 42:337-348.
- Brace, Paul et al. 2002. "Public Opinion in the American States: New Perspectives Using National Survey Data." *American Journal of Political Science* 46:173-89.
- Lax, Jeffrey R. and Justin H. Phillips. 2009. "How Should We Estimate Public Opinion in the States?" *American Journal of Political Science* 53:107-121.

Recommended: (general background in political knowledge/information of American voters)

- Lippmann, Walter. 1922. *Public Opinion*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Campbell, Angus, et. al. 1960. *The American Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Converse, Philip E. 1962. "Information Flow and the Stability of Partisan Attitudes." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 26:578-99.
- Converse, Philip E. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David Apter. New York: Free Press.
- Key, V.O. 1961. *Public Opinion and American democracy*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- Delli Carpini, Michael X. and Scott Keeter. 1996. *What Americans Know About Politics and Why it Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Luskin, Robert C. 1987. "Measuring Political Sophistication." *American Journal of Political Science* 31: 856-99.
- Popkin, Samuel L. 1991. *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Page, Benjamin I. and Robert Y. Shapiro. *The Rational Public*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Erikson, Robert S., Michael B. MacKuen, and James A. Stimson. 2002. *The Macro Polity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### **Week 6 (10/5): Elections and Voting Behavior I**

#### **Project Outline is Due**

##### Articles:

- Campbell, James. E. 1986. Presidential Coattails and Midterm Losses in State Legislative Elections. *American Political Science Review* 80:45-64
- Soss, Joe and David T. Canon. 1995. "Partisan Divisions and Voting Decisions: U.S. Senators, Governors, and the Rise of Divided Federal Government." *Political Research Quarterly* 48: 253-274.
- Carsey, Thomas M., and Gerald C. Wright. 1998. State and National Factors in Gubernatorial and Senatorial Elections. *American Journal of Political Science* 42:994-1002.
- Chubb, John E. 1988. "Institutions, the Economy, and the Dynamics of State Elections." *American Political Science Review* 82:133-54.
- Carey, John M., Richard G. Niemi, and Lynda W. Powell. 2000. "Incumbency and the Probability of Reelection in State Legislative Elections." *Journal of Politics* 62:671-700.
- Leyden, Kevin M., and Stephen A. Borrelli. 1995. "The Effect of State Economic Conditions on Gubernatorial Elections: Does a Unified Government Make A Difference?" *Political Research Quarterly* 48:275-290.
- Atkeson, Lonna Rae, and Randall W. Partin. 1995. "Economic and Referendum Voting: A Comparison of Gubernatorial and Senatorial Elections." *American Political Science Review* 89:99-107.

### **Week 7 (10/12) Elections and Voting Behavior II**

#### **Assignment #1 is Due**

##### Articles:

- Grofman, Bernard, and Lisa Handley. 1991. "The Impact of the Voting Rights Act on Black Representation in Southern State Legislatures" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 16:111-128.
- Shotts, Kenneth W. 2001. "The Effect of Majority-Minority Mandates on Partisan Gerrymandering." *American Journal of Political Science* 45:120-135.
- King, Gary. 1989. "Representation through Legislative Redistricting: A Stochastic Model." *American Journal of Political Science* 33:787-824.
- Schaffner, Brian F., Matthew Streb and Gerald Wright. 2001. "Teams Without Uniforms: The Nonpartisan Ballot in State and Local Elections." *Political Research Quarterly* 54 (1):7.

- Thad Kousser and Megan Mullin, 2007. “Does Voting by Mail Increase Participation? Using Matching to Analyze a Natural Experiment.” *Political Analysis*, Autumn 2007.
- Berinsky, Adam J. 2005. “The Perverse Consequences of Electoral Reform in the United States.” *American Politics Research* 33:471-491.
- Stein, Robert. 1998. “Early Voting.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 62:57-69.

**Week 8 (10/19) Direct Democracy – Primary Effects and Voting Decisions**

Articles:

- Lupia, Arthur. 1994. “Shortcuts Versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections.” *American Political Science Review* 88: 63-76.
- Matsusaka, John G. 1995. “Fiscal Effects of the Voter Initiative: Evidence from the Last 30 Years.” *Journal of Political Economy* 103: 587-623.
- Lascher, Edward L. Jr., Hagen, Michael G., and Rochlin, Steven A. 1996. “Gun Behind the Door? Ballot Initiatives, State Policies and Public Opinion.” *Journal of Politics* 58:760-775.
- Gerber, Elisabeth R. 1996. “Legislative Response to the Threat of Popular Initiatives.” *American Journal of Political Science* 40, 99-128.
- Dyck, Joshua J. 2009. “Political Distrust and Conservative Voting in Ballot Measure Elections” *Political Research Quarterly* (forthcoming–available online)
- Nicholson, Stephen P. 2003. “The Political Environment and Ballot Proposition Awareness.” *American Journal of Political Science* 47:403-410.

Recommended:

- Camobreco, John F. 1998. “Preferences, Fiscal Policies, and the Initiative Process.” *Journal of Politics* 60: 3: 819-829.
- Matsusaka, John G. 2001. “Problems with a Methodology Used to Evaluate the Voter Initiative.” *Journal of Politics* 63: 4: 1250-1256.
- Hagen, Michael G., Lascher, Edward L. Jr., Camobreco, John F. 2001. “Response to Matsusaka: Estimating the Effect of Ballot Initiatives on Policy Responsiveness.” *Journal of Politics* 63: 1257-1263.
- Key, V.O. and Winston W. Crouch. 1939. *The Initiative and Referendum in California*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Magleby, David B. 1984. *Direct Legislation: Voting on Ballot Propositions in the United States*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

**Week 9 (10/26) Direct Democracy – Secondary Effects**

- Boehmke, Frederick J. 2002. “The Effect of Direct Democracy on the Size and Diversity of State Interest Group Populations.” *Journal of Politics* 64:827-.

- Bowler, Shaun and Todd Donovan. "Democracy, Institutions and Attitudes about Citizen Influence on Government." *British Journal of Political Science* 32: 371-90.
- Dyck, Joshua J. and Edward L. Lascher, Jr. 2009. "Direct Democracy and Political Efficacy, Reconsidered." *Political Behavior* 31:401-27.
- Tolbert, Caroline J., and Daniel A. Smith. 2005. "The Educative Effects of Ballot Initiatives on Voter Turnout." *American Politics Research* 33:283-309.
- Dyck, Joshua J. 2009. "Initiated Distrust: Direct Democracy and Trust in Government." *American Politics Research* 37:539-68.
- Smith, Mark A. 2002. "Ballot Initiatives and the Democratic Citizen." *Journal of Politics* 64:892-903.

Recommended:

- Gamble, Barbara. 1997. "Putting Civil Rights to a Popular Vote." *American Journal of Political Science* 41:245-69.
- Hajnal, Zoltan, Elisabeth Gerber and Hugh Louch. 2002. "Minorities and Direct Legislation: Evidence from California's Ballot Proposition Elections." *The Journal of Politics* 64: 154-77.
- Tolbert, Caroline J., and Rodney E. Hero. 1996. "Race/Ethnicity and Direct Democracy: An Analysis of California's Illegal Immigration Initiative." *Journal of Politics*. 58:806-818.
- Bowler, Shaun, Stephen P. Nicholson and Gary M. Segura. 2006. "Earthquakes and Aftershocks: Race, Direct Democracy, and Partisan Change." *American Journal of Political Science* 50:146-159.

**Week 8 (11/2) Political Parties**

**Revised Project Outline is Due**

Articles:

- Aldrich, John H. 2000. "Presidential Address: Southern Parties in State and Nation." *Journal of Politics* 62:643-70.
- Patterson, Samuel C. and Gregory A. Caldeira. 1984. "The Etiology of Partisan Competition." *American Political Science Review* 78: 691-707.
- Barilleaux, Charles. 1986. "A Dynamic Model of Partisan Competition in the American States." *American Journal of Political Science* 30: 822-840.
- Holbrook, Thomas M., and Emily Van Dunk. 1993. "Electoral Competition in the American States." *American Political Science Review* 87:955-962.
- Smith, Mark A. 1997. "The Nature of Party Governance: Connecting Conceptualization and Measurement." *American Journal of Political Science* 41:1042-1956.
- Gibson, James L., Cornelius P. Cotter, John F. Bibby, and Robert J. Huckshorn. 1983. "Assessing Party Organizational Strength." *American Journal of Political Science* 27:193-222.

- Morehouse, Sarah and Malcom Jewell. 2004. "States as Laboratories: A reprise." *Annual Review of Political Science* 7:177-203. (re-read)

Recommended:

- Tucker, Harvey J. 1982. "Interparty Competition in the American States: One More Time." *American Politics Quarterly* 10: 93-116.
- Key, V.O. Jr. 1949. *Southern Politics*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Bianco, William T. and Itai Sened. 2006. "Uncovering Evidence of Conditional Party Government: Reassessing Majority Party Influence in Congress and State Legislatures." *American Political Science Review* 99:361-372.

**Week 9 (11/9) State Legislatures I**

**Assignment #2 is Due**

Squire, Peverill, and Keith Hamm. 2005. *101 Chambers: Congress, State Legislatures, and the Future of Legislative Studies*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press.

Articles:

- Moncrief, Gary, Joel A. Thompson, and William Cassie. 1996. "Revisiting the State of U.S. State Legislative Research." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 21:301-335.
- Clucas, Richard A. 2003. Improving the Harvest of State Legislative Research. *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* 3:387-419.

Recommended:

- Thomas, Sue. 1991. "The Impact of Women on State Legislative Policies." *Journal of Politics*. 53:958-975.
- Sanbonmatsu, Kira. 2002. Political parties and the Recruitment of Women to State Legislatures. *Journal of Politics* 64 (3):791.
- Hedge, David, James Button, and Mary Spear. 1996. "Accounting for the Quality of Black Legislative Life: The View from the States." *American Journal of Political Science* 40:82-98.

**Week 10 (11/16) State Legislatures II**

Articles:

- Squire, Peverill. "Career Opportunities and Membership Stability in Legislatures" *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Feb., 1988), pp. 65-82.
- L. Marvin Overby, Thomas A. Kazez. "Outlying Committees in the Statehouse: An Examination of the Prevalence of Committee Outliers in State Legislatures" *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (Aug., 2000), pp. 701-728.
- Richard A. Clucas. "Principal-Agent Theory and the Power of State House Speakers." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (May, 2001), pp. 319-338

- Nancy Martorano. “Cohesion or Reciprocity? Majority Party Strength and Minority Party Procedural Rights in the Legislative Process. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Spring 2004): pp. 55–73
- Gerald C. Wright, Brian F. Schaffner. “The Influence of Party: Evidence from the State Legislatures.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 96, No. 2 (Jun., 2002), pp. 367-379
- Cherie Maestas. “Professional Legislatures and Ambitious Politicians: Policy Responsiveness of State Institutions.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Nov., 2000), pp. 663-690

**Week 13 (11/23) No Class**

**Week 14 (11/30) Other: Courts, Policy, Diffusion, Etc.**

**Assignment #3 is Due**

Articles:

- Walker, Jack L. 1969. “The Diffusion of Innovations Among the American States.” *American Political Science Review* 63:880-899.
- Berry, William D. and Brady Baybeck. 2005. “Using Geographic Information Systems to Study Interstate Competition.” *American Political Science Review* 99:505-19.
- Jacoby, William G. , and Sandra K. Schneider. 2001. “Variability in State Policy Priorities: An Empirical Analysis.” *Journal of Politics* 63:544.
- Chubb, John E. 1985. “The Political Economy of Federalism.” *American Political Science Review* 4: 994-1015
- Melinda Gann Hall. “Electoral Politics and Strategic Voting in State Supreme Courts Electoral Politics and Strategic Voting in State Supreme Courts.” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (May, 1992), pp. 427-446.
- Melinda Gann Hall. “State Supreme Courts in American Democracy: Probing the Myths of Judicial Reform.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 95, No. 2 (Jun., 2001), pp. 315-330.

**Week 15 (12/7) Research Roundtable**

**Final Paper Due at 4:00pm on Friday, 12/11**