

GOVT 321: City Politics and Policy

New Mexico State University
Department of Government

Spring 2012 Course Syllabus

Time: M W F 12:30 - 1:20 (Breland 179)

Instructor: Daniel Scheller, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: M 1:30 - 3:00; R 4:00 - 5:30,

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and by appointment

Course Description

This course provides a theoretical and applied approach to the study of urban politics within the American democratic system. Urban politics can be seen as the political science contribution to the field of urban studies, which is an interdisciplinary undertaking of enormous breadth and depth. This field incorporates many approaches to the study of innumerable aspects of cities, suburbs, and urbanization. We will use ideas and theories in political science, economics, sociology, urban planning, etc. to analyze ideas and issues in urban politics. Students of political science are taught to think of local politics and local government as inferior to the politics and government of provinces, countries, world-regions, and the earth as a whole. However, the earth as a whole is now dominated by a system of cities, within which governments, businesses and a myriad of other organizations and movements operate. The city provides yet another unit of analysis for researchers to test generalizable theories.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand theories of urban politics offered by the academic community.
- Understand the daily operations and applications of various urban institutions and its actors through readings, discussion, and simulations.
- Critically evaluate theories of urban politics in light of observations of practitioners, and vice versa.
- Understand current issues and problems in urban politics.

Required Texts

Vogel, Ronald K., and John J. Harrigan. 2007. *Political Change in the Metropolis*. 8th ed. New York: Pearson-Longman.

Woodworth, James R., W. Robert Gump, and James R. Forrester. 2006. *Camelot: A Role-Playing Simulation of Political Decision Making*. 5th ed. Thomson-Wadsworth.

All readings, exams, and assignments will be based upon the indicated edition of this text. There is no guarantee that older editions will contain the same information.

Other readings will be located online.

Course Requirements

1. Homework (200 pts.): Homework assignments will be given periodically throughout the semester (4 assignments X 50 pts. per assignment). Assignments will be composed of short answer questions or an essay question based upon a prompt. One assignment will be short answer; two assignments will be essays; one assignment will be an evaluation of the simulation on the date of the Final. The 2 essay prompts should be 1.5 pages, double-spaced.

2. Exams (300 pts.): Three exams will be given throughout the semester. Each exam is worth 100 points (3 exams X 100 pts. per exam). Exams will be composed of multiple choice questions (bring scantron) and are not cumulative.

3. Quizzes (50 points): There will be 12 pop quizzes over the readings throughout the semester. Each quiz is worth 5 points. They will be multiple-choice. I will drop your 2 lowest quiz grades.

4. Simulation (50 points): The simulation will be conducted over 10 days (including the Final). You will receive 5 pts. for each day that you attend the simulation.

Grade Components

Homework	200
Exams	300
Quizzes	50
Simulation	50
Total	600

Grading Scale

A+	= 97% - 100%	(582-600)
A	= 93% - 96.99%	(558-581)
A-	= 90% - 92.99%	(540-557)
B+	= 87% - 89.99%	(522-539)
B	= 83% - 86.99%	(498-521)
B-	= 80% - 82.99%	(480-497)
C+	= 77% - 79.99%	(462-479)
C	= 73% - 76.99%	(438-461)
C-	= 70% - 72.99%	(420-437)
D+	= 67% - 69.99%	(402-419)
D	= 63% - 66.99%	(378-401)
D-	= 60% - 62.99%	(360-377)
F	= <60%	(<360)

Students taking the course with the S/U option must earn a C- to earn a Satisfactory grade.

Course Expectations & Policies

Courtesy

Comments and language in class should be professional and courteous. Cell phones are annoying and distracting. Please put them away or have them on vibrate for emergencies. Please arrive on time and refrain from leaving class early. These actions are distracting to the instructor and students.

Assignment Submissions

All assignments and other course material must be turned in to me in hard-copy form or through Blackboard. I no longer accept emailed assignments and strongly prefer you to turn them in to me during class. If you are ill or cannot make the class on the date an assignment is due, you must make arrangements with a classmate to have the hard-copy delivered to me. I make no guarantees that assignments submitted to my office mailbox or assignments slid under my door are actually delivered to me. It is your responsibility to ensure that I receive your materials. Assignments turned in through Blackboard will not be given extensions or forgiveness for tardiness in the event of internet, Blackboard, and/or power outages. I strongly urge you to turn in the assignments in hard-copy form.

Late Work Policy & Make-Up Exams and Assignments

Since you have ample notice of the due dates of the assignments and their requirements, no extensions will be given for assignments, regardless of excuse. Materials turned in after the indicated due date and time will automatically receive a 20% deduction. Late work will receive an additional 20% deduction for each additional 24 hours that pass in which the assignment is not turned in. I make no guarantees that late work submitted to my office mailbox or assignments slid under my door are actually delivered to me. It is your responsibility to ensure that I receive your materials.

Make-up exams will only be given for the most extenuating circumstances (severe illness, death in immediate family, official university business, jury duty, etc.). I must be informed within 24 hours of the exam date/time for you to be allowed to have a make-up exam. You must provide documentation of the circumstance, and you will not be allowed to take the make-up exam until you have provided documentation that clearly indicates that you were unable to be in class on the exam's date and time.

The date and time of the final exam has been set in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by the university. You should make your travel plans so that they do not conflict with your final exam schedule for your courses. Students will not be allowed to take the exam early or late because they have booked travel plans.

No make-up quizzes will be given.

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be given based upon attendance prior to the simulation. You must be in class when attendance is taken, no exceptions. If you leave class early, you will be counted as absent. Extra Credit will be awarded based upon classes missed:

0-1 = 15 pts.

2 = 10 pts.

3 = 5 pts.

Incompletes

Incomplete grades will not be given except for the most extenuating circumstances. I reserve the right to determine what constitutes an extenuating circumstance in determining whether or not to grant an Incomplete grade.

Student Privacy

Per regulations outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), I will not discuss your grades, class performance, or any issues dealing with your personal circumstances as they relate to this course with another party that cannot legally access your your collegiate records or legally obtain such information. I will not field phone calls from your parents concerning your performance or circumstances related to this course. Your performance may be discussed with other members of the faculty as it pertains to your progress in the program, consideration for awards/funding, and as it is relevant to other university and department-related considerations.

Academic Misconduct

These excerpts are taken from the NMSU Student Handbook:

Any student found guilty of academic misconduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:

1. *Cheating or knowingly assisting another student in committing an act of cheating or other forms of academic dishonesty.*

2. *Plagiarism is using another person's work without acknowledgment, making it appear to be one's own. Any ideas, words, pictures, or other source must be acknowledged in a citation that gives credit to the source. This is true no matter where the material comes from, including the internet, other student's work, unpublished materials, or oral sources. Intentional and unintentional instances of plagiarism are considered instances of academic misconduct. It is the responsibility of the student submitting the work in question to know, understand, and comply with this policy. If no citation is given, then borrowing any of the following would be an example of plagiarism: a) An idea or opinion, even when put into one's own words (paraphrase); b) A few well-said words, if these are a unique insight; c) Many words, even if one changes most of them; d) Materials assembled by others, for instance quotes or a bibliography; e) An argument; f) A pattern of idea; g) Graphs, pictures, or other illustrations; h) Facts; i) All or part of an existing paper or other resource.*

This list is not meant to include all possible examples of plagiarism. See the University Library's web page on plagiarism for further examples. It is your responsibility as a student to understand the university's guidelines concerning plagiarism. I reserve the right to use plagiarism-detection software with any of your submitted work..

3. Unauthorized possession of examinations, reserve library materials, laboratory materials, or other course-related materials.

4. Unauthorized changing of grades on an examination, in an instructor's grade book, or on a grade report; or unauthorized access to academic computer records.

5. Nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records in, or for, academic departments or colleges.

The current Student Code of Conduct definition of plagiarism can be found at:
<http://www.nmsu.edu/vpsa/SCOC/misconduct.html>

Student Disability Services

If you have, or believe you have a disability, you may contact the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Office located in Corbett Center, Room 244, 575-646-6840, or email sas@nmsu.edu. Appropriate accommodations may then be provided for you. All medical information will be treated confidentially. If you have a condition which may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency during class, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the Director of University Disability Services/ADA Coordinator, Diana Quintana, at the SAS Office. Questions regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the American with Disabilities Amendment Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 should be directed to the SAS Office.

Questions regarding NMSU's Non-discrimination Policy and discrimination complaints should be referred to Gerard Nevarez, Office of Institutional Equity, 575-646-3635

Syllabus Change Policy

The contents of this course syllabus are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

Course Schedule

Jan. 20: Introduction to Course

Jan. 23: Introduction to Urban Politics

-V&H: Ch. 1. pp. 3-16.

Jan. 25: Introduction to Urban Politics

-V&H: Ch. 1. pp. 16-29.

Jan. 27: Introduction to Camelot

-WGF: Ch. 1. pp. 9-11.

Jan. 30: The Emergence of Metropolitan America

-V&H: Ch. 2. pp. 35-42.

**Feb. 1: The Emergence of Metropolitan America
Homework 1 Due**

-V&H: Ch. 2. pp. 42-55.

Feb. 3: The Emergence of Metropolitan America

-V&H: Ch. 2. pp. 55-66.

Feb. 6: Immigration

-V&H: Ch. 3. pp. 71-86.

Feb. 8: Machine Politics

-V&H: Ch. 4. pp. 89-96; 101-106.

Feb. 10: Racial Politics

-V&H: Ch. 5. pp. 115-123.

Feb. 13: Exam 1

Feb. 15: Racial Politics

-V&H: Ch. 5. pp. 130-142; 146-150.

Feb. 17: Urban Politics in Film

-No Readings

Feb. 20: Who Governs?

WGF: Ch. 2. pp. 12-23.

Feb 22: Who Governs?

-V&H: Ch. 7. pp. 193-200.

-WGF: Ch. 5. pp. 48-53.

Feb. 24: Mayors

Homework 2 (Essay) Due.

-V&H: Ch. 7. pp. 211-215.

Feb. 27: Forms of Local Government

-V&H: Ch. 4. pp. 96-101.

-WGF: Ch. 7. pp. 68-78.

Feb. 29: Democracy in City Hall

-WGF: Ch. 6. pp. 54-67.

Mar. 2: Issues in Urban Politics: Transportation

-No Reading.

Mar. 5: Legal Powers of Cities

-WGF: Ch. 3. pp. 24-35.

Mar. 7: Exam 2

Mar. 9: Government Revenues

-WGF: Ch. 4. pp. 36-47.

Mar. 12: Consolidation v. Fragmentation

-V&H: Ch. 9. pp. 263-276.

Mar. 14: Consolidation v. Fragmentation

-V&H: Ch. 9. pp. 276-293.

Mar. 16: Issues in Urban Politics: Education

-No Reading.

Mar. 19-23: Spring Break - No Class

Mar. 26: Economic Development

-V&H: Ch. 6. pp. 160-181.

Mar. 28: Economic Development

-V&H: Ch. 6. pp. 181-190.

Mar. 30: Urban Sprawl

-V&H: Ch. 8. pp. 233-244.

Apr. 2: Urban Sprawl & Housing

-V&H: Ch. 8. pp. 244-259.

Apr. 4: Urban Design

Homework 3 (Essay) Due.

-WGF: Ch. 8. pp. 79-84.

Apr. 6: No Class

Apr. 9: Preparing for Camelot

-WGF: pp. 85-90; 174-194.

Apr. 11: Exam 3

Apr. 13: Simulation

Apr. 16: Simulation

Apr. 18: Simulation - TA will proctor

Apr. 20: Urban Affairs Conference - No Class

Apr. 23: Simulation

Apr. 25: Simulation

Apr. 27: Simulation

Apr. 30: Simulation

May 2: Simulation

May 4: Simulation

May 11: Simulation
Homework 4 due (in-class assignment)

Important Dates

Feb. 1: Homework 1 Due

Feb. 3: Last day to Drop

Feb. 13: Exam 1

Feb. 24: Homework 2 Due

Mar. 7: Exam 2

Mar. 12: Last Day to Drop with W

Apr. 4: Homework 3 Due

Apr. 11: Exam 3

May 11: Final (in-class assignment - Homework 4)