Course Description:
Despite the lack of attention they receive from the media and even from their own constituents, state and local governments play a pivotal and crucial role in the daily lives of all Americans. State and local governments provide a lion's share of the services Americans have come to depend upon, from roads, education, law creation, law enforcement, fire protection, aid for the unemployed, insurance for those with low incomes, legal procedures and due process, electricity, and water, to other basic public resources. This course examines how institutional and cultural variations in state and local governments influence how they interact with their constituents, with the federal government, and with each other.

Students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least 4 hours a week engaged in independent learning (e.g., reading, studying, writing, researching) in addition to the 1 hour and 50 minutes of weekly in-class learning.

Course Requirements:
Reading Quizzes: Students will take 5 reading quizzes throughout the course. Each quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions based on the readings and in-class lectures that have occurred since the previous reading quiz. Each quiz will represent 5% of the student's final grade, with the lowest reading quiz score dropped (4 x 5% = 20%). As I am generously dropping the lowest quiz score, I will not offer a makeup quiz except in extreme cases where the student has a valid and fully documented excuse.

Paper: Students will write one research paper. The research paper (~15 pages) will be on a public policy largely of the student's choosing currently being addressed through state and/or local political systems. It is recommended that students use some or all of the following websites to keep current on the policies and policy areas that state and local governments regulate as they decide on their paper topic: Stateline (www.pewtrusts.org/stateline), Governing (www.governing.com), Ballotpedia (https://ballotpedia.org), and Route Fifty (www.routefifty.com). Further guidelines will be distributed in class and on Blackboard.

Exams: Students will take comprehensive midterm and final exams, which will consist of multiple choice and short- and long-essay questions. The exams will be in-class and closed book. If a student is unable to take the midterm and/or final exams, the student must inform me prior to the exam to schedule a make-up. If a student is unable to take the exam the day of the exam, s/he needs to contact me immediately or receive a grade of zero.

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I reserve the right to modify the syllabus as needed.
Grading Rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Date/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Multiple Class Days (see Semester Schedule, below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>March 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>May 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>TBD (Probably May 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Letter grades for Undergraduate Students:

A = 92–100% (92–100 points)
A- = 90–91% (90–91 points)
B+ = 88–89% (88–89 points)
B = 82–87% (82–87 points)
B- = 80–81% (80–81 points)
C+ = 78–79% (78–79 points)
C = 72–77% (72–77 points)
C- = 70–71% (70–71 points)
D+ = 68–69% (68–69 points)
D = 62–67% (62–67 points)
D- = 60–61% (60–61 points)
F = below 59% (0–59 points)

Required Texts:
All required readings will be made available on Blackboard or handed out by the instructor.

Expectations of Students

1. Absences: I do not keep regular attendance, therefore there is no need to provide documentation when classes are missed unless there is a scheduled grading event (e.g., a reading quiz or final exam) for which you would like to attempt to take a make-up version to receive credit. The student will need to provide documentation from the health center, an outside health care provider, or other viable source in order to take a make-up version of the missed assignment. Additionally, the student needs to email me at least 48 hours before the next class date if he/she would like to take a make-up. Any student who does not have documentation and email me 48 hours prior to the next class period will not be permitted to take a makeup exam and will receive a zero for the missed assignment.

2. Late Work Policy: Late papers will be penalized 10% of the final assignment grade for each day tardy. Students CANNOT pass the course if they do not complete the paper.

3. Personal Responsibility: You are in charge of your education. If something is unclear to you, it is your responsibility to seek the answer in a timely manner.

4. Students with Disabilities: Any student who feels she/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the professor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Disability Support Services office at (202) 994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwi.re.gwu.edu/dss/.

5. Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and cheating are unacceptable. Students unfamiliar with GWU’s definitions and policies regarding academic integrity should see the Student Code of Academic Integrity: http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity. Instances of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized multiple
submissions or complicity in cheating or plagiarism) will result in failure of the course.

6. **Writing Skills:** All writing assignments are expected to be well written in keeping with GWU’s objective that students demonstrate the ability to write clearly and persuasively, and will be assessed accordingly. I recommend GWU’s Writing Center: [http://www.gwu.edu/~gwriter/](http://www.gwu.edu/~gwriter/).

## Semester Schedule

### Course Segments
1. Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations
2. The Geography of U.S. Politics
3. The Political Machines, the Progressives, and U.S. Elections
4. State and Local Political Institutions
5. Urban Policy Problems—The Creation of the Inner City Ghettos

### Week 1
**Tuesday, January 16**
- Introductions, reviewing syllabus, The Importance of State and Local Politics

### Segment 1: Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations

### Week 2
**Tuesday, January 23**

### Segment 2: The Geography of U.S. Politics

### Week 3
**Tuesday, January 30**
- Reading Quiz # 1—Readings and Class Notes for January 16 and January 23
Week 4
Tuesday, February 6
- No Class (Tentative)

Week 5
Tuesday, February 13

Segment 3: The Political Machines, the Progressives, and U.S. Elections
Week 6
Tuesday, February 20
- Reading Quiz #2—Readings and Class Notes for January 30 and February 13
- Discuss Research Paper

Week 7
Tuesday, February 27
- No Class (Tentative)
- Movie--Street Fight (to be watched in lieu of class)

Week 8
Tuesday, March 6
- Reading Quiz #3—Readings and Class Notes for February 20 and 27 and March 6

Week 9
Tuesday, March 13
- Spring Break—No Class

Week 10
Tuesday, March 20
- Midterm
Segment 4: State and Local Political Institutions

Week 11
Tuesday, March 27


Week 12
Tuesday, April 3


Segment 5: Urban Policy Problems—The Creation of the Inner City Ghettos

Week 13
Tuesday, April 10

- Reading Quiz # 4—Readings and Class Notes for March 27 and April 3

Week 14
Tuesday, April 17


Week 15
Tuesday, April 24

- Film—*The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* (to be watched outside of class)
- Reading Quiz # 5—Readings and Class Notes for April 10, 17, and 24
- Review for Final
Week 16

Tuesday, May 1

- No Class (Finals Week)
- Paper Due via BlackBoard

Week 16

TBD (Likely May 8)

- Final Exam (Likely 7:30-9:30)