

**POS 102: STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ANDERSON UNIVERSITY (SC)
SYLLABUS**

Instructor:

E-mail:

(instructor does not have an office phone; please use e-mail to contact)

COURSE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to introduce the student to sub-national politics and government in the United States. The primary focus will be on the structures, functions, and problems of contemporary state governments. The changing role of the states, relative to their sub-units (i.e., local governments) and to other states and the national government will also be examined.

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the role of sub-national governments in the American political system and in other democratic politics.
2. Evaluate the role of state government and politics within the American federal system.
3. Explain the impact of environmental factors (e.g., population change, economic development, etc.) on sub-national government in the U.S.
4. Comprehend the constitutional development of American state governments.
5. Evaluate the impact on state government of various political phenomena, such as parties, interest groups, media, and elite and mass behavior.
6. Explain the structure and operations of the major institutions state government (i.e., legislature, executive, bureaucracy, and judiciary).
7. Analyze the impact of budgetary policies, both national and state, on the operation and performance of state government.
8. Understand the content and political consequences of major state policy areas (such as education, criminal justice, economic development, and so on).

POLICIES: Students should understand that it this is a college course and will be taught at the freshman-sophomore college level.

This is an on-line class. Students must work within the AU Canvas learning platform. Everything that pertains to this course and your grade will be conducted on-line. This class meets for one-half of Fall semester, for seven weeks, which means that we will move fast. It is absolutely imperative that students keep up with reading, discussion, and exam assignments.

Do not cheat or plagiarize. Students are referred to the Anderson University academic integrity policy, further noted below.

Students are expected to stay current with course readings, to take part in class discussions, and to show due respect to others in the class.

GRADES: Final course grades will be based on:

four exams at 20% each (80% total)
interactive discussions at 20% total
optional extra credit research paper (could add between 1 and 10 points to final average)
Grade scale: A (90-100); B (80-89); C (70-79); D (60-69); F (below 60)

For each course module, there will be issues for interactive discussion posted on the website by your professor. Each student is expected to post an original response in answer to the post, and also to respond to posts by at least two other students. The original post should be at least two good paragraphs in length, and each response at least one paragraph in length. Posts will be graded on the grounds of how well they answer the posted questions and how well the responses deal with the comments made by classmates. Substantive quality is the primary concern in grading. All posts are to be supported by fact, reason, and reasoned opinion. Responses must be courteous and respectful, even in disagreement; failure to follow this mandate will result in grading penalties for this segment of the course.

All exams will be primarily objective (i.e., multiple choice) in nature, but the professor reserves the right to include one or more discussion questions. The first three exams will each cover two modules. The fourth exam will focus on the seventh module, but will also contain some questions that relate to the whole course. The professor will post information about the material that will be covered on that fourth exam.

An optional extra-credit **research paper of approximately 5 pages of content in length can be submitted. It should be on a topic related to the subject matter contained** in the course. You must clear your topic with the instructor prior to submitting it. The paper is to be double-spaced, and prepared in accordance with the APA format. Proper citations are mandatory. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in the failure of the project, as well as applicable disciplinary actions (see the academic catalog and the student handbook).

REQUIRED TEXT: See Canvas

Students are expected to read a good news media source with national coverage on a regular basis. I recommend politico.com and realclearpolitics.com, all of which have free content. The best newspaper for governmental coverage is The Washington Post, but after one reads a limited number of free articles, the rest of its content is behind a paywall. Another option is USA Today, which provides its content on-line without charge. For coverage of South Carolina government, The State, based in Columbia, probably offers the best coverage.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS FROM THE TEXT (chapters and pages in *Governing States and Localities*, cited below as *GSL*; additional readings may also be assigned):

See Canvas

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Given the nature of an on-line course, the student must find a considerable degree of self-motivation. There will be no in-class, regularly scheduled sessions. Instead, readings from the text and, occasionally, from other sources are required. The text is challenging, so detailed chapter summaries are posted for each chapter. Keep in mind also that the course is being taught during one-half of a semester's regular calendar, which means that the pace will be fast. You must keep up.

INSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

We will be covering fourteen chapters in the book. There are seven weeks for instruction in the term. Not surprisingly, therefore, in each of the modules the student will be required to read two chapters and to respond typically to two interactive discussion posts. Once each module's chapter summaries are opened, they will then remain open through the remainder of the term. Typically there will be additional sources attached in each module as supplemental materials. Unless otherwise noted, these materials will not be specifically covered on the exams and are instead offered to provide more context. Exams will open at midnight on the day designated and close at 11:59 p.m., as designated. In other words, you will have nearly two full days to schedule each exam, which should take approximately one hour to complete.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

This course adheres to the Anderson University Academic and Honesty and Dishonesty Policy: Students are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. The university faculty's expectations define the following areas that would violate academic honesty; plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, and academic misconduct. The policy, process, and penalties for academic dishonesty are described in the student handbook. (p.285 excerpt from Academic Catalog). No student will be permitted to submit for credit papers previously or currently written in this class or any other class. Papers submitted under the above conditions will result in a zero for assignment(s). No student will be exempt from any examination or group presentation without instructor's written approval.

ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

Given Anderson University's mission, academic honesty is not only expected, it is demanded. It is expected that all work submitted by the student will be the product of the student's diligent and ethical efforts. On each test, the final, and the research paper, the student must include the following pledge: "Upon my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid."

DISABILITIES AND ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

If you have a disability that interfere with your learning, testing, or assignment completion in this course, you may be eligible to receive an academic adjustment to help provide you with an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from this course. Please contact Dr. Dianne King, Director of the Center for Student Success, who will advise you on appropriate documentation, determine reasonable adjustments, and notify me of any adjustments for which you are eligible. Once you have been approved for an academic adjustment through the Center for Student Success, please discuss with me its appropriate implementation in this course. Documentation must meet the guidelines specified by university policy, and no one else can be notified of your disability or adjustment without your written consent. This process must be repeated for every semester you are enrolled at Anderson University and wish to receive an adjustment. Academic adjustments are intended to “level the playing field” so that students with disabilities can demonstrate their true abilities in their courses. Changes cannot be made to grades earned before a student has requested an adjustment, so please attend to this early in the semester.

ANDERSON UNIVERSITY'S MISSION AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

Anderson University is an academic community, affiliated with the South Carolina Baptist Convention, providing a challenging education grounded in the liberal arts, enhanced by professional and graduate programs and a co-curricular focus on the development of character, servant leadership, and cultural engagement. This is a diverse community that is Christ-centered, people-focused, student-oriented, quality-driven, and future-directed.

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ANDERSON UNIVERSITY'S VISION STATEMENT

To be a premier teaching university where liberal arts and professional studies thrive within a distinctively Christian community of faculty, staff and students dedicated to learning and service.

ANDERSON UNIVERSITY'S VALUES

Commitment to a Christian Community
Commitment to Liberal Arts
Commitment to the Individual
Commitment to Students

Commitment to a Diverse Student Body
Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement
Commitment to the Future
Commitment to Servant Leadership