State and Local Politics
PSI 323 – 3 credits
Doane College
12WIN1

Course Description:

An analysis of political processes and behavior in state, metropolitan and local governments. Required for Public Administration majors. Fulfills one Doane Plan Contemporary Issues requirement or one Doane Plan Liberal Learning requirement for everyone except Public Administration majors.

Instructor:
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cindy.johnson@doane.edu

Textbook Materials:

Course Objectives:
The student, after completing the course instruction, should have a heightened awareness of the following subject materials:

1) The structure of political institutions within Nebraska state and local subdivisions.
2) The legislative process concerning city ordinances and state statutes.
3) The executive, legislative, and judicial office functions within state government.
4) The political process as it relates to campaigns and policy decisions in Nebraska.
5) Economic and financial issues pertaining to state and local government.

Assessment of Student Performance and Grading:
Students will be able to obtain a total of 300 points from assignments, discussions and examinations conducted during the course. The number of points that a student will be able to earn is as follows:
Final Exam 100
Midterm 100
Government Meeting Report 25
Analysis/Project 75

**Summary of Examinations and Assignments:**

**Final Examination:** A final exam may consist of essays, multiple choice and short answer questions that will cover the entire content of the course.

**Midterm Examination:** this exam will consist of essays, multiple choice and short answer questions that will cover the first half of the course.

**Government Meeting Report:** Each student will attend or view a meeting of a local or state entity and provide an oral report on the meeting’s activities. The report is NOT a summary of a media report (ie newspaper article, on line article, television story, etc.).

**State and Local Government Analysis/Project:** Each student will complete a written review and analysis on 1) local political issue; 2) state political issue; 3) specific piece of legislation before the Nebraska Legislature; or 4) another topic approved by instructor.

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance:** Student attendance at all class meetings is expected. If a student will be unable to attend a class meeting, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor and perform any necessary makeup or additional assignments given to the student by the instructor. Students should obtain class notes from a fellow classmate, and the absent student is responsible for all material covered on the day of the absence. Two or more unexcused absences may result in a failing grade.

**Grading Scale:** The grading scale is based on a nine-point, A, B, C, D, F scale as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100-96</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-85</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>84-80</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>79-75</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>74-70</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>69-65</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>64-60</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59-below</td>
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**Late Assignments:** Assignments that are turned in late during the course are downgraded by one letter grade. For each additional week the assignment is late, an additional letter grade is reduced off the original score given. All assignments must be completed and handed in by March 12 to receive any credit.

**Academic Integrity:** The Doane College Academic Integrity Policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and tests will represent your own work. Any use of others’ ideas and words without proper citation of sources is plagiarism and will result in penalties to be determined by the instructor and/or the dean of graduate studies.

**Format of Writings:** It is required that all writing assignments to be completed outside of class be typed, double spaced, with one-inch margins and using a font no larger than 12 pt. in Times New Roman, Arial or Courier. If you have any questions regarding this requirement, please contact your instructor.

**Course Schedule and Readings:**

(Government meeting reports will be shared each week.)

**Week 1**
October 22  Chapters 1 and 2

**Week 2**
October 29  Chapters 3-5
Relevant article review and discussion

**Week 3**
November 5  Chapters 6-8
Election discussion and analysis
Review for Mid-term

**Week 4**
November 12  Mid-term
Chapters 9-11

**Week 5**
November 19  Chapters 12-14
Analysis/Project Reports

**Week 6**
November 26  Chapters 15-17
Analysis/Project Reports

**Week 7**
December 3  Review for Final Exam
Analysis/Project Reports

**Week 8**  Final Exam
December 10