

**PSCI 260: Introduction to State & Local Government (Section: 001)**  
**Spring 2019**  
**MWF 11:40 a.m. – 12:40 p.m., LA 313**  
**Department of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies**  
**Montana State University Billings**

Instructor: Dr. Jason M. Adkins

Office: LA 816

Email: jason.adkins1@msubillings.edu

Phone: (406) 657-2933

Office Hours: MWF 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., TR 9 a.m. – 10:20 a.m., or by appointment

### **Course Description**

While the federal government captures most of the public's attention, especially while we are in the midst of a partial shutdown, most of our interactions with government occur at the state and local levels. State government provides most funding for local schools, provides funding for state highways, and regulates many industries. County government administers welfare programs, health regulations, and operates local jails. City government makes sure the street lights work, collects garbage, provides water and sewer services, and provides police and fire protection. School districts are their own government entities that have power to tax citizens and operate local schools. Much of the services government provides, though, are intertwined among different levels of government, and you will learn how state and local government operates during the course.

### **Course Objectives**

This course satisfies three credits of the university's Social and History General Education requirements. The goals of the course include:

1. Introducing students to the American system federalism, the relationships between the different levels of government, how state and local government are organized to perform an array of functions and,
2. Challenging students to think critically about the American system of government as the basis for further study.

### **Textbooks and other readings**

Gray, Virginia H., Russell L. Hanson, and Thad Kousser. *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*. 11<sup>th</sup> edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-5063-6362-2. **Required**

Other readings will be posted on D2L.

### **Grading**

Two midterm exams: 30% (15% each)

Final exam: 20%

Federalism analysis paper: 15%  
Government meeting summary: 10%  
Reading quizzes: 10%  
Participation: 15%

**Final grade scale:** A = 93% and above, A- = 90%-93%, B+ = 87%-89%, B = 83%-86%, B- = 80%-82%, C+ = 77%-79%, C = 73%-76%, C- = 70%-72%, D+ = 67%-69%, D = 60%-66%, F = 59% and below (Note: I do not round up final grades if you are just below the cutoff, such as having a 92.8%. I have to define the scale at some point, and some people are always going to fall on the other side of the divide. Do not beg to be bumped up. If you have any concerns about grades for individual assignments, please see me. I do have a 48-hour “cooling off” policy and you have to see me about any grade appeals within a week of me grading an assignment. If you appeal, you need to write a 2-3 paragraph summary of why you think the grade you received does not reflect your work).

*Exams (Two midterms at 15% each and final exam worth 20%):* Three exams will be administered during the semester. The final exam is cumulative. Exams consist of multiple-choice and essay questions. If you miss an exam, you can take a make-up exam during University Day (Friday, Apr. 29). Unfortunately, I will not allow more than one make-up exam unless both absences are due to university sponsored events such as athletics or conferences.

*Federalism analysis paper (15%):* You will write a 7-8 page paper outlining how both state and local governments address an issue of your choice. More details will be posted in D2L. A one-page proposal will be due Friday, March 15, that is worth 5 percent of your paper grade. An annotated bibliography will be due Friday, April 5, that is worth 10 percent of your paper grade. Final papers are due by the end of the day Wednesday, April 24.

*Government meeting summary (5%):* You will need to attend both city council and a school board meeting during the semester. You will need to write a 2-3 page summary of each meeting addressing the major topics covered, any controversial issues discussed, and your thoughts on the process as a whole. You will also need to provide a hard copy of the minutes of the meeting. If you participate in the State Capitol field trip on Tuesday, March 12, you can write a 4-page summary of the day, including what you did, who you met, what you learned, and what would you like to do if you could visit next time. A hard copy of your paper and minutes must be handed in class by Friday, April 12, as well as a copy of your summary uploaded to D2L that same day.

*Reading quizzes (10%):* I will give pop quizzes throughout the semester based on that day’s readings. Quizzes will be multiple-choice and are designed to test whether you read the material, as reading beforehand helps generate good discussion. As each individual quiz is worth little to your overall grade, quizzes cannot be made up.

*Participation (10%):* While this is an intro class where I will lecture frequently, class participation is essential to your learning, and also because you do not want me to drone on for an hour (My wife will attest to that!). Since I assume you have read the material since there are reading quizzes, everyone should be prepared to contribute. I am not looking for the right answer when I look for responses. I am also looking to move along the conversation a bit and help flesh out any questions. I will call on everyone at some point during the semester, so be prepared to

answer questions and offer your thoughts. There will be times when we get to debate issues. If you miss more than six classes with unexcused absences, you lose half of your participation points. If you are absent due to university sponsored events, you will need to email me a 1-2 page reaction to the readings with questions before class.

**Grading notes:** Proper spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure will be assessed as part of your exam and paper grades. Developing the ability to write clearly is an important skill for your future careers. You are expected to carefully read, edit, and proofread their written work. If you would like help with your writing skills, there are on-campus resources that are there to help you. The university offers help in various subjects through the Academic Support Center. Assistance is free and is available in the Student Union Building. Drop-in writing help is available from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Monday-Thursday.

### **Laptop/Cell Phone Policy**

I understand many of you use your computers and tablets to take notes. If you do so, you will need to choose a seat along the walls so your screens will not be distracting to others. I do not allow cell phones in class, so if you need to text, please step out for a moment (but don't make it a habit). I will stop class and wait if I see any texting.

### **Email etiquette**

I try to answer emails the same day they are received, but in some cases, you may have to wait 48 hours for a response. For emails, please use an appropriate subject and appropriate salutations (e.g. Dr. Adkins or Prof. Adkins). Professors do not like it when you start with "Hey!" or "Yo!" Keep emails as short as possible and please do not email about the details of an assignment on the day it is due. I hold five office hours per week and am available by appointment outside of those hours and my other classes if needed.

### **Assignment and late work policy**

All papers should use 12-point Times New Roman font, be double-spaced, and use 1-inch margins. You may use APA or Chicago (parenthetical) Style for your citations. All assignments must be turned in on D2L unless noted. No exceptions will be made. All assignments must be in a Word file (.doc or .docx). Any other file format such as .pdf, .rtf, or Apple Pages will not be accepted and returned with a zero. Google Docs and Pages can export to a Word format. Late work will be accepted. However, life happens. I allow **one** no-questions asked late pass good for a 48-hour extension on the paper assignments. You just need to email me if you need to use one. If you run into issues in completing assignments, visit me during office hours, especially 1-2 weeks before papers are due. Be proactive instead of reactive. I cannot do much to help once due dates have come and gone.

### **Registration Requirement**

University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Please confirm enrollment in MyInfo. Registration errors must be corrected prior to university deadlines. After the deadline

for withdrawing for the class without instructor permission, I will only give permission to those who experience a documented emergency such as serious illness or death in the family that occurs after the deadline.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Honesty**

Use of the intellectual property of others without attributing it to them is considered a serious academic offense. I will either give a zero for an assignment or you will fail the course if I detect academic misconduct. It can also lead to a disciplinary hearing where sanctions can suspension or expulsion from the university. I report **all** instances of plagiarism to Student Affairs. The university’s policy on academic misconduct can be found in Section B of the student handbook. I will provide links to how to avoid plagiarism on D2L. I am available to help. However, you are responsible for learning how to properly cite your sources and avoid plagiarism.

### **Student Accessibility**

MSU Billings is committed to providing equal access. If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that disability-related accommodations are necessary, please contact Disability Support Services (657-2283; located in Room 135 in the College of Education). We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

### **Class Schedule**

Readings will come from the textbook and other readings I may post on D2L. They will be organized in D2L by week. You should be prepared to discuss the assigned reading on the day listed below. I may make changes to the schedule as needed.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading/Assignments</b>
1	1/16	Intro/Syllabus	None
	1/18	<b>SPSA conference</b>	<b>No class</b> Syllabus quiz Thomas Birkland and Sarah Waterman, <i>Publius: The Journal of Federalism</i> , “Is Federalism the Reason for Policy Failure in Hurricane Katrina?” YouTube video, “Federalism and Speed Limits”
2	1/21	<b>MLK Jr. Birthday</b>	<b>No class</b>
	1/23	Socioeconomics of the states	Chapter 1, pgs. 1-13 Isaac Chotiner, Slate, “Rural Resentment How Scott Walker’s rise can explain Donald Trump’s” Trip Gabriel, NY Times, “50 Years Into the War on Poverty, Hardship Hits Back” Monica Duffy Toft, The Conversation, “White right? How demographics is changing US politics”

	1/25	Politics of the states	Chapter 1, pgs. 13-24 Kristen Soltis Anderson, Washington Examiner, “You can't explain our politics by talking about 'red states' and 'blue states'” Charles Lane, Washington Post, “Red America and blue America depend on each other. That’s how it should be”
3	1/28	Types of federalism	Chapter 2, pgs. 28-40 John Kincaid, The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, “From Cooperative to Coercive Federalism”
	1/30	State & local governments	Chapter 2, pgs. 40-55 Rebecca Beitsch, Pew Trusts, “The Shutdown Ended. Utah Wants Its Money Back” Dara Lina, Vox, “Sanctuary Cities explained”
	2/1	State & local parties	Chapter 3, pgs. 57-74 Thomas D. Elias, L.A. Daily News, “Leaders needed before state gets any new political party” Alan Greenblatt, Governing Magazine, “The Waning Power of State Political Parties”
4	2/4	State & local elections	Chapter 3, pgs. 74-92 Ely Portillo and Jim Morrill, Charlotte Observer, “Fight over NC 9th District election could drag on for months, with no one seated”
	2/6	Interest groups	Chapter 4, pgs. 99-108 Taylor W. Anderson and Benjamin Wood, Salt Lake Tribune, “LDS Church announces opposition to Utah medical marijuana initiative — but says it does not object to medical pot with proper safeguards” Michael Olove, Huffington Post, “This State Wanted To Expand Healthcare For The Poor. Big Tobacco Helped To Kill That Idea”
	2/8	Lobbying	Chapter 4, pgs. 108-121 Eve Byron, The Missoulian, “Missoula city, county hire lobbyists for session” Kit Norton and Felipe Rodrigues, <i>VT Digger</i> , “Health care industry injects big spending in Statehouse lobbying”

5	2/11	Public opinion	Chapter 5, pgs. 127-139 Jason M. Adkins, <i>Religion in Public</i> , “The LDS Church’s Waning Influence? Medical Marijuana in Utah Puts Leaders’ Influence Under Spotlight” Jeffrey R. Lax and Justin H. Phillips, <i>American Political Science Review</i> , “Gay Rights in the States: Public Opinion and Policy Responsiveness”
	2/13	Morality	Chapter 5, pgs. 139-153 Gregory Kenyota, <i>Fordham Intellectual Property, Media and Entertainment Law Journal</i> , “Thinking of the Children: The Failure of Violent Video Game Laws” Jeffrie G. Murphy, <i>Public Affairs Quarterly</i> , “Indian Casinos and the Morality of Gambling”
	2/15	Initiatives	Chapter 6, pgs. 158-172 Illana Cohen, <i>Harvard Political Review</i> , “The Power of Ballot Initiatives”
6	2/18	<b>President’s Day</b>	<b>No class</b>
	2/20	Initiatives	Chapter 6, pgs. 173-181 Edward L Lascher Jr., Michael G. Hagen, and Steven A. Rochlin, <i>Journal of Politics</i> , “Gun Behind the Door? Ballot Initiatives, State Policies and Public Opinion”
	2/22	<b>Exam #1</b>	
7	2/25	Legislative politics	Chapter 7, pgs. 187-200 Julianna Pacheco, “The Social Contagion Model: Exploring the Role of Public Opinion on the Diffusion of Antismoking Legislation across the American States” Peverill Squire, “Measuring State Legislative Professionalism: The Squire Index Revisited”
	2/27	Legislative politics	Chapter 7, pgs. 200-212 Daniel M. Butler and David E. Brookman, “Do Politicians Racially Discriminate Against Constituents? A Field Experiment on State Legislators” Daniel M. Butler and David W. Nickerson, “Can Learning Constituency Opinion Affect How Legislators Vote? Results from a Field Experiment”
	3/1	Legislative politics	Chapter 7, pgs. 212-227

			<p>Julia Bosman, Mitch Smith, and Monica Davey, NY Times, “Brownback Tax Cuts Set Off a Revolt by Kansas Republicans”</p> <p>Zoltan Hajnal and Jessica Trounstein, “Where Turnout Matters: The Consequences of Uneven Turnout in City Politics”</p>
	3/4 – 3/8	<b>Spring Break</b>	<b>No class</b>
8	3/11	Executive politics	<p>Chapter 8, pgs. 235-253</p> <p>Patrick Marley, Molly Beck, and Haley BeMiller, “Scott Walker signs lame-duck legislation without vetoes curbing his Democratic successor's power”</p> <p>Marina Villeneuve, Boston Globe, “Maine’s new governor now has to deal with LePage-related lawsuits”</p>
	3/13	Executive politics	<p>Chapter 8, pgs. 253-267</p> <p>Jim Dwyer, NY Times, “A Mayor, a Governor, and the Feud That Keeps New York Down”</p> <p>Gordon R. Friedman, The Oregonian, “2 years in, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler struggles with power, allies and promises”</p>
	3/15	Courts	<p>Chapter 9, pgs. 275-288</p> <p>Meagan Flynn, Washington Post, “West Virginia botches impeachment of chief justice. Faces constitutional crisis. Stay tuned”</p> <p>Christina Goldbaum, NY Times, “State Courts Become Battleground Over Trump’s Sanctuary Cities Policy”</p> <p><b>Federalism analysis proposal due</b></p>
9	3/18	Courts	<p>Chapter 9, pgs. 288-299</p> <p>Phoebe Tollefson, Billings Gazette, “Most Montanans don't have access to drug treatment courts, despite their effectiveness, report says”</p>
	3/20	Corrections policy	<p>Chapter 10</p> <p>Phil Drake, Great Falls Tribune, “State rejects offer over Shelby prison contract”</p> <p>German Lopez, Vox, “A federal report just confirmed it: for-profit prisons are more dangerous than public ones”</p>
	3/22	Fiscal policy	<p>Chapter 11, pgs. 332-346</p> <p>Corin Cates-Carney and Josh Burnham, Montana Public Radio, “What To Know</p>

			Before The 2019 Montana Legislature Begins” Editorial, Chicago Tribune, “Goodbye to Illinois’ \$130 billion pension hole. Now it’s \$133 billion. And getting deeper”
10	3/25	Fiscal policy	Chapter 11, pgs. 346-354 Mike Ferguson, Billings Gazette, “Billings City Council votes to approve near \$320M budget for 2019 fiscal year” Jennifer Medina, NY Times, “With Surplus in Hand, California Eyes Debt”
	3/27	Health & welfare	Chapter 12, pgs. 359-371 Julia Belluz, Vox, “We visited one of America's sickest counties. We're afraid it's about to get worse” Amy Beth Hanson, Associated Press, “Montana Legislature to tackle Medicaid expansion renewal”
	3/29	New approaches to welfare	Chapter 12, pgs. 371-385 Vann R. Newkirk II, The Atlantic, “The Real Lessons From Bill Clinton's Welfare Reform” Katie Rogers and Catie Edmondson, NY Times, “Trump Administration Moves to Restrict Food Stamp Access the Farm Bill Protected”
11	4/1	<b>Exam #2</b>	
	4/3	Education policy	Chapter 13, pgs. 397-406 Moriah Ballingit, Washington Post, “Arizona teachers end walkout despite falling short of aims” Ben Felder, The Oklahoman, “Teachers union calls off walkout, claims 'victory' for schools”
	4/5	<b>MPSA Conference</b>	<b>No class</b> Montana Office of Public Instruction, “Understanding Montana School Finance and School District Budgets” Wilborn P Nobles III, NY Times, “Is an All Charter School System Really the Way to Go?” PBS NewsHour video, “Are charter schools monopolizing public resources?” PBS NewsHour video, “In the black community, a division over charter schools” Vice News video, “Online Charter Schools” <b>Federalism analysis annotated bibliography due</b>
12	4/8	Education policy	Chapter 13, pgs. 406-417

			Seaborn Larson, The Missoulian, “Montana Supreme Court: Tax credit that benefited religious schools is unconstitutional” Christopher N. Osher, Denver Post, “Colorado legislators plan to overhaul education funding system critics say disproportionately benefits wealthy districts”
	4/10	Higher education policy	Chapter 14 Michael Mitchell, Michael Leachman, Kathleen Masterson, and Samantha Waxman, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Unkept Promises: State Cuts to Higher Education Threaten Access and Equity” Keila Szpaller, The Missoulian, “University of Montana budget cuts \$5 million, but avoids cutting tenured faculty”
	4/12	Environmental policy	Chapter 15 Timothy J. Bartik, <i>Growth and Change: A Journal of Urban and Regional Policy</i> , “The Effects of Environmental Regulation on Business Location in the United States” Karl Puckett, Great Falls Tribune, “States, environmentalists join forces in coal leasing case against feds” <b>Government meeting paper due</b>
13	4/15	Economic development	Chapter 16, pgs. 478-489 Aaron M. Renn, Governing Magazine, “Do Cities Really Want Economic Development?” Rick Romell, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, “Foxconn in Wisconsin vs. Amazon in New York and Virginia: How do the subsidies stack up?”
	4/17	Economic development	Chapter 16, pgs. 489-497 Rachel Kaufmann, Next City, “Cities, States Experimenting With Programs That Pay People to Move In” Scott A. Wolla, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, “The Economics of Subsidizing Sports Stadiums”
	4/19	<b>Spring mini-break</b>	<b>No class</b>
14	4/22	Bureaucracies	Chapter 17 Scott Anderson, Patch, “What Does Tony Evers Election As Governor Mean For Act 10?”

			Bently Little, LA Times, “Working for a Local Bureaucracy for Eight Years: A Horror Story”
	4/24	Inequality in states	Chapter 18 Nathan Arnosti and Amy Lui, Brookings Institution, “Why rural America needs cities” Eugenio Peluso and Francesco Andreaoli, Huffington Post, “Study: US Cities Have Worse Inequality Than Mexico, With Rich And Poor Living Side-By-Side” <b>Federalism analysis paper due</b>
	4/26	<b>University Day</b>	<b>No class</b>
15	4/29	<b>Final exam</b>	8:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. ( <b>Note different time</b> )