POLS 1102: STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
Spring 2004

Class meetings  
M/W, 2-3:15 PM in ADM 335

Instructor  
Michael Bitzer

E-mail  
jmbitzer@catawba.edu

Homepage  
faculty.catawba.edu/jmbitzer/index.html

Office location  
202 Hedrick Administration Building

Office hours  
M & W: 9-11 AM, 3-4:30 PM, and by appointment

Office phone  
704.637.4117

Course Description:  
A description and analysis of the structure and operation of the American state and local government, federal-state relationships, the political process, and the formation of public policy. Prerequisite: POLSC 1100 or 1101. (Catawba Catalog)

This course serves as an introduction to the study of subnational politics in the United States. The course has several goals, including:

First, this course will cover the unique features of subnational governments, by focusing on the institutions, political behavior, and public policies of the various states and municipalities, as well as the changing role of the states and municipalities in their relationships with the federal government;

Second, to explore the theoretical and scholarly approaches to understanding politics in the states and municipalities, primarily through research being done on state and local governments;

Third, to begin thinking about possible research questions or approaches in political science, utilizing state and local governments as the foundations for your research; and,

Fourth, to explore issues regarding the impact of suburbanization on American politics, as well as the concept of “place” within American politics and society.

This course also is a communication-intense course, utilizing written assignments and oral discussions in class. The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and will be announced in class.

Grading Policy:  
All outside class assignments are graded on the Catawba GPA scale; in-class assignments are graded on a 0-100 scale. There is no “curve” for this course, and no extra credit projects are allowed; the following will constitute your final grade:

Your score:

Mid-Exam .................... ________________ (weighted 1.5x)

Research Critiques (5)..... ________________ (weighted 1x for each paper)
Research Questions .................. (out of a possible 13; total weighted 1x)

Final Exam ......................... (weighted 2.5x)

When grades are assigned on the 100-point scale, the following ranges apply, and then the GPA score is used for that assignment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To calculate your final grade, add up your grades, divide by 10, and refer to the chart below. There are no “extra credit” projects given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grading criteria for the papers and exam essays includes the following:
- Is there an introduction that states a primary thesis/argument to the essay?
- Does the essay completely answer the question?
- Does the essay provide sufficient examples for the thesis?
- Is the writing clear and well organized?
- Does the essay summarize the argument?

Exams:
Each exam will be based on course lectures, discussions and assigned readings. The exam format will rely heavily on essay questions. Please note the dates of the exams on the schedule. Make-up exams are only given under the most dire of circumstances, and only with documented record (i.e., Health Center form; permission from the Dean of the College). Students are responsible for scheduling a day and time convenient with the faculty member for making up the exam. Students have one week in which to make up the exam; after that period, the grade is recorded as a zero.

It is the goal of the instructor to hand back graded material within one week of the work being handed in; please do not ask before a week’s time if the instructor has graded the work.

A note on the approach of this collegiate class. The textbooks will give students an overview of knowledge that the professor may then discuss further in lecture and discussion. While the material covered in the textbooks will not be necessarily covered in complete detail in class, it is expected that students will have read the material prior to
coming to class for that week. Simply because the material is not covered in class does not excuse the student from responsibility for the material on exams.

Textbooks:
The following books have been ordered for the course.


All readings should be completed before class.

A note on the readings: Active readers take notes, underline important and mystifying passages, make marginal comments, take time to think about what they have read, and come to class prepared to give their interpretations, share their thoughts, and answer questions. In addition to presenting material in lecture form, I will be asking for feedback and discussion on the readings. If you find yourself having difficulty understanding the material, please set an appointment with me and I will be happy to review the information with you.

Research Questions:
Each week students will hand in a one-page paper, stating a possible research topic prompted from the readings in the Weber & Brace book. You should consider why would this research be important to conduct; what kind of data you could utilize; and what you might expect to find from an analysis. The typed material will be due at the beginning of class on the week of the readings; no late submissions will be accepted.

Participation:
As scholars of political science, you should be willing to offer your insight and arguments on various topics; likewise, you should be prepared to have your arguments challenged by your colleagues. We are all here to expand our educational foundation; the right to present your argument is just as important as the right to acknowledge countervailing arguments.

Classroom participation includes both attendance and interaction during classroom discussion. If the instructor believes that students are not coming prepared for class, unannounced pop quizzes will be given and counted into the participation grade.

Classroom participation includes both attendance and interaction during classroom discussion. Attendance for all class meetings is mandatory; if the instructor is in class, then students are expected to be in class. Missed classes will result in 3 points off the attendance component of your final grade. Unless documentation is provided by the College Health Center, the Dean of Students or Dean of the College, absences will not be
excused. As stated in the Catawba College Catalog (pg. 79), more than 6 absences in this class (1/4 of the class meetings) will result in a grade of F for the course.

Assignments (except for research question papers) are due in the class period as noted on the schedule. Late assignments turned in within 24 hours after the class meeting they were due will have ten points deducted from the final grade. Assignments due on a Friday and that are not handed in in class will be due by 4 PM on Friday with ten points deducted from the final grade; otherwise, the assignment will be a zero. No work will be accepted after the 24 hour late period; the grade will be recorded as a zero. Research question papers are due at the beginning of the first class for that assignment; no research questions will be accepted as late.

Academic Honesty:
All work on all assignments must be your own. Students are expected to be familiar with College guidelines for honest academic conduct, and will be held responsible with appropriate penalties. Any accusation or suspicion of academic dishonesty (as defined in both the Catawba College Catalog and the student handbook) will be forwarded to the College Court—no exceptions.

Grade Appeals:
If you have a question about the grading of a work, I ask that you come in with a written explanation as to the specific area that you have a concern. This requires that you re-read back through your work, write your concern on paper, and then research as to why it should be included in your grade. Only then should you come to me and we can talk about your work. I am always available to discuss problems or difficulties, but I do not go for the “well, I had this and you didn’t count it” logic.

Research Critique Papers:
Your papers will be on the issues raised in Place Matters, Fenced Off, and the articles from State Politics & Policy Quarterly. Your papers must summarize and evaluate the material presented in the book/journal article (see schedule), meaning that one-half of your paper can be devoted to summarization, with the other half devoted to evaluation & analysis (critique). You should critique and analyze the research design and concept: such as, what was the major question the authors were trying to investigate? Did they succeed? What are the variables the authors are using? Are they adequate? What could have been done to improve the research design?

A word about these research papers—do not feel that you need to know highly statistical concepts to understand these works. You should focus on what the questions are being asked; how they go about trying to investigate these questions; what their findings are; and how does this research help us further our understanding of state and local politics and government?

Technical requirements. The papers will be:
- 3-4 pages typed for the journal articles; 5-6 pages for the books
- double-spaced
- staple in the upper-left hand corner
– 10/12 point Times
– normal margins (1" around)
– In the upper-left hand corner of the first page, you will have “POLS 1102: Paper #____” on the first line and the date on the second line.
– Your SS# will appear in the “header” (left-hand corner) of every page. Your name will not appear on any pages, so that I may blind grade them.
– A page number will appear in the “footer” (right-hand corner) of every page.
– For direct quotes or paraphrasing ideas from the articles/books, you may use the parenthetical citation approach (Author’s last name, page number).
– Each paper will have a bibliography, which can be on the same page as the last paragraph. Your bibliography format should be the following (as required for publication in most political science journals, commonly referred to as APSR style):
  – For books: Author’s Lastname, Firstname. Year of Publication. Title of Work. City of Publication: Name of the Press.
– At the end of your paper, following your bibliography, you will type the following: “I have abided by the Catawba College Honor Code during the preparation of this paper.”

Failure to adhere to these requirements will be reflected in the paper’s grade.

Schedule:
The following is tentative, with changes announced in class:

I: Overview, Historical Foundations, and Modern-Day Role of Subnational Governments
   Week 1: The Need, Necessity, and Role of Subnational Governments
          – Weber & Brace, Ch. 1
   Week 2: Intergovernmental Relationships and Political Culture in the United States
          – Weber & Brace, Ch. 2
   Wks 3-4: Legal Foundations of State and Local Governments; 2000 Census Report
          – Week 3: Discussion of Gainsborough, Preface, Chs. 1 & 2
          – Week 4: Review of Gainsborough, Chs. 1-4 (due Thursday in class)

II: Political Institutions
   Week 5: Legislatures in Subnational Governments
          – Discussion on Klarner, SPPQ
          – Weber & Brace, Chs. 4 & 8
   Wks 6-7: The Chief Executives & Bureaucracies: On the Front Line of “Devolutionary” Policies
          – Week 6: Weber & Brace, Chs. 3, 5 & 7
Week 7: Discussion of Gainsborough, Chs. 5 & 6

Week 8: SPRING BREAK

Week 9: State Courts & Judicial Process
- Weber & Brace, Ch. 6
- **Review** of Gainsborough, Chs. 5-9 (due Thursday in class)

**Mid-Exam:** please bring bluebooks if an in-class exam is held.

**III: Political Behavior in the States**

Week 10: Public Opinion & Interest Groups
- Discussion on Schneider & Jacoby, SPPQ
- Weber & Brace, Ch. 11

Week 11: Parties and Elections in States and Municipalities
- Week 10: Discussion & **Review** on Bardwell, SPPQ (Group 1) (due Thursday in class)
- Weeks 11: Discussion & **Review** on Abbe & Herrnson, SPPQ (Group 2) (due Thursday in class)
- Weber & Brace, Chs. 9 & 10

**IV: Public Policy Process and Activities in States and Municipalities**

Week 12: Policy Process
- Weber & Brace, Ch. 12
- Discussion on Dreier et al., Preface & Ch. 1

Week 13: Economic Development Policy
- Turner, SPPQ
- **Review** of Dreier et al., Chs. 1-4 (due Thursday in class)

Week 14: Education Policy; Sense of Why “Place Matters”
- Weber & Brace, Ch. 13
- Discussion on Dreier et al., Chs. 5 & 6

Week 15: Conclusion & Wrap-Up
- **Review** of Dreier et al., Chs. 5-8 (due last class)

**FINAL EXAM:** Saturday, May 1 from 1-3 PM in the classroom. Please bring bluebooks if an in-class exam is held.