

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay  
Political Science  
PSC 406: State and Local Government  
Fall 2009  
Tuesday/Thursday: 3:30-4:50 p.m.

Three (3) credit hours

Room: MAC 204

Instructor: Professor Sara Rinfret

Office: MAC B321

Phone: 920-465-2758

Email: rinfrets@uwgb.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday: 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.; Wednesday 1:00-2:00 p.m. or by appointment

(\*Email is the most reliable way to contact me, please use UWGB email)

Course Prerequisites: College standing

Course Description and Objectives: This course is designed to provide students with a basic understanding of how political decisions are made by the state and local governments, in practice as well as in theory across the United States. *While this class will have some examples from the state of Wisconsin, it is NOT the focus. The course has as its main objective to help you understand the activities and business of many state and local governments across the United States.* Upon completion of this course, you should: (1) have gained a more thorough understanding of some of the basic elements, structures, principles, and processes of the myriad state and local political systems; (2) emerge with a greater understanding and appreciation for state and local governments; and (3) be better prepared to be a participant in state and local politics.

Course Organization and Requirements

This course will use various methods such as in-class assignments, written assignments, city council simulation, a take home exam, major research project, and class discussions to become better acquainted with state and local governments. Students are expected to follow the weekly course schedule. The readings will be used for weekly discussions, assignments, and in-class activities. In order that we maximize mutual learning experience, you are required to complete the assigned readings according to the weekly schedule.

This class is also a writing emphasis course. All of your writing assignments will be critically evaluated. Thus, it is important that you spend quality time on each writing assignment, carefully noting grammar, spelling, organization, and overall writing style. The best papers are generally those that have gone through a few iterations. That is, don't write your paper a few hours before class! I encourage you to have someone else read your paper for clarity, as well as proof for errors.

Textbooks and Required Materials:

- Kevin B. Smith, Alan Greenblatt, and Michele Mariani. 2008. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. *Governing States and Localities*, Washington DC: CQPress
- Additional required readings (see course outline) can be found on D2L
  - Please use "content" on D2L for list of other required readings
- Book may be purchased from the University Bookstore. Cheaper versions might be available on amazon.com\*\*

### Lap Top Computers and Cell Phones:

- *Cell Phones:* If students are caught texting during class, you will be asked to leave and will receive zero points for the day (participation). If cell phone use is a constant occurrence, this will damage your overall grade. If you can't live without your cell phone then don't take this class.
- *Laptops:* Students should be able to take notes without laptops, and studies have shown that taking your own notes, with a pen and paper increases your likelihood to do well in the classroom. Please, note, however, that on the course syllabus I have included "laptop activity days." During these class sessions ONLY, I ask students to bring their own laptops to class for fun and exciting in-classroom assignments. These dates are TBD, if not specified on the course outline.

### Using D2L:

This semester each student is enrolled in D2L for this course. Once you login into D2L through the UWGB homepage you can find additional copies of the course syllabus, grades, class announcements, and readings. You can email me using the mail tool on D2L, but for a faster response rate contact me: rinfrrets@uwgb.edu

### Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes:

#### Attendance and Participation (100 points possible)

- ✓ *Attendance:* You are expected to attend ALL class sessions. Missing more than 3 class sessions will negatively impact your attendance/participation grade.  
Attendance will be taken in the form of participation
- ✓ *Participation:* Each student is expected to participate in classroom discussions and assignments. Questioning, probing, making judgments, wondering about "what ifs" – these are all part of a healthy learning process. To participate effectively you should read the scheduled assignment BEFORE coming to class. Throughout the semester the class will work on in- classroom assignments that pertain to the week's assigned readings. These activities should be fun and a way for students to apply the textbook to real world scenarios. These assignments cannot be made up if you miss class so please do not ask.  
Note: If student attendance begins to drop, the instructor reserves the right to add additional points to the course and have in-class pop quizzes—these are unannounced and based on the reading for the day.

City Council Meeting and Reaction Paper (100): Students are required to attend or watch a Green Bay City Council meeting by Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup>. Please make sure to pick up an agenda or print one from the city's website and attach to your reflection paper. Failure to do so will result in a major point deduction. The Green Bay City Council meets the **first** and **third Tuesday** of each month @ 7p.m., Room 203 in the Council Chambers. For more details or directions please visit their website: <http://www.ci.green-bay.wi.us/> (Link is also on D2L content page)

- *If for some reason you are unable to "attend" one of these meeting dates in person due to work, you are REQUIRED to watch one of the council meetings on the local television station, contact the County Clerk for a tape, or watch a YouTube version on the city's website.* Please use this website for additional details: [http://www.ci.green-bay.wi.us/government/city\\_government.html](http://www.ci.green-bay.wi.us/government/city_government.html)

- Here are the possible dates for attendance: September 15, October 6, October 20, November 3, or November 17. ***Only five dates available so plan your schedule now – no excuses.*** After attending or watching a city council meeting students are required to write a 3-4 page reflection paper by analyzing the following questions: What was the topic(s) or issue(s) discussed at the meeting? How did the mayor react to these topic(s) or issue(s)? How did city council members react to these topic(s) or issues(s)? What is your overall evaluation? Please make sure to use these questions to write a reflection about the city council meeting. Your reflections should include the following:
  - 1) Introduction: (1 paragraph)
  - 2) Body: (3-4 paragraphs)
    - ❖ Description of the major issues discussed at the meeting and reactions
  - 3) Conclusion (3-4 paragraphs)
    - ❖ Wrap up your paper – your overall evaluation
- All papers are due no later than November 19 by 5p.m. on the designated D2L drop box. You can either scan the meeting minutes and upload with your D2L submission OR turn in a hard copy to me by the due date.
- Note: Late analyses will not be accepted and students must plan their schedules accordingly to attend or watch one city council meeting.

City Council Simulation (100 points): During the first week of class you will draw a specific “role” (mayor, council member, interest group, or local citizen) in which you will “simulate” during our city council meeting simulation on Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup>. Keep this specific role in mind when you attend the city council meeting for ideas for how to carry out your duties for our in-class simulation. The issue for discussion for our in-class city council meeting is to address the following (more details to follow, too):

- The Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary is a 700 acre place of nature, with hiking trails for walking, and a rehabilitation site for many animals. For our classroom simulation, a company called Zip Line around the World files a request to the city council for a permit to build a zip line within the grounds of the sanctuary. For this classroom activity, one student serves as the mayor, 12 students represent individual city council members, 2-3 students represent Zip Line Around the World, 2-3 students represent People for a Natural Environment (environmental organization), 2-3 students represent Citizens for Zip Lines (local residents of Green Bay in favor of a zip line), and 2-3 students represent Neighbors Against Zip Lines.
- *How Will You Be Evaluated?* For this assignment, each student, even if you represent a group, is *required* to attend/participate in the simulation. The mayor and council will begin the simulation (more details later in class). Then, a representative from each of the groups (Zip line World, People for a Natural Environment, and ALL citizens groups) will present a 5-10 minute stance to the city council/mayor. Then, the city council votes and determines if the zip line can be built in the wildlife sanctuary. Students will be graded on: participation and role playing in the simulation and a 1-2 page bibliographic statement. Each student is required to turn in a statement on how he/she prepared for the simulation (i.e. what role are you carrying out? What outside research did you do to prepare for this simulation? Are you for or against the zip line? Why or Why not?). These statements should be double-spaced, 12 point font, and grammatically correct. Students are required to turn in a hard copy of the 1-2 page assignment at the beginning of this class and actively participate in this activity (i.e. your grade consists of the paper and participation). Failure to miss this class will result in a zero so plan your schedule

accordingly. This assignment cannot be made up! More details to follow later in the semester.

Examination (100 points): To critically assess the materials we discuss in this course, students will be given a take-home exam. This exam will consist of up to 6 questions and students have a week to submit their answers on the designated D2L drop box. The take-home exam is due by 11p.m., October 29<sup>th</sup>. This will be a writing intensive exam and students should submit answers that are grammatically correct, proper citations, etc. More details to follow during the semester.

Research Paper/Project/Presentation (300 points): For this project, students must work in small groups of no less than 2, and no more than 4. Groups will be selected during the first weeks of class. Each group will conduct research on an issue that faces a local government in the state of Wisconsin. Your group is required to submit a three page summary of the topic area/local government for our class on **September 13<sup>th</sup>**. This three page summary should have an outline and at least 5 possible references (primary) that you will use for your research projects. Your final papers should be organized in the following order (failure to do so will result in a lower grade):

- 1) Introduction: Discussion and history of issue. This part of the paper will likely be 1-2 pages long, but could be longer. Also, in this section you should report on the status of your issue with the local government you are studying. So, for example, if your paper is on a contested housing project in your city you might write about the history of development in your city – or you could write about development and zoning in cities generally.
- 2) Stakeholders (1-2 pages): Interest groups involved in issue (what organizations and people with a stake in the issue) describe them and discuss what they want. (Builders organizations? Teachers unions? Community groups?)
- 3) Institutional Actors (1-2 pages): Policymakers involved in issue (what elected or other officials – people in government mostly). Who are they? Why are they important? What is their role?
- 4) Policy Incentives (1-2pages): Incentives operating on policymakers. Why are things happening in the way they are? What motivates people? (Think about it or ask them.)
- 5) Evaluation and Conclusion (2-3) pages: Your evaluation of the issue--why are the laws the way they are, what, if anything, could be improved in the management of the issue, what, if anything, prevents the changes you think should be made, and finally, what could be done to overcome these obstacles.
- Papers should be 12 pages (minimum) – 16 pages (maximum)
- Please Note: You must have at least one interview with a policy maker as a source. This can be any type of government official or leader in an organization with familiarity with your issue. (All you have to do is call the office and say you are writing a paper and you would like to talk to them about....). I suggest your interview be conducted after you have completed your research and are familiar with the issue. In order to answer all the questions above most students find they have to have more than one interview with a policy maker. This is not a problem – most students find the interviews kind of fun. Cite the information you get in the interview the same way you would any other information. Here is an example: “Personal Interview, 23 December 2006, Frank Thompson, Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Redmond, Oregon.”
- Research Papers (200 points) are due: December 17, 2009 by 1p.m. on D2L
- Research Presentations (100 points out of the 300): During the last week of class and on the designated final exam date, groups are required to provide a 15 minute (no longer) PowerPoint presentation of their projects
- More details on requirements and formatting later

- As noted in the course outline, I will provide in-class time to work on this project with your groups, but you will still need to do work outside of class to complete.

Reaction Papers (20 points apiece = 40 points possible): During the semester, the class will have two-three guest speakers. One guest speaker will be an interest group from the area and the other an education specialist. After the guest speaker, students are required to write a 1 page reaction paper (i.e. did the guest speaker do a good job of explaining the real world implications of what we learned in the text). Each reaction paper is worth 20 points and due on D2L before the assigned class period. This should be an easy way to earn 40 points 😊

#### Article Presentations (50 Points Possible)

Students will form groups of 2-3 students and sign-up for one class that you will read an article and present to class on the date listed in the course schedule. This article should pertain to the week's topic – if we are discussing “legislatures” for the week, then your article should address an issue that pertains to a state's legislature. Students must present the material to the class as if “teaching.” Students not presenting are required to attend class and ask questions (attendance will be taken and graded under attendance/participation). The key factors to include in your presentations:

- Tell us what the article was about (the topic), 2) How does it (the article or the topic) relate to class, the week's topic?, 3) What is the important point of the article?, and 4) Be able to answer questions from the class
- Students will need to work together to put together a 30 minute PowerPoint presentation. These presentations will be at the end of the class period on the designated date. It should be apparent the contribution of each students' effort to the presentation. Each student will be graded separately. There are no make-ups for these assignments, so please pay attention to the schedule. The presentations are worth 50 points of your total grade.
- Please use the library to locate articles, or ask me for suggestions. This is a great website to get your group started:  
<http://www.governing.com/> (highly recommend this site because it deals with state/local governments

Extra Credit: This is an upper level class with many points possible, no extra credit--please do not ask.

#### Totals Points for the Course:

City Council Meeting and Reaction Paper	100 points
City Council Simulation (bibliographic statement and participation)	100 points
Take Home Exam	100 points
Research Paper/Project/Presentation	300 points
Group Article Presentation	50 points
Guest Speaker Reaction Papers (2)	40 points
Attendance and Participation	100 points
*Coming to class, participating, in-class activities, and current events*	
<b>Total</b>	790 points possible (If no alterations to the syllabus)

**A= 790-731 points**

**C= 624-565 points**

**AB= 730-705 points**

**B= 704-650 points**

**BC= 649-625 points**

**CD= 564-542 points**

**D= 541-475 points**

**F= 474-Below**

### **Important Dates to Remember:**

Topic and Brief Summary/Overview for your Research Projects: September 15<sup>th</sup> – bring a hard copy and turn in at the beginning of class (part of your research project grade)

City Council Meeting and Reflection Paper Due: no later than November 19<sup>th</sup> D2L drop box

City Council Simulation and Bibliographic Paper: November 24<sup>th</sup> (bring to class)

Reaction Papers Due: October 6, and November 17 D2L drop boxes

Article Presentation Options (each student presents with a group on one of the following):

- Sept 24 (political attitudes and participation),
- Sept 29 (parties and interest groups),
- Oct 6 (legislatures),
- Oct 15 (governors/executives),
- Oct 27 (bureaucracy),
- Nov 10 (education policy),
- Nov 17 (environmental policy),
- and Dec 1 (healthcare and/or stem cell research)

Take Home Exam Due: Thursday, October 29 by 11p.m. D2L drop box

Research Paper Due: Thursday, December 17 by 1p.m. D2L drop box

Research Presentations: last week of class and if needed during the final exam period

No Class: October 29, November 26, and December 10

### **Tentative Course Outline and Schedule of Assignments:**

*(The instructor reserves the right to change elements of the syllabus at her discretion. If changes occur, students will receive a syllabus addendum)*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading/Assignments</b>
<b>Week 1:</b> Thursday, September 3	Introduction and Overview of Syllabus/Course	*Roles drawn for City Council Simulation* (students receive descriptions, too)
<b>Week 2:</b> Tuesday, September 8	Introduction to State and Local Government	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch.1 and D2L Reading “Character of the State” *Decide groups for research project* *Sign up for Group Article Presentations”
Thursday, September 10	Federalism and Discussion About	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch.2 and

	Summaries Due on Tuesday	"Environmental Federalism and Federal-State Working Relationships" D2L Reading
<b>Week 3:</b> Tuesday, September, 15	State Constitutions	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch. 3 and D2L Reading "Constitution" <b>Due:</b> Hard copies turned in @ the beginning of class, 3 page summary of the topic and local Wisconsin government your group is going to address for your project and at least 5 references *City Council Meeting 7p.m.*
Thursday, September 17	Political Attitudes and Participation/"Run Granny Run"	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch. 4
<b>Week 4:</b> Tuesday, September 22	Political Attitudes and Participation/"Run Granny Run"	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch. 4
Thursday, September 24	Wrap Up Political Participation/ Begin Parties and Interest Groups	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 5
<b>Week 5:</b> Tuesday, September 29	Parties and Interest Groups <b>"Group Presentation on Interest Group Article"</b>	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 5
Thursday, October 1	Guest Speakers on Interest Groups: Dale and Penny Schaber	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 5
<b>Week 6:</b> Tuesday, October 6	Legislatures <b>"Group Presentation on Legislature Article"</b>	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch. 6 and D2L Reading "Legislature" <b>Due:</b> Reaction Paper on Guest Speaker on D2L before class *City Council Meeting 7p.m.
Thursday, October 8	Governors and Executives	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 7
<b>Week 7:</b> Tuesday, October 13	Governors and Executives "All the Kings Men"	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 7
Thursday, October 15	Governors and Executives "All the Kings Men" <b>"Group Presentation on Governor/and or Executives Article"</b>	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 7
<b>Week 8:</b> Tuesday, October 20	The Courts	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch. 8 *City Council Meeting 7p.m.
Thursday, October 22	Crime and Punishment: "The Death Penalty"	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch. 14 Take Home Exam handed out, in

		class.
<b>Week 9</b> Tuesday, October 27	The Bureaucracy <b>“Group Presentation on Bureaucracy Article”</b>	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 9
Thursday, October 29	NO CLASS, Work on Exam!	<b>Due: Take Home Exam by 11p.m. on D2L</b>
<b>Week 10:</b> Tuesday, November 3	Local Government	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 10 *City Council Meeting 7p.m.
Thursday, November 5	Finance and Discussion with Groups about the progress of their major research projects	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 12 <b>In class time to work on your group projects – bring materials to class!</b>
<b>Week 11:</b> Tuesday, November 10	Education Policy and NCLB <b>“Group Presentation on Education Policy”</b>	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 13 and D2L Reading “Mantel’s No Child Left Behind” *Sign Up for Final Project Presentations*
Thursday, November 12	Guest Speaker, Education Policy, Dr. Gregory Maas	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 13
<b>Week 12:</b> Tuesday, November 17	States Racing to the Top or Bottom? Environmental Policy <b>“Group Presentation on Environmental Policy”</b>	<b>Read:</b> Rabe and ‘Wisconsin and Climate Change’ readings on D2L <b>Due:</b> Reaction Paper on D2L before class In class discussion about the city council simulation and bibliographic statements *City Council Meeting 7p.m.
Thursday, November 19	<b>Class Work Day: Prepare for City Council Simulation (bring materials to class)</b>	<b>Due:</b> Last day available to turn in Reflection Paper for City Council Meeting on D2L Turn in hard copy of meeting minutes to class if unable to upload onto D2L
<b>Week 13:</b> Tuesday, November 24	<b>CITY COUNCIL SIMULATION</b>	<b>Due:</b> Participation in City Council Simulation and Bibliographic statement due – bring to class!
Thursday, November 26	NO CLASS	<b>Happy Thanksgiving!</b>
<b>Week 14:</b> Tuesday, December 1	Health Care Issues (Stem Cell Research) <b>“Group Presentation on Health Care and/or Stem Cell Research”</b>	<b>Read:</b> Textbook Ch 15 and D2L Reading on Stem Cell Research



Thursday, December 3	Student Presentations	
<b>Week 15:</b> Tuesday, December 8 Thursday, December 10  <b>Finals Week: December 15-19</b> <b>*We do not meet for class this week, only the exam date/time*</b>	Student Presentations No Class (work on finishing papers or presentations)  <b>Final Exam: Thursday, December 17 from 1-3p.m. in our regular classroom -- Student Presentations (if needed) and final papers due by 1p.m. on D2L</b>	

### Classroom Policies

- **Classroom Etiquette:** Students are expected to observe proper etiquette in class. Please do not walk into class late or leave early without notifying the professor. Disruptions, such as talking to a classmate during class must be avoided. I expect all students to maintain a high level of professionalism in their classroom conduct with me, and with their fellow students. This means coming to class on time, being respectful during class discussions and in all communications with me and others. Rude behavior will not be tolerated. Any student who acts in such an inappropriate manner will be asked to leave the class. Second offenders will have a meeting with the department chair and a complaint filed with the Office of Student Life.
- **E-mail Etiquette:** E-mail is a wonderful tool for you to contact me with questions, but it does not replace office hours. If you have involved questions about course material, you should come see me during office hours or during an alternate appointment. Office hours are the best opportunity to get your questions answered. Plus, you can get to know your professors.
- **Incompletes or Withdrawals “W” for the Course:** If for some reason the course is not working out for you please adhere to University policies for the last day to drop a class. If you need an incomplete for the course, you **MUST** come to my office hours or set up a meeting with me four weeks from the end of class in order to make this request. A written medical excuse or documentation will be needed for the professor to grant such a request.
- **Late Assignments:** Students are expected to submit all work on the date specified in the course calendar and be present for examinations. Any exceptions to this must be approved by the instructor before the date in question. Students must complete all assignments to receive a grade for the course.
- **Miss a Lecture:** Lectures will not be repeated, and lecture notes will not be provided by the instructor. Ask a friend for their notes.
- **Plagiarism:** All work submitted must be your own; no duplicate work (work completed for another class) will not be accepted. Acts of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of ZERO (0) for the assignment. To avoid acts of plagiarism, cite each reference or source you use and give proper credit for the ideas, opinions, and findings of others. When you are using the exact words of others, you must use quotation marks and include the page number where you found the quote in your citation.
- **D2L:** This class is supported by D2L. Please refer to this site regularly for additional

readings, announcements, or updates to the schedule.

- **Sensitive Course Materials:** If an instructor believes it is appropriate, the syllabus should communicate to students that some course content may be considered sensitive by some students.” University education aims to expand student understanding and awareness. Thus, it is necessarily involves engagement with a wide range of information, ideas, and creative representations. In the course of college studies, students can expect to encounter—and critically appraise—materials that may differ from and perhaps challenge familiar understandings, ideas, and beliefs. Students are encouraged to discuss these matters with faculty.”
- **Disability Assistance:** Consistent with federal law and the policies of the University of Wisconsin, it is the policy of UW-Green Bay to provide appropriate and necessary accommodations to students with documented physical and learning disabilities. If you anticipate requiring any auxiliary aides or services, you should contact the coordinator of the Disability Services Office, at 465-2849 as soon as possible to discuss your needs and arrange the provision of services.