American State and Local Government  
POS 2112  
Fall 2015  
MW 8:30-9:20am (Period 2)  
101 Little Hall (LIT)

Dr. Daniel A. Smith  
Department of Political Science  
University of Florida  
Office: 003 Anderson  
Office Hours: W 9:30-11:30am

Phone: 352.273.2346  
Email: dasmith@ufl.edu  
Home Page: http://people.clas.ufl.edu/dasmith/  
Twitter: @electionsmith

Course Description  
This course introduces students to the politics, institutions, and policy processes of state and local governments in the United States. These governments play pivotal policy roles in health care, education, corrections, economic development, environmental protection, and welfare, to name a few. State and local governments are a permanent fixture in the lives of all people living in the United States, and their programmatic and fiscal roles have increased substantially relative to that of the federal government over the past 25 years. For this reason alone, it is useful for students to gain an intimate understanding of state and local government.

From a political science perspective, by comparing the similarities and differences between state and local governments, we will assess how (and if) variation across state and local political institutions affects the politics and policies of subnational governments. Leveraging the variation at the state and local levels, we will also gain a better understanding of how (and if) citizens’ attitudes shape the policies and political institutions that governments adopt.

We will take advantage of our location and focus considerable attention on the politics, governmental structures, and policies in Florida, Alachua County, and the City of Gainesville. By examining our immediate surroundings, while noting the general patterns and differences across states and localities, we will be able to provide coherence that would not be possible in an effort to understand all state and local governments.

Required Textbook & Readings  

Embedded hyperlinks are available for all other readings in the syllabus.

Students should keep abreast of state and local politics in Florida. Here are two Florida political websites:

http://www.flapolitics.com/  
http://www.sayfiereview.com/

Attendance/Participation  
Students are expected to do the readings, attend my general lectures, and participate in discussion sections. My lectures will be organized around the topics and readings found in the schedule that follows. My lecture style is dynamic and interactive. In order for this to be a successful course, it is imperative that you do the assigned readings before class, give yourself time to think about them, and prepare yourself to discuss them in class and in your discussion section. You are encouraged to raise your hand, raise questions, clarify comments, and correct my mistakes (!). Really.

Attendance in your discussion section is mandatory, and the Teaching Assistants (TAs) will take attendance. You must attend the discussion section for which you are officially enrolled. If you cannot attend class on a regular basis, I would urge you to drop this class. Your attendance and participation (in your discussion section and in the general lecture) will count as 10% of your final grade.
Short Essays
Students will write four short essays. These essays, which are aimed to increase student participation in
discussion sections, are to be critical reflections on the questions posed in the syllabus each week. Students may
choose from any of the 12 opportunities to write their four short essays. Each short essay is to be roughly 800
words (two to three double-spaced pages in 12-point font) and may be written in the first person. A reference
page is only required if you’re drawing from or citing research not in the syllabus.

In addition to being succinct, well-organized, and well-edited, your essays should begin with a clear introductory
statement of your argument, including supporting evidence, and most importantly, should answer the prompt.

A hard copy of your short essay is due at the start of your designated discussion section for the week of the
assignment. Each of the four short essays is worth five points, for a total of 20% of your final grade. TAs will
accept no late short essays, no electronic submissions, nor essays on topics from other weeks.

Pop Quizzes
There will be 10 unannounced “pop” quizzes during my general lectures. The quizzes will be on the on-line
readings assigned for that class. Quizzes will typically be multiple choice or true/false questions and are designed
to show evidence that you’ve done the readings. They are not “gotcha” quizzes. Each quiz is worth two points,
for a total of 20% of your final grade. Students will receive one point for an incorrect answer; two points for a
correct answer. No makeup quizzes will be permitted except for official University functions that are brought to
Dr. Smith’s attention prior to the class you know you will miss. I do not provide any makeup quizzes for sickness,
family issues, or personal trials or tribulations; we all have them, occasionally.

Exams
There are two in-class exams. Both will test your knowledge of the material covered in the lectures, discussion
sections, and assigned readings. The exams will have multiple choice and short essay questions. Both are worth
25% of your final grade. Makeup exams are not permitted except in extenuating circumstances, and may only
be arranged by Dr. Smith (and not the TAs) prior to the exam. An unexcused absence on an exam results in a
grade of 0%.

Extra Credit
Students may receive up to two points of extra credit toward their final grade by attending a city or county
commission meeting (held downtown) and writing up a 2-3 page critical analysis of the proceedings. Here are
the links to the city and county commissions’ scheduled meetings. Your critical analyses must be submitted to
your TA during the discussion section of the week you attended the meeting.

Summary of Grading
“Short Essays” 20% (4 x 5% each)
“Pop” Quizzes 20% (10 x 2% each)
Exams 50% (2 x 25% each)
Discussion Section Participation 10%

Grading
The following cutoffs will be used for grades:

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<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>A</th>
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<td>Grade</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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Grade Values for GPA Conversion

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For more information about UF’s Grades and Grade Policies:
http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html

I do not “curve” exams or final grades. As such, everyone in class may receive an ‘A.’ Only in the rarest of circumstances will I grant an Incomplete (‘I’) grade.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
The UF Honor Code reads, in part: “I affirm that this work in its entirety is mine alone, and that I have received no outside assistance from anyone else, including classmates, other students, or faculty. I understand that plagiarism, seeking or receiving other unauthorized assistance, or any false representations regarding this exam [or other work] are serious offenses punishable under the Student Honor Code.” Any student transgressing UF’s Honor Code will receive an ‘E’ for the course and will be referred to the appropriate University authorities for disciplinary action.

Classroom Decorum
This is a large lecture class. Please be respectful of those students around you. During lectures, you are welcome to use electronic devices in class, but only to take notes and pull up online materials. You are hereby advised that Florida law forbids the recording or filming of conversations without the consent of all parties, and any rebroadcast of my lecture is strictly prohibited. If you’d like to record my lectures for your personal use, you must get my permission first. I expressly do not grant permission to copy, transcribe, reproduce, rebroadcast, sell, or otherwise publicly disseminate materials from my lectures.

Students with Special Needs
It is the responsibility of students requiring any special accommodation for this course to make an appointment to see me at the beginning of the semester. I will make every effort possible to meet your needs in accordance to University guidelines.

Office Hours
If you have any questions or concerns, I encourage you to consult either me or your TA during our weekly office hours. You may drop by during our scheduled office hours, or you may email us.

Course Schedule
Section I: State Politics in a Federal System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture 1</th>
<th>24 Aug</th>
<th>Course Overview: Studying State &amp; Local Governments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>Donovan, Mooney, &amp; Smith, chapter 1</td>
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<td>Sherman, “Marco Rubio says a minor can get an abortion—but not a tattoo...”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Lecture 2</th>
<th>26 Aug</th>
<th>Political Institutions and Cultures of State &amp; Local Governments: The Comparative Method</th>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>Donovan, Mooney, &amp; Smith, chapter 1</td>
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<td>Weissert &amp; Crew, “Florida Module” (password protected)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Discussion 1</th>
<th>27/28 Aug</th>
<th>Introduction of TAs and Students &amp; the Comparative Method</th>
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<tr>
<th>Lecture 3</th>
<th>31 Aug</th>
<th>Florida’s Political History</th>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>Colburn, “Florida’s Megatrends” (Introduction)</td>
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<td>Allman, Finding Florida (Prologue)</td>
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<td>Romano, “Sadly, Florida Politics has Even More of the Same”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lecture 4  
2 Sept  
History of American Federalism  
Readings:  
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 2  
- Hamilton, “Federalist #17”  
- Madison, “Federalist #45”

Discussion 2  
3/4 Sept  
Political Institutions and Cultures of State & Local Governments  
Short Essay #1 Due. Prompt:  
Knowing what you know about Florida’s political history, provide two explanations for why the Sunshine State continually is ranked as having the most political corruption in the country.

No Class: Labor Day  
7 Sept

Lecture 5  
9 Sept  
State Politics within a Federal System  
Readings:  
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 2  
- WSJ, “Federalism and ObamaCare”  
- Clark, “No Easy Options for Feds in Legal Marijuana States”

Discussion 3  
10/11 Sept  
Federalism: State Politics within a Federal System  
Short Essay #2 Due. Prompt:  
You are Alexander Hamilton. Write a memo to James Madison arguing that the federal government under the “new” (1787) Constitution has the power to regulate the growing and sale of marijuana, and that it shouldn’t be left up to the individual states.

Section II: Linkages between Citizens and States

Lecture 7  
14 Sept  
Participation, Elections, and Representation  
Readings:  
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 3  
- Liptak, “Error and Fraud at Issue as Absentee Voting Rises”  
- Roth, “Why Ohio’s early voting cuts hit African-Americans hardest”

Lecture 8  
16 Sept  
Participation, Elections, and Representation  
Readings:  
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 3  
- Wiltz, “Racial Generation Gap Looms Large for States”  
- Wiltz, “Haitian-Americans Come of Age Politically”  
- LPR, “WHY MILLENNIALS DON’T VOTE FOR MAYOR Florida Approves Online Voter Registration”

Discussion 4  
17/18 Sept  
Participation, Elections and Representation  
Short Essay #3 Due. Prompt:  
Once implemented, the adoption of online voter registration in Florida will boost the turnout of young voters. Do you agree or disagree with this statement, and why?

Lecture 9  
21 Sept  
Direct Democracy  
Readings:  
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 4  
- Malewitz, “Cost of Walker Recall Effort Topped $80 million”  
- Whyte, “Ballot measure backers spend big, win big”
Lecture 10
23 Sept
Direct Democracy
Readings:
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 4
Liptak, “Secrecy Rejected on Ballot Petitions”
Dockery, “Sen. Hays’ Amendment 1 op-ed fiction”

Discussion 5
24/25 Sept
Direct Democracy
Short Essay #4 Due. Prompt:
Some scholars argue that ballot initiatives can drive turnout. What does this argument assume about citizens and ballot measures? Drawing on what you know about Florida’s initiative process, especially United for Care’s failed campaign in 2014 for medical marijuana and the reelection of Governor Rick Scott, do you agree or disagree with this argument?

Lecture 11
28 Sept
Political Parties
Readings:
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 5
Berman, “Rand Paul Purchases a Path around an Inconvenient Kentucky Law”
Colburn, “One-party politics not what Founding Fathers had in mind”
Perez-Verdia, “Campaigns and Political Parties Need to Spice it Up”

Lecture 12
30 Sept
Political Parties
Readings:
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 5
Desilver, “Ahead of redistricting, Democrats seek to reverse statehouse declines”
Klas, “Is a politically unbiased map possible for Florida?”
Klas, “Group Proposes Amendment to open Florida’s Primaries to all Voters”

Discussion 6
1/2 Oct
Political Parties
Short Essay #5 Due. Prompt:
Make the case for why Florida should not change its closed primary system to a blanket primary system.

Lecture 13
5 Oct
Interest Groups
Readings:
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 6
Nichols, “Don’t Just Pressure ALEC Sponsors, Name and Shame ALEC Legislators”
WFTV, “League of Women Voters works to help voters understand amendments”

Lecture 14
7 Oct
Interest Groups
Readings:
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 6
DeSlatte, “$120m spent so far on lobbying in Tallahassee”
Whyte, “Alcohol Distributors Ply Statehouses to Keep Profits Flowing”
Ray, “One-Man Lobby Shops Do Nicely in 2015 Q2”

Discussion 7
8/9 Oct
Interest Groups
Short Essay #6 Due. Prompt:
Drawing on recent examples in Florida to inform your response, do you think lobbyists benefit the representation of ordinary citizens’ interests? Why or why not?
Lecture 15  
**Elections and Representation: Campaign Finance**

12 Oct  
Readings:
- Fineout, “Florida’s Political Parties Rake in Money during Session”
- Wallace, “Florida Republican Party battles slump in fundraising”
- Shanton & Underhill, “Citizens United and the States”
- Goodman, “Supreme Court Rules Corporations Can Spend in State Elections”
- Stinson, “Money Pours into State Races as Stakes Rise”

1st EXAM  
14 Oct  In-Class (closed book, closed notes)

15/16 Oct  No Discussion Sections

Section III: Institutions and Processes  
Lecture 16  
**State Legislatures**

19 Oct  Readings:
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 7
- Wallace & Klas, “Florida Senate admits map it drew is unconstitutional”
- Van Sickler, “One-third of Florida Legislature faces no opposition at polls”
- Stinson, “Despite Huge Victories, Republicans face some Obstacles”

Lecture 17  
**State Legislatures**

21 Oct  Readings:
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 7
- Mitchell, “Political Intrigue in Senate President Vote”
- Dockery, “Early Supporters get the plum positions”
- Van Sickler, “Even after the gift ban and reform, freebies flow to Florida lawmakers”

Discussion 8  
**State Legislatures**

22/23 Oct  
**Short Essay #7 Due. Prompt:**

> Florida has a part-time (sometimes called “hybrid”) legislature, which has led some members to become creative (as Marc Caputo, notes) when filling their free time in Tallahassee. Do you think the citizens of Florida would benefit if the legislature became a fulltime body?

Lecture 18  
**Governors**

26 Oct  Readings:
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 8
- Smith, “How Rick Scott won re-election as Florida governor”
- Perez, Siroti, Cook, “Jeb Bush Leveraged Political Connections for Clients and Allies…”
- Dixon, “Gov. Rick Scott laid off more state workers last year than previous 5 combined”

Lecture 19  
**Governors**

28 Oct  Readings:
- Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 8
- Vock, “Govs enjoy quirky veto power”
- Mistler, “LePage’s vetoes came too late, so 65 laws stand”

Discussion 9  
**Governors**

29/30 Oct  
**Short Essay #8 Due. Prompt:**

> Some governors have limited institutional powers to do their jobs. Make an argument against curtailing their formal powers, contending that gubernatorial power should be as expanded.
Lecture 20  
2 Nov  
State Courts  
Readings:  
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 9  
Liptak, “Rendering Justice, with one Eye on Reelection”  
Rayfield, “Conservatives Fail to Oust Judges in Iowa and Florida”  
Stinson, “High Court to Decide: Can State Judicial Candidates Ask for Campaign Money?”

Lecture 21  
4 Nov  
State Courts  
Readings:  
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 9  
Davis, “Power of the Florida court system at the center of Amendment 5”  
Krueger, “Stetson law prof took Gideon case to Supreme Court”

No Discussions: Homecoming  
5/6 Nov  

Section III: State & Local Public Policy

Lecture 22  
9 Nov  
Local Government  
Readings:  
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 11  
Bergal, “Cities Forge Policy Apart From States”  
Henderson, “San Francisco Shoot, New Federal Policy Put Pressure on Sanctuary Cities”  
Gainesville Mayor and City Commission (explore)  
Alachua County Board of Commissioners (explore)

No Class: Veterans Day  
11 Nov  

Discussion 10  
12/13 Nov  
Local Politics  
Short Essay #9 Due. Prompt:  
Citing poor turnout, the Gainesville City Commission is considering changing the timing of its mayoral and city commission races from the Spring to General Elections held in November. Make an argument for why this is a bad policy decision.

Lecture 23  
16 Nov  
Fiscal Policy & Budgeting  
Readings:  
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 10  
Povich, “States Debate Who’s Helped, Hurt in Shifting Tax Burdens”  
Bousquet: “Bush and Scott Budget Vetoes: A Tale of Two Governors”  
Dockery, “What happened to that $1.8b surplus?”

Lecture 24  
18 Nov  
Morality Policy  
Readings:  
Donovan, Mooney, & Smith, chapter 13  
Soffen, “How Texas Could Set National Template for Limiting Abortion Access”  
Cooper, “Colorado profits, but still divided on legal weed”  
Kam, “...legal battle over drug testing of state workers”

Discussion 11  
19/20 Nov  
Fiscal Policy and Morality Policy  
Short Essay #10 Due. Prompt:  
Looking at this map from 2013, provide three hypotheses for why some states enacted more restrictions on women wanting to obtain an abortion than other states. Evaluating each, which of the three hypotheses do you think carries the most weight in explaining the variation across the states, and why?
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture/Event</th>
<th>Social Welfare and Health Care Policy / Education Policy</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<td>23 Nov</td>
<td>Lecture 25</td>
<td>Social Welfare and Health Care Policy</td>
<td>Donovan, Mooney, &amp; Smith, chapter 14</td>
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<td>Greenberg, “Gov. Rick Scott shifts again on Medicaid expansion”</td>
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<td>Vestal, “More States Lean Toward Medicaid Expansion”</td>
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<td>25 Nov</td>
<td>No Class: Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td>26/27 Nov</td>
<td>No Discussions: Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td>30 Nov</td>
<td>Lecture 25</td>
<td>Social Welfare and Health Care Policy</td>
<td>Donovan, Mooney, &amp; Smith, chapter 14</td>
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<td>Kaiser, “Interactive: A State-by-State Look at How the Uninsured Fare under the ACA”</td>
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<td>Torres, “In Tampa Bay, this is what child poverty looks like”</td>
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<td>2 Dec</td>
<td>Lecture 26</td>
<td>Education Policy</td>
<td>Donovan, Mooney, &amp; Smith, chapter 15</td>
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<td>Bryant, “The big Jeb Bush charter school lie”</td>
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<td>SEF, “Low Income Students Now a Majority in the Nation’s Public Schools”&amp; Map</td>
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<td>Quinton, “States to Colleges: Prove You’re Worth It”</td>
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<td>3/4 Dec</td>
<td>Discussion 12</td>
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<td>7 Dec</td>
<td>Lecture 27</td>
<td>Review Session</td>
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<td>9 Dec</td>
<td>2nd EXAM</td>
<td>In-Class (closed book, closed notes)</td>
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