MPPA 5316 Federalism and Public Policy
Spring 2017

Dr. Jon R. Taylor
Meeting Time: 5:30pm – 6:45pm MW Strake Hall, Room 202
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Office Hours: MW: 7:00am – 8:00am; 9:00am – 5:00pm; TTH: 7:00am – 8:00am and 11:00am – 3:00pm; F: 7:00am – 8:00am; 9:00am – 12:00pm

Required Text:

None – You will provide me with a flash drive. In return, I will provide you with readings, lecture notes, and supplementary materials.

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to introduce the important concepts of federalism and intergovernmental relations with a particular emphasis on how those concepts affect public policy and public administration. The course will cover the political, legal, and intellectual contexts of federalism. We will seek to understand the importance of federalism by examining its constitutional foundations and evolution through time. Various theories of federalism will be used to explore the role of the national, state, and local governments. Attention will be paid to how the interaction of governments in our federal system influences policy decisions and the ability of government to meet the demands and needs of citizens.

Course Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Evaluate the effects of various power relationships among the federal, state, metropolitan, and local units of government.
- Explain important institutional relationships involving federalism and public policy.
- Identify the intergovernmental aspects of public policy.
- Recognize current trends, issues, administrative structures and procedures in federalism.

Exams and Grading:

There will be a comprehensive final exam, an analytical essay, and book/literature review for the class. The following is the grading breakdown for the course:

Attendance and participation:  20%
Analytical essay: 40%
Policy memorandum: 40%

Students are expected to prepare thoroughly for each class session, to submit written materials on time, and to participate actively and constructively in class. Attendance is critical. All written work is expected to be of high quality. That is, it should be logically organized, complete, and lead the reader to a conclusion. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, proper referencing, and organization will be graded as well as content and presentation. All quotations and significant paraphrases should be properly cited.

Analytical Essay:

An analytical essay is required. The completed essay is due on May 8, 2017. All work submitted must be typewritten and double spaced, using a 12 point font, with 1 inch margins on all four sides and properly footnoted. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade. The grading of the essay will be based on:

- Your ability to provide an analytical viewpoint on the topic to back up your opinions provided with research materials.
- Clarity and organization of the essay.
- Appropriate citations and reference throughout the essay (footnotes, bibliography, etc.).
- Correct grammar, spelling and form.
- Unexcused late essays will be reduced by one-half a grade per day.
- The analytical essay should be between 15 – 20 pages in length.

Policy Memorandum:

A policy briefing memo is a concise, clear statement in memo-format that distills essential information for a policy maker/elected official. The goal of a policy brief is to highlight the most important information necessary for a busy policy maker to make a decision. Memos should all focus on a single problem or issue that you care deeply about.

Your policy briefing memo should include the following items:

- Summarize the policy problem and the pending policy decision
- Critically evaluate the political and policy context
- You may distill the principal arguments, or talking points, supporting different positions or policy options.
- You should provide a clear recommendation.

The memo will be due on May 8, 2017. Try to keep it to 3 – 4 pages in length, typewritten and single-spaced, using a 12 point font, with 1 inch margins on all four sides.
Class Rules:

- Attendance and participation is required and worth 20% of your overall grade
- Arriving late is strongly discouraged
- Reading course assignments is expected
- All Electronic devices are to be muted during class – period
- Showing respect to other students and the professor is expected
- Make up work will be limited to special circumstances (and with prior notification only)
- Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will result in a failing grade.

Attendance and Miscellaneous:

I rarely, if ever, take roll in class. That does not mean I fail to notice the lack of your presence in the classroom. On the contrary. With such intimate classes as offered at the University of St. Thomas, your absence is quite noticeable. I like to have you in class. I value your input. But I make the presumption that since you are in college that you are a reasonably responsible adult. It bothers me very little if you have found someone or something better than attending my class. Of course, it bothers me very little if you have found someone/something better. If you don't show up for class and/or blow-off or do extraordinarily poor on the homework assignments, exams, and the article review, you may be looking at crime or a job in the fast food industry as a succinct alternative to the stresses of higher education.

Academic Integrity:

“IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN BORN”– Mark 14:21.

All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy and reported to the University’s Academic Misconduct Committee.

As stated in the Academic Misconduct Code for the University of St. Thomas, academic misconduct includes: (a) cheating (using an authorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; (b) assisting others in any such act; or (c) attempting to engage in such acts.

Plagiarism is using the work of another person and claiming it as your own. The most common types of plagiarism include:

- Using a paper or portion of a paper prepared by someone else;
• Quoting someone else’s language or words without proper quotation or citation; and
• Paraphrasing someone else’s ideas, framework, or insights without giving credit to the original author in a citation.

Academic misconduct in any form is unacceptable and suspected violations will be pursued aggressively.

Students with Disabilities:

If you have any condition, such as a physical, psychiatric/emotional, medical or learning disability, which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as outlined in this syllabus, please notify me and the Office for Counseling and Testing Services in the first week of the course so that we may make appropriate arrangements. All information and documentation of disability is confidential. Course materials are available in alternative formats upon request.

Schedule of Events (Subject to Change):

Introduction and Theories of Federalism
Federalism and the Courts
Fiscal Federalism
Politics of Federalism
Public Choice and Federalism
New Regionalism and Federalism
Preemption, Devolution and Federalism

Spring Break March 13th – 17th
Local Governments in the Federal System
Tribal Sovereignty and Interstate Cooperation in the Federal System
Economic Policy, States and Federalism
Homeland Security and Disaster Relief Policy
Immigration Policy
Health Policy

Holy Week Break April 13th – 14th
Education Policy
Environmental Policy
Welfare Policy
President Trump, Federalism, and the Future

Policy Memorandum due May 8th
Analytical Essay due May 8th 8:30am – 11:00am