

Course Syllabus

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POS 2112: State and Local Politics

Basic Course and Instructor Information

Semester: Spring 2022

CRN: 24363

Class Meets: Online only.

Instructor Name: Danny Fuerstman

Office Phone: 407-582-1203. This is the general Behavioral and Social Sciences West Campus number. The best way to reach me is by e-mail.

Office Fax: 407-582-1675. This is the general Behavioral and Social Sciences West Campus number. The best way to reach me is by e-mail.

Office Location: Technical location: Behavioral and Social Sciences Bldg 11, Rm 103 West Campus. In reality I live in Sarasota and am therefore very infrequently on campus.

Student/Office Hours: I am happy to set up an appointment to "virtually" meet with you via Zoom/FaceTime/Google Hangouts/Skype/Teams, or you can always e-mail me questions as I respond quite quickly.

Email Address: You can either e-mail me directly through Canvas (click on "Inbox" to the left) or you can e-mail me at dfuerstman@valenciacollege.edu.

Teaching style and instructional methods: The course is taught over Canvas and uses a variety of instructional methods, including video, discussions, simulations, and more.

Course Description

Prerequisite: ENC 1101 or ENC 1101H or IDH 1110

Official Valencia Description: In-depth study of state, county and municipal government with emphasis on contemporary problems. Gordon Rule course which requires demonstration of college level writing skills through multiple assignments. Minimum grade of C required if used to satisfy Gordon Rule requirement.

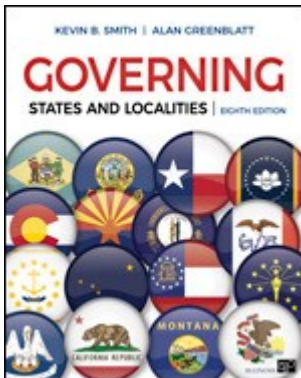
This course is designed to give you a general understanding of political processes, structures and occurrences at the state and local level. Although this course will be quite useful to students majoring in Political Science, it is primarily intended to help most students understand the important role that state and local governments plays in our lives despite the amount of emphasis we typically ascribe to the federal government.

Additional Instructor Description: Look, the government is really important. But following the news can be confusing, or infuriating, or boring, depending on your interests. In this class we will learn about what the government does, why it does it, and what part we all play in the whole system. Hopefully we will learn all that with a minimum of confusion, irritation, or boredom!

Text and Materials

The following text is required:

Governing States and Localities 8th Edition. Kevin B. Smith and Alan Greenblatt. Sage Publishing, 2021. ISBN 978-1544388-601 You can get the ebook or the paper text. The paper version of the text is available through the [West Campus bookstore](https://www.valenciabookstores.com/buy_textbooks.asp) (https://www.valenciabookstores.com/buy_textbooks.asp), Amazon, or directly from [the publisher's website](https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/governing-states-and-localities/book270091) (<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/governing-states-and-localities/book270091>). The digital version is the cheapest by a significant amount, if you don't mind using digital. I know there are some classes where the instructor has you buy the book and then you never use it. I promise this is not one of those classes and you do need the book to succeed in the class.



Course Learning Outcomes and Competencies

Students do not require any background in state and local politics, in American politics, or in political science generally to successfully complete this course.

Valencia Competencies: Part of your experience in this course will be to develop the core competencies of Valencia College of "Think, Value, Communicate, and Act" TVCA. Students will consider their role in the larger scheme of the American political system, learn to value the role they play as citizens, communicate ideas learned in the course through discussions and examinations,

and understand ways in which they can take action to become more civically engaged.

Core Competencies: This course is designed to meet Valencia College's core competencies of critical thinking and cultural and historical understanding.

Course Learning Outcomes: the student, at the successful completion of this course, should be able to:

- 1) describe the basic principles of federalism and how they apply in our republican form of government.
- 2) describe the structure and characteristics of state and local governments.
- 3) describe the policy making process of state and/or local government.
- 4) demonstrate college-level writing skills.

Expectations

Your Expectations of Me

In order to create a positive learning environment that allows for every student to maximize their potential in the course, I find it helpful to lay out some mutual expectations we can and should have for each other. You should absolutely expect me to communicate with you frequently and regularly. I try my best to respond to all e-mails and Canvas messages within 24 hours, and to have all assignments graded within 24 hours, if not sooner. You should expect me to treat you with respect and to respect your opinions and views. As our class deals explicitly with politics, you should expect me to be as neutral as possible in the way I present material, and to do my utmost to foster in you the ability to come to your own conclusions about how you view the political world and orient yourself towards it.

My Expectations of You

In return, I have several expectations of you. I expect you to do your best to keep up with your work, and to be in touch with me as soon as is feasible if you are not able to do so. I expect you to treat me with respect as I will absolutely do for you. In our interactions, and in your interactions with your classmates, I expect you to be courteous, even if and when you disagree with what they are saying. Finally, I expect you to read this whole syllabus (yes, I know it's long) and to follow the policies it lays out.

Grading, Attendance, and Assignments

Grading Policy and Assignments

Grading policy and assignments are subject to change. All assignments are due Sunday by 11:59 PM of the relevant week. You can always find your most current grade in the Canvas gradebook by clicking "Grades" in the left navigation bar of the course.

There are 6 types of assessed activities. The following are the anticipated assignments. Additional assignments may be added. These assignments are subject to change and advanced notice will be provided to students if anything is changed:

Assignment	Total Number	Points For Each	Total Points
Syllabus Quiz	1	10	10
Module Quiz	Best 7 of 8	10	70
Unit Test (objective section and essay section)	4	140	560
Discussion Board	2 Boards in 3 parts each	20-20-10 per Board	100
Critical Reflection Paper	3	30	90
State Research Paper	1	170	170
		Course Total Points	1000

Introductory Assignment/Syllabus Quiz

After the Course Information module is complete students will be asked to take a [quiz about the syllabus](#). It is open note/open syllabus. The purpose of this quiz is to make sure that students have read and understand the syllabus. This quiz serves as the introductory assignment for the course for "no show" reporting.

Module Quizzes

Each module finishes with a module quiz. The module quizzes are open-book and open-note, are timed, and are comprised of multiple choice questions. There are 8 module quizzes. You can take each one only once, but you can drop your lowest score.

Unit Tests

Each of the four units finishes with a test. The test will be composed of two parts - an open-book/open-note objective section with question types such as multiple choice, matching, and fill-in-the blank, and a section with several essays. You may only take each section once.

Discussion Boards

There are two discussion boards in this class, and each takes place in three separate pieces over three weeks. More details can be found in the [first Discussion Board module](#).

Critical Reflections

There are three short critical reflection papers throughout the course. More details can be found in the first critical reflection assignment.

State Research Paper

The state research paper serves as the final exam for the course. You can find more information on the paper in the [Research Paper/Final Exam Module](#) (it's the second module in the Modules page).

Withdrawal Policy

Per Valencia Policy 4-07 (Academic Progress, Course Attendance and Grades, and Withdrawals), a student who withdraws from class before the withdrawal deadline (March 25, 2022) will receive a grade of "W." A student is not permitted to withdraw after the withdrawal deadline. Students who stay in the class after this deadline are responsible to complete all work required for the course; e.g., quizzes, tests, discussions, etc. If you choose to stop attending the class after the withdrawal deadline, you will be held responsible for all work missed, including the final. Any work that is not completed by the appropriate deadline will receive a zero. Hence, the final grade for the course will be determined by taking into consideration the percentages obtained by work that was turned in and the zeros given to work that was not turned in on time. Students can still be withdrawn by the college for violations of the college's code of conduct policies. Any student who withdraws or is withdrawn from a class during a third or subsequent attempt in the same course will be assigned a grade of "F." Students may want to meet with an advisor or counselor before withdrawing. Withdrawal may impact future financial aid and staying on satisfactory academic progress. More details about [satisfactory academic progress can be found at this page](#). (<https://valenciacollege.edu/finaid/satisfactory-progress.php>)

I do not withdraw students from the course for attendance violations. Please make sure you withdraw yourself if you so choose. Failure to attend (virtually or otherwise) will result in zeros but not a withdrawal. Please review this [information related to withdrawals](#) (<https://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/academicpoliciesprocedures/courseattemptscoursewithdrawal/>).

Late Work/Make-up Assignments

Here is the deal with late work and make-up assignments: I hate being in the position of a referee

having to decide (a) whether the reason someone has missed an assignment is "good enough" to justify it and (b) having to feel like I need to verify the accuracy of your excuse. That sets up an adversarial dynamic between us, which doesn't seem like the best way to go about it. In the olden days we used to just be able to say stuff like "late assignments will be allowed at the instructor's discretion" but it is really tough to ensure that I am being consistent and equitable that way. Therefore I've come up with the following policy and so far it seems to be working well. It strikes a balance between not unduly punishing those who miss things, but also not creating a world where no one does anything by the deadlines.

You can do any assignment after the date that it is due, but with a 3% penalty per day. The maximum penalty is 40%, in other words your score cannot be reduced below a 60% on something that is late. It's all set up automatically in Canvas, so do let me know if it seems to be messing the math up, and I'll double check it. There are some absences that are excused, though, and that the late penalty does not apply to. This includes if you have a doctor's note, a hospital note, or a death in the family. Also any other official college-excused absence, such as travel for a college athletic or academic team, would count. In any of these cases please just reach out to me by e-mail and we will figure out a way for you to make the work up without penalty. Similarly, if you know you're going to struggle to meet an upcoming deadline due to a medical reason (such as COVID or expected due date, etc.), please reach out and we'll work it out so that you do not have the penalty.

For any other reason - whether that's family issue, work-related stuff, schoolwork-related stuff, or if you just happened to forget - you can make up the assignment with the above late penalty, no questions asked. Assignments will be accepted up until the due date of the last assignment for the course.

Grading Scale

This course uses the following grading scale:

89.5% or higher – A

79.5% - 89.4% – B

69.5% - 79.4% – C

59.5% - 69.4% – D

59.4% or lower – F

To calculate your percentage, your total number of points in the course will be divided by the total number available in the course.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit planned for the course at this time. Should any opportunities be offered they will be offered to everyone and will be included in the weekly e-mail updates sent out on Mondays.

Other Policies

Course End Date

Please note that the deadline for the course is Wednesday, April 27th at 11:59 PM. Any late work submitted after that time will not be graded and will not count towards your final grade.

Communication

The best way to reach me is either through Canvas's built-in messaging system, or through college e-mail (dfuerstman@valenciacollege.edu). Most e-mails will be answered within 24 hours (probably less) during the week, and within 72 hours during a weekend. It is safe to say that if you don't hear back from me within 72 hours then I have not received your e-mail and you should try me on the other e-mail address. Or I'm lying in a ditch somewhere and you probably should have called for help sooner than 72 hours!

Statement of Plagiarism and/or Cheating

Plagiarism is the use of ideas, facts, opinions, illustrative material, data, direct or indirect wording of another scholar and/or writer—professional or student—without giving proper credit. Cheating extends to other activities such as working with others on exams or copying other students' work (or other activities that are prohibited by the instructions in an assignment). Any assignments involving plagiarism or other cheating will receive anything from a reduction in points, a zero for the assignment, failure in the course or similar penalty and could possibly be referred to the dean for further action.

Standards of Conduct

Students are expected to abide by the [Student Code of Conduct](https://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/academicpoliciesprocedures/studentcodeofconduct/) (<https://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/academicpoliciesprocedures/studentcodeofconduct/>).

Required Technology

This course has no special technological requirements other than regular and stable access to the internet.

College Resources

The college has many resources available to help you successfully navigate your education at Valencia, as well as plan for wherever life may take you after (including transferring to another school or entering the job market). I've listed below some of the most important resources, along with brief descriptions and links. You may already know about some of them, but I suspect that some will be new to you; they certainly were to me when I first learned about them!

Accommodation Services

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a Notification to Instructor (NTI) form from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the professor, preferably during the first two weeks of class; accommodations will not be applied retroactively. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities.

West Campus SSB, Rm. 102 Phone: 407-582-1523 Fax: 407-582-1326

Advising

Valencia has an excellent free advising and counseling group. This includes both those advisors who focus on career/education planning, and counselors who are available for mental health support. You can find out more by visiting Valencia's [Advising and Counseling website](https://valenciacollege.edu/students/advising-counseling/) (<https://valenciacollege.edu/students/advising-counseling/>).

Canvas Technical Support

Canvas has some awesome technical support. As such you can always get help by clicking the question mark icon in the lower left-hand corner of the Canvas window and choosing "Report a Problem" or contacting Canvas support at 407-582-5600.

Other Technical Support

The library has put together a great Libguide that has details on getting various kinds of tech support as well as information on tutoring. [You can find it here.](https://libguides.valenciacollege.edu/c.php?g=1014597&p=7732655) (<https://libguides.valenciacollege.edu/c.php?g=1014597&p=7732655>) You can also find more on tutoring below.

Free Microsoft Office 365 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.)

If you head into your Atlas account and you look on the My Atlas tab, you should see a box titled "Microsoft Office For Personal Use". It's a completely free download of the various Office products,

including Word, which you can access as a Valencia student.

Learning Support Services/Free Tutoring

Learning Support Services provides students with academic support through distance tutoring, face to face tutoring at the campuses, writing consultations, library services, and resources. Tutoring is offered in most academic disciplines including math, science, foreign languages, English for academic purposes (EAP), computer programming and writing assistance for any course. Assistance with library research can be accessed online through Atlas or the tutoring LibGuide. For more information on how to access tutoring and library research assistance, please visit the college-wide [Learning Support Services LibGuide](http://www.valenciacollege.edu/tutoring) (<http://www.valenciacollege.edu/tutoring>).

Please note: Brainfuse is our new 24/7 online tutoring and learning hub, which is available to all of Valencia's students. This service is best used as a back-up to Valencia's Distance Tutoring service, not as a replacement. Brainfuse is accessible [through this link](http://www.valenciacollege.edu/tutoring) (<http://www.valenciacollege.edu/tutoring>).

Pooky's Pantry

Pooky's Pantry, located on Valencia's East campus but open to all Valencia students, is a "free resource for students in need of food, outside resource information, and local housing information. A student is allowed to take up to 6 items per day with a valid Valencia ID". It is open Monday – Thursday 8AM to 5 PM, and Friday, noon to 5 PM. It is located in Building 4, Room 134.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is subject to change. Due notice will be provided to students via e-mail should anything change.

Course Calendar




The course schedule is as follows:


Module #	Date	Module Topics	Reading	Assignments
Module 1	1/10 - 1/23 at 11:59 PM	Introduction and Federalism	Chapters 1 and 2	Syllabus Quiz DUE 1/16 Module 1 Quiz Critical Reflection 1

				DUE 1/23
Module 2	1/24 - 2/6 at 11:59 PM	Constitutions and State Finance	Chapters 3 and 4	Module 2 Quiz Unit 1 Test Discussion Board 1 Part 1
Module 3	2/7 - 2/20 at 11:59 PM	Legislatures and Executives	Chapters 7 and 8	Module 3 Quiz Discussion Board 1 Part 2 Critical Reflection 2
Module 4	2/21 - 3/6 at 11:59 PM	Courts and Bureaucracies	Chapters 9 and 10	Module 4 Quiz Unit 2 Test Discussion Board 1 Part 3
Module 5	3/7 - 3/20 at 11:59 PM	Political Participation, Parties, and Interest Groups	Chapters 5 and 6	Module 5 Quiz Discussion Board 2 Part 1 Critical Reflection 3
Module 6	3/21 - 4/3 at 11:59 PM	Local Governments and Urban Politics	Chapters 11 and 12	Module 6 Quiz Discussion Board 2 Part 2 Unit 3 Test
Module 7	4/4 - 4/17 at 11:59 PM	Policy: Education, and Criminal Justice	Chapters 13 and 14	Module 7 Quiz Discussion Board 2 Part 3







				State Research Paper
Module 8 NOTE ONLY ONE WEEK FOR THIS MODULE	4/18 - 4/24 at 11:59 PM	Policy: Social and Environmental	Chapters 15 and 16	Module 8 Quiz Unit 4 Test

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Sun Jan 16, 2022	 Introductory Assignment / Syllabus Quiz https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336430	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jan 23, 2022	 Critical Reflection #1 https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336438	due by 11:59pm
	 Module 1 Quiz https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336425	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Sun Feb 6, 2022	 Discussion Board #1 Part 1 (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336437)	due by 11:59pm
	 Module 2 Quiz (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336419)	due by 11:59pm
	 Unit 1 Test Mini-Essays (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336426)	due by 11:59pm
	 Unit 1 Test Objective Section (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336427)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 20, 2022	 Critical Reflection #2 (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336439)	due by 11:59pm
	 Discussion Board #1 Part 2 (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336436)	due by 11:59pm
	 Module 3 Quiz (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336423)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Mar 6, 2022	 Discussion Board #1 Part 3: Reflections (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336441)	due by 11:59pm
	 Module 4 Quiz (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336441)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
	/3336424	
	 Unit 2 Test Mini-Essays (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336432)	due by 11:59pm
	 Unit 2 Test Objective Section (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336417)	due by 11:59pm
	 Critical Reflection #3 (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336440)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Mar 20, 2022	 Discussion Board #2 Part 1 (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336435)	due by 11:59pm
	 Module 5 Quiz (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336428)	due by 11:59pm
	 Discussion Board #2 Part 2 (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336434)	due by 11:59pm
	 Module 6 Quiz (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336418)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Apr 3, 2022	 Unit 3 Test Mini-Essays (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336433)	due by 11:59pm
	 Unit 3 Test Objective Section (https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
	/3336422)	
	 Module 7 Quiz https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336420	due by 11:59pm
Sun Apr 17, 2022	 Submit Research Paper Here https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336443	due by 11:59pm
	 Discussion Board #2 Part 3: Reflections https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336442	due by 11:59pm
	 Module 8 Quiz https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336429	due by 11:59pm
Sun Apr 24, 2022	 Unit 4 Test Mini-Essays https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336431	due by 11:59pm
	 Unit 4 Test Objective Section https://valenciacollege.instructure.com/courses/138427/assignments/3336421	due by 11:59pm