

POLITICS OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Political Science 2201, Spring 2005

Professor J. Clark
Room: Pafford 140
Telephone: 678-839-6504
e-mail: jlark@westga.edu

Office hours:
MW: 2:00-5:00
TR: 2:00-4:00
Or by appointment

SYLLABUS

Course Objective: This course examines the relationship between the three levels of government in the United States, analyzes the role of state and local governments in the American political system and describes the impact of their policies on American life. Philosophical issues related to federalism and decentralization in democracy are discussed. The ultimate purpose of the course is to improve the students' understanding of their political system and to enhance their participation in its processes.

Learning Outcomes: Students will demonstrate that they have developed: an understanding of the basic values of American civic culture; the institutional, political, and legal processes of the American states and localities, with particular emphasis on Georgia; the interrelationship of the American states and localities with one another and with the national government; the major public policy of the states and the role of states in their implementation; and that they have the ability to communicate their knowledge in writing.

Relation to Mission: The course provides the student with greater understanding of the U. S. federal system and the role of state and local governments. It furthers their understanding of politics in Georgia and their local government.

Core Curriculum Application: Area E or Area F, part one.

Textbooks: League of Women Voters of Georgia, *Georgia Government*.
Smith, Greenblatt and Buntin, *Governing States & Localities*

Grading: There will be three essay examinations during the semester which will each constitute one-fourth of the students' grades. The remaining one-fourth will be based upon an original paper in which the students describe the role of one unit of local government. The students are asked to select a unit of local government and to review the Georgia Constitution and Statutes regarding the structure and authority granted to the unit. They should plan to attend at least 3 meetings of the governmental unit to observe how that government sets policy. Following the newspaper accounts of meetings will also be helpful. The papers should be approximately 6-8 type-written, double-spaced pages in length. Constitution, statutes, newspapers articles, discussions at governmental meetings, and any interviews that are used should be properly cited in footnotes and bibliography. Evidence of having attended three meetings should be included in the papers which are due on April 18.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

- I. Introduction:
 - A. Approaches to government: Smith et al, Chapter 1
 - B. Environment:
 - C. Federalism: Smith et al, Chapter 2
 - D. Constitution: Smith et al, Chapter 3; LWV, Chapter 1

- II. Public participation: Smith et al, Chapters 4 & 5; LWV Chapter 8
 - A. Political culture and attitude
 - B. Elections
 - C. Parties and interest Groups

EXAM I: Feb. 11

- III. Institutions of government:
 - A. Legislature: Smith et al, Chapter 6; LWV, Chapters 3 & 4
 - B. Executive: Smith et al, Chapter 7 & 9, LWV, Chapter 2
 - C. Judiciary: Smith et al, Chapter 8, LWV, Chapter 5
 - D. Local government: Smith et al, Chapter 10; LWV, Chapter 6

EXAM II: March 18

- IV. Policy outputs: LWV, Chapter 9
 - A. Revenue: Smith et al Chapter 11; LWV, Chapter 7
 - B. Education: Smith et al, Chapter 12
 - C. Crime and punishment: Smith et al, Chapter 13
 - D. Health and Welfare: Smith et al, Chapter 14

- V. Conclusion:

EXAM III: May 6, 11:00d