

PS 5315: LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Course Syllabus

Assignments

- Weekly Reading Reactions (4 posts; 10 points each)
- Film Review (20 points)
- Final Exam (40 points)

See page 2 for more information about assignments.

Important Dates

- June 2: Class Begins
- June 9: Reaction 1 Due
- June 16: Reaction 2 Due
- June 23: Reaction 3 Due
- June 26: Film Review Due
- June 30: Reaction 4 Due
- July 3: University Holiday
- July 7: Final Exam Due

See page 4 for the course schedule.

Readings

There are no required books that must be purchased for this course.

All required readings are posted on our course Blackboard page, as PDFs or links to websites.

See page 5 for the list of class readings.



Course Introduction

How have local governments attempted to solve problems related to federalism, bureaucratic overlap, finances, and the provision of public services? How do local governments respond to pressure from citizen groups and the media? How do the problems faced by urban local governments differ from the problems of rural local government? This course will attempt to answer these questions by examining a wide range of issues facing local governments. We will think critically about real problems faced by cities, counties, and special districts in Texas, and we will link these issues to theories of local government administration.

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Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 2-3pm

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Grading

Course Requirements

- Weekly Reaction 1:
Worth 10 points
Due June 9
- Weekly Reaction 2:
Worth 10 points
Due June 16
- Weekly Reaction 3:
Worth 10 points
Due June 23
- Film Review:
Worth 20 points
Due June 26
- Weekly Reaction 4:
Worth 10 points
Due June 30
- Final Exam:
Worth 40 points
Due July 7

Course Grading

- 90-100 points = A
- 80-89 points = B
- 70-79 points = C
- 60-69 points = D
- Less than 60 points = F

Submission

- Assignments are due by 5pm CDT on due date.
- All assignments must be submitted via course Blackboard page.

Course Assignments

Assignment	Description
<p>Weekly Reading Reactions</p> <p>Four Weekly Reactions Due on Tuesdays</p> <p>Worth 10 points Each</p>	<p>Each week, complete a four-part reading reaction quiz, activity, and discussion</p>
<p>Film Review</p> <p>Due on June 26 Worth 20 points</p>	<p>Write a 10-page review of three short films about local government issues.</p>
<p>Final Exam</p> <p>Due on July 7 Worth 40 points</p>	<p>Write a 15-20 page essay in response to two questions about course readings.</p>

You can find additional details about each assignment (including instructions, formatting and citation requirements, examples, and grading rubrics) on our course Blackboard page.

Course and Program Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to critique significant theoretical approaches of local public policymaking.

- **How will we meet this goal?**
Unit 1 & 4

- **How will we assess this goal?**
Reaction Posts;
Final Exam

2. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate local processes of policymaking.

- **How will we meet this goal?**
Units 2-3

- **How will we assess this goal?**
Reaction Posts;
Film Review

3. Demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate statistical tools for quantitative analysis of local public policy.

- **How will we meet this goal?**
Units 1-4

- **How will we assess this goal?**
Reaction Posts

Course Policies

Distance Education Statement

- Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Late Work

- If you need to miss an assignment, please inform Dr. Moreland of the situation as soon as possible. Late assignments will only be allowed in the case of an emergency.

Students with Special Needs

- Any student who because of a disability may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary accommodations. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such an accommodation, please contact the coordinator for the Center for Counseling and Accessibility Services, at (432) 837-8363 in Ferguson Hall 112.

Academic Integrity

- Any instance of academic misconduct, such as turning in an identical written assignment for another course without approval, cheating and plagiarizing written assignments, collusion, or misrepresenting facts will be punished according to the university's disciplinary policy.

Source Citation and Style Guide

- All written work should follow the American Political Science Association (APSA) style guide. Written work should include in-text citations and a reference page.

Communicating with the Professor:

- The best way to contact me is through email at amoreland@sulross.edu. I will try to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours, please resend your email or call my office at 432.837-8162.

Course Schedule

Unit	Dates	Readings	Assignments
Unit 1: Studying Local Governments in a Federal System	June 3- June 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swartz 2014 • Hogue 2013 • Katz 2003 • Trounstone 2009 • Shipan & Volden 2006 • Honadle 2001 • Becker 2009 • Farmer 2014 	Reaction 1 Due June 9 at 5pm CDT
Unit 2: City Governments	June 10- June 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ennis 2005 • Gurwitt 2007 • Goldstein 2014 • Cities 101 • TML Handbook • Svava & Nelson 2008 • Bradbury & Waechter 2009 • TML How Cities Work • Wood 2002 • Eisenger 2000 • Maciag 2013 	Reaction 2 Due June 16 at 5pm CDT
Unit 3: County Governments	June 17- June 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funkhouser 2012 • Palacios 2012 • Moravec 2013 • Texas County Government 2015 • Gilmartin, Avery, & Cartrite 2011 • Savitch, Vogel, & Ye 2009 • Hoene, Baldassare, & Shires 2002 • Wogan 2014 	Reaction 3 Due June 23 at 5pm CDT
Unit 4: Special Districts and Citizen Engagement in Local Government	June 24- June 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burka 2008 • Cohen 2012 • Fernandez 2012 • Chammah 2012 • TSRC 2008 • Killian 2011 • Heikkila & Roussin Isett 2007 • Aikens and Krane 2010 • The Secret Tax Explosion 	Film Review Due June 26 at 5pm CDT Reaction 4 Due June 30 at 5pm CDT

Final Exam due July 8 at 5pm on Blackboard.

Course Readings

Unit 1: Studying Local Governments in a Federal System

- Swartz, Mimi. 2014. "Cities, Slicker." *Texas Monthly*, May: <http://www.texasmonthly.com/story/cities-slicker>
- Hogue, Carma. 2013. "Governing Organization Summary Report: 2012." *United States Census Bureau*, September 26: http://www2.census.gov/govs/cog/g12_org.pdf
- Katz, Ellis. 2003. "Responses to Change by State and Local Government: Contemporary Experiments in the Laboratories of Democracy." *Issues of Democracy* 8(2): 4-12.
- Trounstone, Jessica. 2009. "All Politics is Local: The Reemergence of the Study of City Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 7(3): 611-618.
- Shipan, Charles R. and Craig Volden. 2006. "Bottom-Up Federalism: The Diffusion of Antismoking Policies from U.S. Cities to States." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 825-843.
- Honadle, Beth Walter. 2001. "Theoretical and Practical Issues of Local Government Capacity in an Era of Devolution." *Journal of Regional Analysis and Policy* 31(1): 77-90.
- Becker, Christine. 2009. "Disaster Recovery: A Local Government Responsibility." *PM Magazine* 91(2): <http://webapps.icma.org/pm/9102/>
- Farmer, Liz. 2014. "Can Cities and Suburbs Work Together?" *Governing*, March: <http://www.governing.com/news/headlines/Can-Cities-and-Their-Suburbs-Work-Together-.html>

Unit 2: City Governments

- Ennis, Michael. 2005. "What's the Matter With Dallas?" *Texas Monthly*, July: <http://www.texasmonthly.com/content/what%E2%80%99s-matter-dallas>
- Gurwitt, Rob. 2007. "Can Dallas Govern Itself?" *Governing*, July: <http://www.governing.com/topics/politics/Can-Dallas-Govern-Itself.html>
- Goldstein, Scott. 2014. "Rawlings Keeps His Own Counsel — To Chagrin of Some on Council." *Dallas Morning News*, March 15. <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/politics/local-politics/20140315-rawlings-keeps-his-own-counsel-to-chagrin-of-some-on-council.ece>
- National League of Cities. 2013. "Cities 101." <http://www.nlc.org/build-skills-and-networks/resources/cities-101>
- Texas Municipal League. 2011. Handbook for Mayors and Councilmembers. http://www.tml.org/pub_handbooks.asp
- Svara, James H. and Kimberly L. Nelson. 2008. "Taking Stock of the Council-Manager Form at 100." *Public Management* (August): 6-14.
- Bradbury, Mark D. and G. David Waechter. 2009. "Extreme Outsourcing in Local Government: At the Top and All But the Top." *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 29(3): 230-248.
- Texas Municipal League. 2011. How Cities Work. <http://www.tml.org/HowCitiesWork.asp>
- Wood, Curtis. 2002. "Voter Turnout in City Elections." *Urban Affairs Review* 38 (2): 209-231.
- Eisinger, Peter. 2000. "The Politics of Bread and Circuses." *Urban Affairs Review* 35(3): 316-333.
- Maciag, Mike. 2013. "Oil Boom Fuels Fastest-Growing Metro Area, Midland, Texas -- But at a Price." *Governing*, September 12. <http://www.governing.com/blogs/by-the-numbers/gov-midland-oil-boom-jobs-population-growth-creates-challenges-for-government.html>

Unit 3: County Governments

- Funkhouser, Mark. 2012. "Cities, Counties and the Urge to Merge." *Governing*, October: <http://www.governing.com/columns/public-money/col-cities-counties-consolidation.html>
- Palacios, Joey. 2012. "Could The City Of San Antonio And Bexar County Become One Governing Body?" *Texas Public Radio*, November 26. <http://tpr.org/post/could-city-san-antonio-and-bexar-county-become-one-governing-body>
- Moravec, Eva Ruth. 2013. "Castro Opposes County-City Consolidation." *San Antonio Express News*, March 1. http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/article/Castro-opposes-county-city-consolidation-4318611.php
- Texas Association of Counties. 2015. "Texas County Government." *Texas Association of Counties*. www.county.org/texas-county-government/Pages/default.aspx
- Gilmartin, John A., Richard O. Avery, and Eric S. Cartrite. 2011. "County Government Topics: Points of County Law." V.G. Young Institute of County Government, 5: vgyi.tamu.edu/files/2011/09/Points-of-County-Law.pdf
- Savitch, H. V., Ronald K. Vogel and Lin Ye. 2009. "Beyond the Rhetoric: Lessons from Louisville's Consolidation." *American Review of Public Administration* 20 (10): 1-25.
- Hoene, Christopher, Mark Baldassare and Michael Shires. 2002. "The Development of Counties as Municipal Governments : A Case Study of Los Angeles County in the Twenty-First Century." *Urban Affairs Review* 37 (4): 575-591.
- Wogan, J.B. 2014. "Can Cities and Rural Counties Come Together?" *Governing*, April: <http://www.governing.com/topics/politics/gov-can-cities-and-rural-counties-collaborate.html>

Unit 4: Special Districts and Citizen Engagement in Local Government

- Burka, Paul. 2008. "Fed Up." *Texas Monthly*, April; <http://www.texasmonthly.com/story/fed-0>
- Cohen, Jason. 2012. "Numerous Scandals Rock El Paso Area." *TM Daily Post*, February 27: <http://www.texasmonthly.com/story/numerous-scandals-rock-el-paso-area>
- Fernandez, Manny. 2012. "El Paso Schools Confront Scandal of Students Who 'Disappeared' at Test Time." *New York Times*, October 13. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/14/education/el-paso-rattled-by-scandal-of-disappeared-students.html?_r=0
- Chammah, Maurice. 2012. "Entire El Paso School Board Stripped of Authority After Cheating Scandal." *Governing*, December 7. <http://www.governing.com/news/state/tt-el-paso-school-board-cheating-scandal.html>
- Texas Senate Research Committee. 2008. "Invisible Governments: Special Purpose Districts in Texas." <http://www.senate.state.tx.us/SRC/pdf/SL-SpPurposeDistricts.pdf>
- Killian, Larita. 2011. "The Continuing Problem of Special Districts in American Government." *Accounting and the Public Interest* 11(1): 52-67.
- Heikkila, Tanya and Kimberley Roussin Isett. 2007. "Citizen Involvement and Performance Management in Special-Purpose Governments." *Public Administration Review* 67(2): 238-248.
- Aikens, Stephen Kwamena and Dale Krane. 2010. "Are Public Officials Obstacles to Citizen-Centered E-Government? An Examination of Municipal Administrators' Motivations and Actions." *State and Local Government Review* 42(2): 87-103.
- Governing. 2013. "The Secret Tax Explosion." *Governing*, September: <http://www.governing.com/columns/public-money/col-secret-tax-explosion.html>

