

# PS 5311: Intergovernmental Relations

## Fall 2023

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**Professor:** Jessica Velasco, DPA  
**Office Hours:** MW (2-5 p.m.) & by appointment  
**Office Location:** LH 210  
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### Course Description:

*Intergovernmental relations* can be defined as “the activities and interaction that enable a federal system to function or not function” (Stephens & Wikstrom, 2007). Sounds simple, right? In reality and as society has evolved and social issues have become more complex, intergovernmental relations have become more complex as well. This course will explore that complexity, including a focus not only on the national-state-local interactions, but also on the interactions between the Native American nations and the various levels of government in our country.



### Course Learning Outcomes:

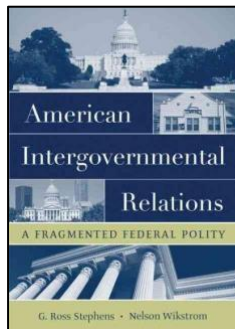
By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Describe the history of the intergovernmental relations (IGR) in the United States
- Explain past and current challenges to positive IGR
- Identify some of the big questions in IGR, as well as potential answers
- Describe findings of current research in IGR
- Research, develop, and propose strategies to address conflicts in IGR, focused (ideally) on the public service areas where they work

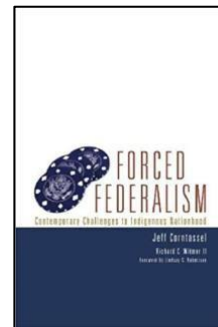
### Program Learning Outcomes

<b>Public Administration</b>	<b>Political Science</b>
<p>The graduating student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate the ability to critique significant theoretical approaches of public administration.</li><li>• Demonstrate the ability to evaluate domestic and international administrative processes.</li><li>• Demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate statistical tools for quantitative analysis.</li></ul>	<p>The graduating student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate the ability to analyze significant theoretical approaches of political science</li><li>• Demonstrate the ability to evaluate domestic and international political processes</li><li>• Demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate statistical tools for quantitative analysis</li></ul>

## Required Texts:



**Title:** American Intergovernmental Relations: A Fragmented Polity (2007)  
**Authors:** G. Ross Stephens & Nelson Wikstrom  
**ISBN:** 0195172027  
**ISBN-13:** 9780195172027



**Title:** Forced Federalism: Contemporary Challenges to Indigenous Nationhood (2008)  
**Authors:** Jeff Corntassel & Richard C. Witmer, II.  
**ISBN:** 0806139064  
**ISBN13:** 9780806139067

## GRADING

The point distribution is listed below:

Discussion Boards (4 x 50)	200
Reading Assignments (4 x 50)	200
Case Studies (4 x 150)	600
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>

Grades in this class will be determined by the number of points you earn by the end of the course.

<b>A</b>	<b>895-1000 points</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>795-894 POINTS</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>695-794 POINTS</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>595-694 POINTS</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>BELOW 595 POINTS</b>

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Readings:** There are two required texts for this class. You are expected to complete the readings that are listed on the syllabus. You will also be reading additional articles and materials to complete your assignments. These should be peer-reviewed or government/organization sources. Online periodicals and magazines are not peer-reviewed and should only be used in rare cases. Please see the information below about the SRSU library resources.

**Discussion Boards:** On some weeks, you will be required to participate in discussion boards related to the readings for the week. **You will need to post three discussion questions by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.**

of those weeks and two, scholarly responses by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. All students must follow the ground rules for discussion boards (see below). Please see the posted rubric for more information on the grading for the discussion boards. Please also review the examples of scholarly posts provided in your Week 1 folder. You should view these response posts like mini research papers. Any claims you use on the discussion board should be substantiated. Also, reviewing all questions and responses at the end of the week will help you get more out of the course. **DUE DATE: Response posts are due by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday on the weeks they are assigned. Weeks for these assignments are noted on the course calendar.**

**Reading Assignments:** On some weeks, you will need to complete an assignment related to the readings for the week. Please submit these to the appropriate spot in Blackboard in Word using the template provided. Please also refer to the rubric provided for guidance on how points will be assigned. **DUE DATE: Reading assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday on the weeks they are assigned. Weeks for these assignments are noted on the course calendar.** NOTE: There are FIVE reading assignment options. You only need to complete FOUR of them.

**Case Studies:** You will complete three case studies this semester, one that focuses on each of the four main relationships in U.S. intergovernmental relations. Instructions and rubrics can be found on Blackboard. **(DUE DATE: Case studies are due by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday on the weeks they are assigned. Weeks for these assignments are noted on the syllabus.**

### **INTERACTION OPPORTUNITIES**

It is important to me that we have some sort of interaction in the class. I will be having an optional, virtual Q&A session during the first week of class. In addition, I will be interacting with you on discussion boards, and I will be planning at least a few virtual meetings and/or guest speakers. Details will be sent out on Blackboard announcements. In addition, I am happy to schedule individual meetings with any of you. Just let me know!

### **CALENDAR**

<b>W</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Due &amp; Important Dates</b>
1	8/28-9/3	Introduction to the Course	Syllabus	Post an introduction to the discussion board  <b>*8/31 Last day for registration changes</b>
2	9/4-9/10	The United States as a Federal System: Theoretical Insights and Experience	Chapter 1 AIR	Post discussion questions by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. and two responses by Sunday at 11:59 p.m.  <b>*9/4 Labor Day Holiday</b>
3	9/11-9/17	Federalism & IGR: Concepts, Models, and the American System; Contemporary American Federalism & IGR: Cooperation & Conflict	Chapters 2-3 AIR	Complete reading assignment by Sunday at 11:59 p.m.  <b>*9/13 Last day to drop with no record</b>

4	9/18-9/24	CASE STUDY: FEDERAL-STATE	Articles to support case study	Submit case study by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. <b>*9/19-Constitution Day Celebration and National Voter Registration Day</b>
5	9/25-10/1	Fiscal Federalism	Chapter 4 AIR	Post discussion questions by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. and two responses by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. <b>*9/27 Meal on the Mall</b>
6	10/2-10/8	Federalism and IGR: The National Policy Process and Public Policy	Chapter 5 AIR	Post discussion questions by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. and two responses by Sunday at 11:59 p.m.
7	10/9-10/15	CASE STUDY: STATE-STATE	Articles to support case study	Submit case study by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. <b>*10/10—Last day to register to vote in November</b>
8	10/16-10/22	Regulation & Cooperation and Conflict (states)	Chapters 6-7 AIR	Complete reading assignment by Sunday at 11:59 p.m.
9	10/23-10/29	State-Local Relations and Local Governments in the IG system	Chapters 8-9 AIR	Complete reading assignment by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. <b>*10/23 Early voting starts</b>
10	10/30-11/5	CASE STUDY: STATE-LOCAL	Chapter 10 AIR & Articles to support case study	Submit case study by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. <b>*11/3-Last day of early voting</b>
11	11/6-11/12	Contemporary Challenges to Indigenous Nationhood & Current Social Constructions of Indigenous Peoples	Chapters 1-2 FF	Post discussion questions by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. and two responses by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. <b>*11/7-Election Day</b>
12	11/13-11/19	Managing the Politics of Perception & The Forced Federalism Survey	Chapters 3-4 FF	Complete reading assignment by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. <b>*11/14 Last day to apply for Fall 2023 graduation</b> <b>*11/17 Last day to drop with a “W”</b>
13	11/20-11/26	Enjoy your holiday!		<b>*11/22-24 Thanksgiving Holiday</b>

14	11/27-12/3	Negotiating Compacts between Indigenous Nations & States	Chapters 5-6 FF	Complete reading assignment by Sunday at 11:59 p.m.
15	12/4-12/10	CASE-STUDY: US-NATIVE NATIONS	Articles to support case study	Submit final case study by 12/10 at 11:59 p.m. <b>*12/6 Last day of Fall 2023 classes</b>
16	12/11-12/15	Finals week and Graduation		

**Key:**

AIR= American Intergovernmental Relations: A Fragmented Polity (2007)

FF= Forced Federalism: Contemporary Challenges to Indigenous Nationhood (2008)

**WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME:**

- I will provide weekly communication with the class through announcements (email and posted on Blackboard), email notifications, and virtual office hours.
- I will provide email responses within 24 hours of receipt during the hours of 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday.
- I will provide grades and feedback for assignments within one week of the submission due date.
- I will provide clear and concise instructions on how to complete the online course requirements.
- I will provide a range of opportunities to engage in the course content in a meaningful way.
- I will engage in the weekly discussion boards to provide direction or clarification to the discussion.
- I will do my best to stay abreast of the current research in the field to help you get the best possible experience in the course.

**WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:**

- You will familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, policies, assessments, evaluation, grading criteria, and course design.
- You will acquire the tools necessary to be successful in this class. This includes the book, reliable Internet access, and a device other than your phone for completing assignments.
- You will complete all assigned readings and coursework by assigned due dates.
- You will engage in the course, with your peers, and with me, using open and appropriate communication
- You will be diligent about using communication in a way that shows respect to me and your classmates
- You will submit graduate-level work that has been checked carefully for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation (using a free extension like Grammarly is recommended).
- You will respond to communication from me and your classmates in a timely manner (within 24 hours).
- You will not plagiarize the work of others or yourself, and you will also not collaborate with others on class assignments (unless clearly authorized to do so)

- You will reach out to me immediately if you are having trouble in the class or with access to course materials (although please call the Help Desk--888.837.6055 for general access issues)

### **GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION BOARDS**

SOURCE: Center for Teaching and Learning. (2020). Sample discussion board ground rules. Retrieved from <https://ctl.wiley.com/sample-discussion-board-ground-rules/>

- **Ask questions.**  
If you find something confusing or want to know more, do not hesitate to ask questions. Make sure to post your questions in the appropriate thread.
- **Participate.**  
Do not hide in the background; it is not fair to lurk and let others do all the work. Contribute to discussions to get as much as possible from the course and to maintain your participation grade.
- **Do not dominate a discussion.**  
Share your knowledge, but not to the point of excluding others. If you have something to offer, please share it, but allow everyone to contribute equally to a discussion.
- **Be intellectually rigorous.**  
Do not excuse sloppy or illogical thinking. Challenge yourself and one another.
- **Be tactful.**  
Be critical of ideas but remember there are other people involved. Be tactful and kind. You can hurt the feelings of a person reading your post.
- **Forgive other students' mistakes.**  
Do not correct others, even if you follow the rules of netiquette and use good manners. Just because you do not agree with a student's post does not mean that he or she is wrong. Instead, offer a different perspective to encourage further discussion.
- **Read the whole thread before posting.**  
Read all the posts in a thread before responding so you don't repeat what others have already said. Try to contribute clarifying information or a new idea to a discussion.
- **Be concise.**  
Do not waste people's time by posting basic, repetitive information. Make your point clearly and quickly.
- **Reread and check your posts.**  
Practice professionalism. Be mindful of how you look online; others will likely judge the tone and quality of your writing. Reread your posts and edit for clarity and mechanics.
- **Cite your sources.**  
If you use a source, cite it properly. Give credit where credit is due. Include links where appropriate.
- **Maintain confidentiality.**  
Respect your classmates' privacy. Do not repeat the personal information that others share.
- **Report technical problems.** If the platform is not working properly, please let me know as soon as possible

### **OTHER COURSE POLICIES & RESOURCES**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a

course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources *unless permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

As an SRSU student, it is your responsibility to read and understand the university's expectations about academic integrity. All violations will be taken seriously and handled through the appropriate university process. The policy can be found at: <https://www.sulross.edu/about/administration/university-policies/>

**In addition, please note that plagiarism detection software will be used in this class for written assignments. Respondus Lockdown and Monitor will likely be used for the two exams as well.**

If you have any questions about this, please ask!

### **LATE WORK:**

I have been very intentional about how I have designed this course and distributed the content to optimize your learning and comprehension. Trying to cram weeks of work into a few days or waiting until the end of the semester to do everything isn't conducive to learning. For this reason, you must have an extenuating circumstance and approval from me to submit late work. If you submit late work without an approved extension from me, I reserve the right not to grade it. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Since university-related travel (e.g., travel for athletics competition) is planned in advance (with a few exceptions), make sure to plan ahead and submit assignments before departure to avoid missing deadlines.

### **COURSE BLACKBOARD RESOURCES:**

There are several resources on the course Blackboard page. You are expected to review and familiarize yourself with the items in Blackboard in the first week of class. **NOTE:** Please post general, course-related questions to the discussion board forum I have set up for this. Typically, if one student in the class has the question, others do as well. Please allow 24 hours for a response, and then feel free to email me or call me directly with your question.

### **ADA STATEMENT**

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu). Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

### **SRSU DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT**

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website.

Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. 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. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

### **ALPINE LIBRARY INFORMATION**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu/](http://library.sulross.edu/). Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting [library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/](http://library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/) or ask a librarian by emailing [srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu).

New for Fall 2023: Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL) and ScanIt to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

### **BLACKBOARD TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

SRSU 24/7 Blackboard Technical Support Online Support Desk Contact Info: Toll Free: 888.837.6055. Email: [blackboardsupport@sulross.edu](mailto:blackboardsupport@sulross.edu)

### **INCOMPLETE POLICY**

We do have the ability to assign students an incomplete at the end of a course. However, two things are typically required for an incomplete to be granted: 1) an extenuating circumstance, and 2) most of the work for the course has been completed. In our program, we have been very flexible with this policy, especially in the last two years. However, we are not seeing the best results from students who are granted this option. In addition, we feel that it has created a level of unfairness for students who finish all their work by the stated deadlines. Therefore, not only will we be using this option more sparingly, but we will also be assessing a grade letter penalty for incomplete classes. This means that the highest grade possible when using this option will be a "B" in the course. The max extension for an incomplete is finals week of the following term, and incompletes are calculated as an "F" in your GPA until you have successfully completed the final assignments.



## Marketable Skills

<b>Public Administration</b>	<b>Political Science</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students can organize and execute presentations relevant to public administration</li><li>• Students understand and can execute a program evaluation</li><li>• Students can conduct statistical analyses that are useful to the work of public administrators.</li><li>• Students can read and interpret an organization budget</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students can organize and execute verbal and written presentations of complex social issues</li><li>• Students can tackle social and political problems by acquiring relevant data and using insight and technical skills to analyze data and develop logical solutions</li><li>• Students understand the roles and responsibilities of institutional authority within local, state, national, and international communities.</li><li>• Students understand and can execute a policy analysis</li></ul>