POS 3182W Florida Politics

Fall 2013 Syllabus

Contact Information

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Course Description and Goals

Florida Politics examines politics in the Sunshine State focusing on foundations, institutions, processes and policy. We look at the changing demographic and economic environment of Florida, the state constitution, political culture and public opinion. We examine participation in state and local politics, the role of interest groups and political parties and the conduct of state and local elections. We explore Florida's governmental institutions including the legislature, executive branch, bureaucracy, and courts. We also investigate the structure, function, governance and challenges facing local government in Florida. Finally we analyze and evaluate state and local policy in the Sunshine State including criminal justice, land use, economic development, civil rights, education, health, welfare and taxing and spending.

Goals

1. Knowledge: Students will understand basic facts and concepts related to Florida politics and policy.

2. Comparative Approach: Students will look at politics and policy in Florida to see how and why politics operates in our state as contrasted to other states.

3. Knowledge Extension: Students will examine a variety of websites related to Florida politics and describe, analyze and reflect on information that extends beyond the class texts.

4. Political Geography: Students will analyze Florida to see how politics, policy and political culture vary in different regions, markets and counties.

5. Diversity: Students will explore how diversity impacts state politics and policy focusing on contemporary minority American culture as defined by race, ethnicity, gender, social and economic class, age, sexual orientation and physical ability.

6. Current Issues: Students will find, discuss, and express thoughtful opinions about current politics and policy in Florida.

Required Texts

1. Susan MacManus, Aubrey Jewett, Thomas Dye & David Bonanza (MJDB), *Politics in Florida*, 3rd ed., Tallahassee: Florida Institute of Government Press, 2011

2. Kevin Hill, Susan MacManus, & Dario Moreno (HMM), Eds. *Florida Politics: Ten Media Markets, One Powerful State*, Tallahassee: Florida Institute of Government Press, 2004

Evaluation

6 Modules – 78% of your total grade. Each module consists of 2 graded activities: Chapter Quiz and Extend, Update & Discuss. Each module will usually cover 2 chapters from the Politics in Florida text and 2 chapters from the Ten Media Markets text. Since this course is over the 16 week fall term you will have about two weeks to do each module.

Chapter Quiz – 36% of total grade. Each quiz will usually have 50 questions primarily covering material from the two texts (although more questions will come from Politics in Florida). You will normally have 60 minutes to take the quiz. You may take the quiz a second time to improve your score. If you pass the first quiz with at least a 60 or higher and choose to take the quiz a second time I will take the higher score of the two attempts as your grade for the quiz. If you score less than 60 on the first attempt and take the quiz a second time I will take the average of the two attempts as your grade for the quiz. You should read the chapters and study before starting the quiz as you will not have time to look up every answer.

Extend, Update & Discuss – 42% of total grade. I will put you in small groups for the online discussion based on your last name. Extend, Update & Discuss will include several steps. First you will visit several websites tied to the readings and then describe, analyze and reflect on several things you learned about Florida politics and policy from those sites that extends your knowledge beyond what is found in the text (750-1000 words). Next you will update information from the readings by looking up and writing a 350-500 word current event. You will upload this paper (the knowledge extension and current event) using the assignment function and also paste it into your discussion group. Finally you must engage in discussion with your fellow classmates by responding to their knowledge extension and current event. The discussion will require a minimum of three postings each module: the initial posting of your paper and then at least two postings responding to your fellow students. You should attempt to engage in professional college level discussion with your classmates. Highest grades go to students who exceed my expectations for quantity and quality of their papers and their discussion with classmates. Two additional postings is the minimum to get a C on that part of the

assignment. You will need 8 or more (depending on quality and length) additional postings to get the highest possible score on discussing with class mates.

To grade discussion I have developed a rubric (scoring guidelines). Each discussion is worth up to 100 points: 50 points are possible for knowledge extension, 30 points for the current event, and 20 points for discussing things with your classmates. In addition there will be a 10 point penalty for each day the initial posting is late. So 10 points off for one day late and 20 points off for two days late and so on until the module closes. Once the module closes you will not be able to post further and I will not accept your postings.

Media Market Analysis - 22% of your total grade. You will write a media market analysis on one of the media markets covered in our text (I will assign you a particular media market). Your analysis will be 3500 to 5000 words long, double-spaced with Times New Roman font and will have four sections: a summary of your media market chapter, an update of key statistics since the text was published (put in tables and described and analyzed), summary and analysis of two current political/policy issues specific to your media market, and a conclusion that evaluates the current and likely future political power of this market. I will make specific market assignments and post more details soon. You may start the paper while we are working on the modules but will also have two or three weeks to work on the paper after the modules are over if you like. The paper will be due no later than Thursday, December 5 at 11:00 p.m.

Policies

1. If you have questions about the course of a general nature do not e-mail me initially. Instead post your question in the Discussions section of the web site. Once in Discussions section select the topic “Questions for Professor Jewett” and then hit “Create Message,” type in your question and then hit “post.” Wait 48 hours for a response. You should review this section before asking your question as someone else may have already asked it. Of course if your problem is personal (grade related for instance) or involves not being able to get on the site (and hence unable to get to Discussions) feel free to e-mail me at my normal e-mail address.

2. If you would like to seek the help of fellow students go to Discussions and select the topic “Students Seeking Help from Students” and post your question as above. This can be a technical question about computer problems or a subject matter question. I will give extra credit to students who help others!

3. Online courses require students to be self-motivated and do work on a regular basis without being reminded of assignments and due dates. The average student can expect to put in at least 6-8 hours a week on this course if they want to do well. You will be reading 2 chapters from the main text and 2 articles from the reader each module. You can also expect that you will write 1500-2000 words a module (counting initial postings and discussions with others) if you want to do well.

4. Late assignments will not be accepted once a quiz, discussion or module closes (as mentioned above I will take your initial paper posting on discussion late with a 10 point per

day penalty but once the module closes that will be it). Do not wait until the last minute to do assignments. Computer problems and Internet connection problems will happen. They are not acceptable excuses for missing due dates and deadlines.

5. I follow and enforce the UCF policies pertaining to academic honesty and integrity and expect professional student conduct. See the UCF policies established in the Golden Rule if you are unfamiliar.

6. Students registered with UCF Disability Services will be given accommodation as needed.

Grading Scale

This class is on a 10 point grading scale with no plus minus grades.

100-90 A (Outstanding or excellent work)

89-80 B (Good, above average work)

79-70 C (Average work)

69-60 D (Below average, poor work)

59-0 F (Unacceptable work or missed assignment)

Assignment Due Dates

Module 1 Florida's Political Culture and Constitution: Quiz due by Wednesday 9/4 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Thursday 9/5 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Monday 9/9 11:00 pm

PLEASE NOTE: JUST BECAUSE SOME DUE DATES FALLS OVER THE LABOR DAY HOLIDAY DOES NOT MEAN YOU HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THEN TO DO THE ASSIGNMENT!

For Module 1 please read:

Politics in Florida chapters 1 Political Culture and 2 Constitution

Media Market chapters Introduction and 1 Florida Overview

Module 2 Public Opinion, Parties and Elections: Quiz due by Wednesday 9/18 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Thursday 9/19 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Monday 9/23 11:00 pm

For Module 2 please read:

Politics in Florida chapters 3 Public Opinion and 4 Parties and Elections

Media Market chapters 2 Florida's Black Voters and 3 Youth Florida's Hispanic Voters

Module 3 Interest Groups and the Legislature: Quiz due by Wednesday 10/2 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Thursday 10/3 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Monday 10/7 11:00 pm

For Module 3 please read:

Politics in Florida chapters 5 Interest Groups and 6 Legislature

Media Market chapters 4 West Florida and 5 North to Central Florida

Module 4 Executive Branch and Courts and Crime: Quiz due by Wednesday 10/16 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Thursday 10/17 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Monday 10/21 11:00 pm

For Module 4 please read:

Politics in Florida chapters 7 Executive Branch and 8 Courts and Crimes

Media Market chapters 6 Northeast Florida and Jacksonville and 7 Tampa Bay

Withdrawal Deadline Monday 10/28

Module 5 Taxing, Spending and Local Government: Quiz due by Wednesday 10/30 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Thursday 10/31 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Monday 11/4 11:00 pm

For Module 5 please read:

Politics in Florida chapters 9 Taxing and Spending and 10 Local Government

Media Market chapters and 8 Central Florida and 9 Southwest Florida

Module 6 Education, Welfare and Health and Environment and Growth Management: Quiz due by Wednesday 11/13 at 11 pm; Initial discussion posting due by Thursday 11/14 at 11 pm; additional postings due by, and module closes on, Monday 11/18 11:00 pm

PLEASE NOTE: JUST BECAUSE SOME DUE DATE FALLS OVER THE VETERANS' DAY HOLIDAY DOES NOT MEAN YOU HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THEN TO DO THE ASSIGNMENT!

For Module 6 please read:

Politics in Florida chapters 11 Education, Social Welfare and Health Care and 12 Environment, Growth Management, and Economic Development

Media Market chapters 10 Palm Beach and the Treasure Coast and 11 South Florida

Getting Started

To begin the course, go back to the home page and then click on Learning Modules and then read and follow the instructions for Module 1.