

Room: 399 Millett Hall
Dates: January 11, 2016 - April 29, 2016
Time: T & Th 12:30 PM - 1:50 PM
Twitter: @LeeHannahWSU

Professor: Lee Hannah
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Office: 317 Millett Hall
Office Hours: T 4:00 - 5:00 PM; W 1:00 - 2:00 PM & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Why study Ohio? First and foremost, you live here and many of you will continue to live here. Understanding the intricacies of Ohio's politics will make you better informed citizens and allow you to engage in the democratic process. While the events in Washington garner more attention and are certainly exciting, it is decisions made at the state and local level that are often most important to your daily life and to your bottom line. Moreover, Ohio is actually a pretty interesting state to live in! Some have suggested that Ohio is the "first entirely American state."¹ And in the last century, Ohio is *the* most watched state during presidential elections. Since 1896, only two presidential candidates ascended to the presidency without winning in Ohio. Because of Ohio's role as a bellwether state, national leaders pay attention to and cater to Ohio's voters. In this class we will learn about the historical and political foundations of Ohio, the design of the Ohio constitution and government branches, the structure of local government in Ohio, the Ohio budget, and the current political landscape of Ohio. In each section we will focus on some of the most salient issues facing Ohioans.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of the class, students will be able to:

- Connect the historical foundations of Ohio to current issues and features in Ohio politics.
- Critique current Ohio policies and formulate policy memos reviewing and prescribing policy solutions.
- Evaluate current government reform efforts related to elections and local governance.

READING MATERIALS (Required):

- Sracic, Paul and William Binning. 2016. *Ohio Government and Politics*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Additional readings will be available online, posted on Pilot, or available through the Wright State University library.

Make-Up Grades: You are allowed to make up academic work only in the case of excused absences. These absences may include missing class for a University-sanctioned activity (with proper documentation), illness, religious observance, or family emergency. If you know in advance that you are going to miss class, please contact me before the absence to make arrangements for completing the work. If you are absent for an unexpected reason, please check in with me as soon as possible. You will have one week from the day of your return to class to make up a missed assignment.

¹Barone, Michael and Richard E. Cohen. 2010. *The Almanac of American Politics*. Washington, D.C.: National Journal Group

Late Work Policy: Assignments turned in late will be penalized 5% per day.

Methods for Learning and Teaching: This course will contain a mix of lecture, class discussion, and in-class exercises. It is vital for your own comprehension of the course material that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings and to participate in class exercises.

Integrated Writing: PLS 3230 is designated an “Integrated Writing” (IW) course, designed to meet WSU guidelines for developing effective writing skills. Students will be expected to produce writing that:

- Demonstrates their understanding of course content,
- Is appropriate for the audience and purpose of a particular writing task,
- Demonstrates the degree of mastery of disciplinary writing conventions appropriate to the course (including documentation conventions), and
- Shows competency in standard edited American English.

Effective writing counts toward the final course grade. Students will meet IW requirements in a number of ways. These include: two policy memos that require the student to write summaries of current policies and prescriptions for new policies; exams with short answer and essay components; homework assignments; and daily responses to the reading.

Expectations

Attendance: Your attendance in class is always expected. Attending class will allow you to keep up with the course material and will provide for meaningful discussion as a class. I will take attendance as a way to get to know you. Attendance will count for 10% of your grade and will be scored as the percentage of classes that you attend (I will start taking attendance after the second week). Please contact me via e-mail if you are unable to attend class. We follow the University’s attendance policy regarding excused absences. See [Wright State’s Add/Drop Policy](#) and [Wright State’s Excused Absence Policy](#).

Preparation and Participation: I expect you to read the assigned material before class and be prepared to discuss what you read in class. You will fill out a [Google Form](#) on a daily basis that allows you to report what you learned and to ask clarifying questions. There are numerous reading assignments over the course of the semester, you must fill out the form for 75% of the readings for full credit. I will check the reading forms before each class, you only need to respond to one reading. Some nights, only one reading will be assigned, and on other occasions we will have multiple readings. Regardless, you need to only complete the reading form one time for each class. Contributing to class discussion will make the course more interesting and will enhance your understanding of the material. Some of the articles I ask you to read are dense and statistically complex. In such cases, I will provide specific directions to help maximize comprehension.

Academic Honesty: All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without proper citation) will be tolerated. Please consult the [Code of Student Conduct](#) for academic integrity.

Be Flexible: While the syllabus represents an agreement between us, I reserve the right to revise and modify it throughout the course if it is necessary to achieve our goals. Situations beyond either of our control can also emerge that require changes to the course. I will notify you of any changes made throughout the course.

Cell Phones and Laptops: Please be respectful of your fellow students and me by silencing your cell phone during class and limiting laptop use to only class-related activity.

Disability

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office of Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated. It is your responsibility to notify me during the first week of the semester if such accommodations are needed. If you have questions about this, contact the [Office of Disability Services](#) at 937-775-5680 or disability_services@wright.edu.

Adverse Weather Commitment. In the event of inclement or threatening weather, everyone should use their best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Safety should be the main concern. If you cannot get to class because of adverse weather conditions, you should contact me as soon as possible. Similarly, if I am unable to reach our class location, I will notify you of any cancellation or change as soon as possible (at least one hour before class starts), using Pilot to prevent you from embarking on any unnecessary travel. If you cannot get to class because of weather conditions, I will make allowances relative to required attendance policies, as well as any scheduled tests, assignments, or other assessments. Wright State students, faculty, and staff are urged to make cautious decisions regarding travel. If you believe the weather is too threatening, contact your professors and/or supervisors and explain your situation. Ultimately, it is your decision to travel to Wright State.²

Assignments

Homework Assignments (20% of final grade) You will complete 5 homework assignments over the term. These will include short answer questions and short essays. These will be assigned in the class period before they are due.

Policy Memos (20% of final grade) These assignments allow you to explore policies that you are most interested in. You will provide a summary of the current landscape of the policy and detail recommendations for how the government of Ohio should adopt or adapt state policies. These assignments you will have an opportunity to apply concepts we are learning in class to the real-life political arena. We will have 2 of these over the semester. (No more than 2 single-spaced pages - Rubric on Pilot)

Midterm Exam (20% of final grade) The midterm exam material will be drawn from class discussions and the readings. The exam is intended to assess your knowledge of class content and your ability to apply relevant concepts. The exam will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Final Exam (20% of final grade) The final exam material will be drawn from class discussions and the readings from the second half of the course. The exam is intended to assess your knowledge of class content and your ability to apply relevant concepts. The exam will include

²Wright State travel policy: <https://www.wright.edu/emergency-management/cancellations-and-closures>

multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Reading Questions (10% of final grade) There will be a [Google Form](#) posted on Pilot that asks a few basic questions about the readings. I will use these to prepare the course and to motivate you to complete the readings. There are 21 nights with readings over the course of the semester. You must complete 16 (75%) to earn full credit. These are due before class.

Attendance (10% of final grade) I will take attendance every day.

Grading

Below I list each assignment, the due date (also marked on course calendar), and the weight it receives in the final calculation of your grade:

| Assignment | Due Date | % of Grade |
|-------------------|-------------|------------|
| Homework 1 | February 11 | 4% |
| Policy Memo 1 | February 18 | 10% |
| Midterm Exam | February 21 | 20% |
| Homework 2 | March 17 | 4% |
| Homework 3 | March 22 | 4% |
| Homework 4 | March 29 | 4% |
| Policy Memo 2 | April 19 | 10% |
| Final Exam | April 26 | 20% |
| Reading Questions | Daily | 10% |
| Attendance | Daily | 10% |

CLASS SCHEDULE:³

The textbook chapter readings are denoted as “SB” for Sracic and Binning. Readings are expected to be completed before each class meeting.

Week 1

January 12 - Introduction to Government of Ohio

January 14 - The Politics of a Purple State

Reading: SB Chapter 1 (posted on Pilot)

Reading: Markon, Jerry. 2012. “Obama Showering Ohio with Attention and Money.” *The Washington Post*, September 25, 2012.

Week 2

January 19⁴ - Outlining Ohio’s Politics

Reading: Flinn, Thomas A. 1960. “The Outline of Ohio’s Politics.” *Western Political Quarterly* 13:702-721.

January 21 - A Brief History of Ohio

Reading: SB Chapter 2 (posted on Pilot)

Week 3

January 26⁵ - Ohio’s Political Heritage

Reading: Cauchon, Dennis. 2011. “Population drastically declines in Ohio cities.” *USA Today* March 10, 2011.

Reading: “Ohio County Profiles.” Ohio Development Services Agency.

Reading: Skim [The Ohio Constitution](#)

January 28 - History of Ohio with special guest Mr. Richard Doll

Due: Submit proposal for Policy Memo #1⁶

Week 4⁷

February 2 - State Legislative Chambers

Reading: Squire, Peverill and Gary Moncrief. 2010 “99 Chambers and Why They Matter.” Chapter 1 from *State Legislatures Today: Politics Under the Domes*. Columbus, OH: Longman

³Students are responsible for knowing both university and course schedules.

The academic calendar is available at: <https://www.wright.edu/registrar/academic-calendar>.

⁴Instructor approval to register

⁵Last day to register

⁶Due at beginning of class. Submit to Dropbox on Pilot.

⁷Iowa Caucus February 1

February 4 - The Ohio Legislature

Reading: SB Chapter 3

Week 5⁸February 9 - Political Science Research 1: Term Limits

Reading: Mooney, Christopher Z. 2009. "Term Limits as a Boon to Legislative Scholarship: A Review." *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* Vol. 9(2):204-228.

February 11 - Ohio Executive Branch

Homework 1: Answer questions about the Ohio governor and executive branch.⁹

Reading: SB Chapter 4

Week 6¹⁰February 16 - Lawmaking in Ohio

Reading: Ohio Legislative Service Commission. 2015. "[Tools for Understanding a Bill.](#)" from *A Guidebook for Ohio Legislators* (14th Ed.).

** Deadline to [register to vote](#) in Ohio primary.

February 18 - Midterm Exam Review

Due: Policy Memo #1¹¹

Week 7¹²February 23 - Midterm ExamFebruary 25¹³ - Courts in Ohio

Reading: SB Chapter 5

Spring Break

February 29 - March 4¹⁴

⁸New Hampshire Primary February 9

⁹Due at beginning of class. Submit to Dropbox on Pilot.

¹⁰Nevada caucus (Dem) South Carolina Primary (GOP) February 20

¹¹Due at beginning of class. Submit to Dropbox on Pilot.

¹²Nevada caucus (GOP) February 23; South Carolina (Dem) February 27

¹³Make-up Date for Midterm Exam

¹⁴Travel and/or watch the SEC Primary on March 1

Week 8March 8 - Law and Order in Ohio

Reading: Stewart, Chris. 2015. "[How Mexican drug cartels move heroin to Miami Valley street corners.](#)" *Dayton Daily News* ¹⁵ June 26, 2015.

March 10 - Political Science Research 2: Judicial Elections

Reading: Gibson, James L., Jeffrey A. Gottfried, Michael X. Delli Carpini, and Kathleen Hall Jamieson. 2011. "The Effects of Judicial Campaign Activity on the Legitimacy of Courts: A Survey-based Experiment." *Political Research Quarterly* 64(3): 545-558.

Week 9 ¹⁶March 15 - Ohio Primary Election Day

Reading TBA

Due: Submit proposal for Policy Memo #2¹⁷

March 17 - Ohio Primary Recap

Homework 2: Analysis of Ohio Primary Results.¹⁸

Reading TBA

Week 10

March 22 - Reporting on Ohio Politics with special guest Laura Bischoff - Investigative reporter with the *Dayton Daily News*

Homework 3: Submit five questions about reporting on Ohio politics for Mrs. Bischoff.¹⁹

March 24 -Local Government in Ohio

Reading: SB Chapter 6

Week 11March 29 - Local Government Reform

Homework 4: Answer questions about the Dayton Together plan on <http://daytontgether.com/> ²⁰

Reading: Grigsby, Lisa. 2015. "[Dayton Together- Initiative To Merge City & County Government.](#)" *Dayton Most Metro* July 9, 2015.

Reading: Stewart, Chris. 2015. "[Plan to unify Dayton, Montgomery County divides Democratic leaders.](#)" *Dayton Daily News* ²¹ July 6, 2015.

¹⁵Pay Wall: Reading also available on Pilot

¹⁶Primaries in FL, IL, MO, NC, OH

¹⁷Due at beginning of class. Submit to Dropbox on Pilot.

¹⁸Due at beginning of class. Submit to Dropbox on Pilot.

¹⁹Assignment is due on March 21 at 5:00 PM. Submit to Dropbox on Pilot.

²⁰Assignment is due on March 28 at 5:00 PM. Submit to Dropbox on Pilot

²¹Pay Wall: Reading also available on Pilot

March 31 -Local Government and Public Health

Reading: Florida, Richard. 2016. "[America's Great Fitness Divide](#)." *The Atlantic: CityLab* January 11, 2016.

Week 12April 5 - Financing the State Government of Ohio

Homework 5: Economic impact assessment of the presidential debate hosted by Wright State.

Reading: SB Chapter 7

April 7 - Local Economies in Ohio

Reading: Economic Impact Report of Wright Patterson AFB on Greene County. Report by Wright State's Center for Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA)²²

Week 13April 12 - Parties, Interest Groups, and Elections in Ohio

Reading: SB Chapter 8

April 14 - Political Science Research 3: Life in a Battleground State

Reading: McClurg, Scott D. and Thomas M. Holbrook. 2009. "Living in a Battleground: Presidential Campaigns and Fundamental Predictors of Vote Choice." *Political Research Quarterly* 62(3): 495-506.

Week 14April 19 - Financing Education

Reading: Berkman, Michael B. and Eric Plutzer. 2005. "Financing Public Education." Chapter 2 from *Ten Thousand Democracies: Politics and Public Opinion in America's School Districts*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Due: Policy Memo #2²³

April 21 - Final Exam Review**Week 15**April 26 - **Final Exam: 12:30 - 2:30 PM**²⁴

²²The report will be released and posted later in the semester.

²³Due at beginning of class. Submit to Dropbox on Pilot.

²⁴Exam takes place in 399 Millett.