

**STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT**  
**Bluefield State College**  
**POSC 218—SPRING 2015**  
**Sections 001 & 002**  
**CRN: 20033 & 20623**  
**IVNWE**

**Colin S. Cavell, Ph.D.**  
**Class TTH: 2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. (14:00-15:15)**  
**Office Hours: TBA**  
**VOICE: 304.327.4034 (W)**

**Course Room No.: PHYSED P202F & HEC W21**  
**INTERNET: ccavell@bluefieldstate.edu**  
**Office No.: B120**  
**512-924-2364 (M)**

A comparative study of American state and local governments, with emphasis on federalism, federal and state relations, interstate regulations, and structure and political process of state and local governments.

Grading Policy: 20% for Attendance\*; 20% for participation in the Soliya Connect Program or making an In-Class Presentation; 20% for the Midterm Exam; 20% for the Research Paper; and 20% for the Final Exam. A Guidelines sheet will be distributed outlining the requirements for your Class Presentation and for your Research Paper.

Grading Scale: 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; 0-59=F. These numerical scores correspond to the following evaluations: “A” = Excellent; “B” = Good; “C” = Satisfactory (NOTE: A grade of “C” or better is required in major courses); “D” = Poor (passing, except in major courses); “F” = Earned Failure (removed only by repeating the course; upon successfully passing the course, the first grade is “excluded” from grade point average. The second grade is “included” in the recalculation of the grade point average); and “I” = Incomplete.

Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of POSC 218, students should be able to read and provide an immanent critique of texts; to articulate arguments and examine their flaws; be familiar with the basics of logical, ethical, and dialectical reasoning; be familiar with essays, both pro and con, regarding the responsibilities of state and local government in the United States; understand what is federalism and how it works; know that each state operates under both its own state constitution as well as the US federal constitution; be familiar with state finances and taxing policies; have some understanding of statewide political attitudes and participation in election campaigns and their importance; be cognizant of the various political parties and interest groups operating within their state; understand the law-making role of state legislatures and city councils; have familiarity with the state and city executive branches and the role and power of the governor, mayors, and city managers; be familiar with the state judicial court system and its role; understand the power and role of the state and local bureaucracy; appreciate the role of local municipal governments and their associative politics; understand the role of the educational system within the state; be familiar with the state and local criminal justice system; understand the role of the state healthcare system; be cognizant of the built and natural environment and culture of the state and their importance.

Academic Integrity Policy: Academic integrity is expected of all students. This means that all work for this class must be undertaken and completed by you alone without collaboration from others. Any dishonesty in the performance of course work, such as plagiarism or cheating in other forms, will be reported. In the event the student is charged with some form of dishonesty, the Student Discipline Policy will be followed. The full text of the BSC Academic Honesty Policy can be found at: <http://www.bluefieldstate.edu/academics/academic-honesty-and-proctoring>. In addition, students should be aware that research paper assignments may be submitted to [Turnitin](#) by the instructor for the purpose of checking for possible plagiarism. Submitted assignments will be included in the BSC dedicated database of assignments at Turnitin and will be used solely for the purpose of checking for possible plagiarism during the grading process during this term and in the future.

**Attendance Policy\***: Attendance in class is mandatory. It is the student's responsibility to sign the attendance sheet each day of class; failure to sign the attendance sheet—even if in attendance—will be counted as an absence. “When the number of clock hours of willful absences exceeds the number of semester hours of credit, the instructor will notify the Registrar that the student has exceeded the permissible number of absences and should be withdrawn from class.” Students with Excused Absences must submit to me a hard copy of the campus publication *The Bulletin* announcing your allowed absence in order to get credit for the day(s) of your absence. “It is the responsibility of the student to...provide supporting documents for institutional and unavoidable absences” (*Bluefield State College Academic Catalog 2012-2014*, p. 55). As well, you are expected to follow the syllabus and accordingly be prepared for each day's class. This means that you must read the pre-assigned readings before class so that you will be prepared to discuss and debate in class the subject matter scheduled for that day and answer questions related to the issues being covered. **NOTE: TURN OFF** all cell phones during class.

\* Absence from class may be made up by preparing a **two-page, typed** (i.e. using maximum 12 point font size and maximum double-spaced text with one-inch margin on all sides), **summary** on the missed material scheduled to be covered the day(s) of your absence. The summary must be in your own words and must **not** be copied material from the text(s), the internet, or any other source(s). **All summaries must be turned in to me by the last day of classes if you want credit for your absences.**

**Cell Phone Policy**: Turn off all cell phones during class or put on vibration. If you absolutely must answer your phone, leave the classroom before answering your phone and return only after you have completed your conversation.

**Withdrawal Policy**: Academic Withdrawal from the course prior to the deadline date for withdrawal as published within the academic calendar is accomplished by securing a change in schedule form and having it signed by appropriate persons. Blank copies of the change in schedule form are available in the offices of the Registrar, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean and the advisor. After obtaining the required signatures, the student must submit, prior to the deadline date, the change in schedule form to the Office of the Registrar.

**Disability Services Statement**: BSC is committed to full inclusion of all students. Students who, by nature of a **documented disability**, require classroom, equipment, testing or assignment accommodations should contact the Student Support Services at 304.327.4227 to request accommodations before the start of the semester. Your immediate attention to these arrangements is necessary to assure a positive learning experience.

**Free Tutoring Services Available**: BSC offers **Smarthinking free online tutoring for all BSC students** in the following subjects: Math; Accounting, Managerial; Accounting, Financial; Writing (all subjects); Grammar; Microeconomics; Macroeconomics; Statistics; Spanish. Chemistry, etc. **This service is free and available 24 hours a day to all BSC students.** Go to <http://www.smarthinking.com/> and follow these instructions.

**Required Texts:**

Smith, Kevin B. and Alan Greenblatt. 2014. *Governing States and Localities, 4th edition*. Washington, DC: CQ Press College. [ISBN-13: 978—1-4522-2633-0], 600 pages.

**\*\*\*This class is web-enhanced and students will be able to access supplemental materials on the BSC BlackBoard website, including chapter PowerPoint summaries, Tables, Figures, Maps, etc.\*\*\***

**Jan. 19:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (College Closed)

**Jan. 20:** [Tuesday: Classes begin for Spring 2015 Semester] Introduction: The Relevance and Importance of State & Local Politics

**Main Themes:** Nature of the American political system; republican governmental type; written constitution; tripartite separation of powers; role of media and civil society, formulating governmental policy; and federalism

**Explain Syllabus:** Go over class requirements, required books, class presentation, research paper, midterm and final exams.

**Jan. 22 [Thursday]:** Introduction: They Tax Dogs in West Virginia, Don't They? (cont'd.)

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 1

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 1.

**Jan. 27:** Higher Education Day in West Virginia [no class]

**Activity:** Students go to Charleston to lobby WV legislators for higher education

**Jan. 29:** Introduction: They Tax Dogs in West Virginia, Don't They? (cont'd.)

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 1

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 1.

**Feb. 3:** Federalism: The Power Plan

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 2

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 2.

**Feb. 5:** Federalism: The Power Plan

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 2

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 2.

**Feb. 10:** Constitutions: Operating Instructions

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 3

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 3.

**Feb. 12:** Constitutions: Operating Instructions

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 3

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 3.

**Feb. 17:** Finances: Filling the Till and Paying the Bills

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 4

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 4.

**Feb. 19:** Finances: Filling the Till and Paying the Bills

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 4

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 4.

**Feb. 24:** Political Attitudes and Participation: Venting and Voting

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 5

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 5.

**Feb. 26:** Political Attitudes and Participation: Venting and Voting

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 5

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 5.

**Mar. 3:** Parties and Interest Groups: Elephants, Donkeys, and Cash Cows

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 6

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 6.

**Mar. 5:** Parties and Interest Groups: Elephants, Donkeys, and Cash Cows

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 6

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 6.

**Mar. 10:** Legislatures: The Art of Herding Cats

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 7

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 7.

**Mar. 12:** Legislatures: The Art of Herding Cats (cont'd.)

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 7

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 7.

**Mar. 17:** Governors and Executives: There Is No Such Thing as Absolute Power

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 8

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 8.

**Mar. 19:** Governors and Executives: There Is No Such Thing as Absolute Power

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 8

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 8.

**Mar. 13-20:** Midterm Exam Online [Click on Quizzes and then on “Midterm Exam”. You will have 120 minutes to complete the exam and only one attempt. You must complete the Midterm Exam by 11:55 p.m. on March 20, 2015.]

**Mar. 23:** Mid-Semester grades due to Registrar

**Mar. 23-27:** Spring Break (no classes; college closed)

**Mar. 31:** Courts: Turning Law into Politics

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 9

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 9.

**Apr. 2:** Courts: Turning Law into Politics

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 9

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 9.

**Apr. 7:** Bureaucracy: What Nobody Wants but Everybody Needs

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 10

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 10.

**Apr. 9:** Bureaucracy: What Nobody Wants but Everybody Needs (cont'd.)

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 10

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 10.

**Apr. 10:** Last Day to Withdraw from course/college with a grade of "W"

**Apr. 14:** Local Government: Function Follows Form

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 11

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 11.

**Apr. 16:** Local Government: Function Follows Form (cont'd.)

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 11

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 11.

**Apr. 21:** Metropolitics: The Hole Problem of Government

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 12

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 12.

**Apr. 23:** Metropolitics: The Hole Problem of Government (cont'd.)

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 12

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 12.

**Apr. 28:** [In-Class Presentations Due.] Education: Reading, Writing, and Regulation

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 13

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 13.

**Assignment:** In-Class Presentations Due today. Make sure you have completed your in-class presentation. See Presentation Guidelines.

**Apr. 30:** [Research Papers Due] Crime and Punishment

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 14

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 14.

**Assignment:** Research Papers Due today. a) Submit a copy of your Research Papers to Turnitin. Click on the Turnitin button on the course BlackBoard page for submission instructions. b) Hand in a hard copy of your Research Paper to me in class. c) Also, send an electronic copy to me by email as a Microsoft Word attachment to ccavell@bluefieldstate.edu.

**May 5:** Health and Welfare Policy: State, Heal Thyself!

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 15

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 15.

**May 7:** Environment and Climate Change: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

**Readings:** Smith and Greenblatt, Ch. 16

**Assignment:** Complete Quiz for Chapter 16.

**May 8 [Friday]:** [Last day of class. All course work MUST be completed by this date. No submissions will be accepted after this date.]

**Assignment:** Complete all readings.

**May 9-15:** Final Exam Online [Click on Quizzes and then on "Final Exam". You will have 120 minutes to complete the exam and only one attempt. You must complete the Final Exam by 11:55 p.m. on May 15, 2015.]

**May 18 [Monday]:** Final grades due to Registrar by 12:00 Noon electronically.