

Political Science 253

Research in State Politics

Thad Kousser
Office Hours: 11:30-1:30, Tuesdays
tkousser@ucsd.edu, 534-3239

Fall 2015
Thursdays, 9am-noon, SSB 104

What's the Point?

This is not a comprehensive course in the field of state politics. It will not survey the literature to prepare you for an exam, it will not investigate all of the operations of the three branches of state government, and it will not make you an expert in the politics of each of the 50 states. Its more narrow focus will be how our general knowledge of politics has been advanced by several streams of scholarship that take advantage of the unique research opportunities presented by the American states.

These streams tend to have three common characteristics. First, they are motivated by the same types of questions that have interested political scientists working in other fields. Second, they look at phenomena that vary significantly across the states, hoping to isolate the effects of one factor by comparing states which are (ostensibly) otherwise similar. Third, they are self-consciously cumulative enterprises that use theoretical or empirical innovations to advance previous works. By focusing on these sorts of literatures, we will ignore important areas of state politics research and reality. Please see me if you'd like citations that can help you gain a general familiarity with the operations of state governments or an introduction to literatures that we are giving short shrift (like state courts, interest groups, female and minority legislators, bureaucracy, committees, party organizations, or policies).

Our seminar discussions will sacrifice scope for rigorous examinations of the formulas and flaws of each work. Each class member will present a reading approximately every other week, giving a conference-style PowerPoint and proposing questions for the rest of the class to consider. My ultimate goal is to turn you into state politics researchers by figuring out what we already know about each topic, what the remaining questions are, and how you can go about answering them.

Where are the Readings?

- › Two books are available for purchase at the bookstore: *Politics in the American States, A Comparative Analysis, Tenth Edition* (very different from prior editions) and Erikson, Wright, and McIver's *Statehouse Democracy: Public Opinion in the American States*.
- › Articles are on JSTOR

What are the Assignments?

- › 30% of your grade will be based on class presentations and participation.
- › 20% will come from a four-page research design due on or before October 15.
- › 20% will come from a four-page research design due on or before November 12.
- › 30% will come from an 8-page research design and exploratory data analysis due December 10th.

Course Outline

Part I. What Does State Politics Research Look Like?

September 24. Studying State Politics

- i. “How Do Citizens React When Politicians Support Policies They Oppose? Field Experiments with Elite Communication,” David E. Broockman and Daniel M. Butler, manuscript available at http://stanford.edu/~dbroock/papers/broockman_butler_legislator_experiments_2014.pdf
- ii. Boris Shor and Nolan McCarty, 2011. The Ideological Mapping of American Legislatures. *American Political Science Review*, 105, pp 530-551.

October 1 The Good and Bad of Direct Democracy

- i. Shaun Bowler and Todd Donovan, 2012, “The Initiative Process,” in *Politics in the American States, A Comparative Analysis, Tenth Edition*.
- ii. Arthur Lupia, 1994, “Shortcuts Versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections,” *American Political Science Review* 88:63-76.
- iii. Elisabeth R. 1996, “Legislative Response to the Threat of Popular Initiatives.” *American Journal of Political Science* 40:99-128.
- iv. Edward L. Lascher, Jr., Michael G. Hagen, and Steven A. Rochlin, 1996, “Gun Behind the Door? Ballot Initiatives, State Policies, and Public Opinion,” *Journal of Politics*. 58:760-775, and then follow up with John Matsusaka, 2001, “Problems with a Methodology Used to Evaluate the Voter Initiative,” *Journal of Politics* 63:1250-1256, and Hagen, Lascher, Jr., and John Camobreco, “Response to Matsusaka: Estimating the Effect of Ballot Initiatives on Policy Responsiveness,” *Journal of Politics* 63:1257-1263.
- v. Mike Binder, Matthew Childers and Natalie Johnson “Campaigns and the Mitigation of Framing Effects on Voting Behavior: A Natural and Field Experiment,” Forthcoming *Political Behavior*.

October 8. What do People Want from State Government? Opinion Measurement

- i. Robert Erikson, Gerald Wright, and John McIver, 1993, *Statehouse Democracy: Public Opinion and Policy in the American States* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press), Chapters 1-3.
- ii. Paul Brace, Kellie Sims-Butler, Kevin Arceneaux, and Martin Johnson, 2002, “Public Opinion in the American States: New Perspectives Using National Data,” *American Journal of Political Science*, 46: 173-189.
- iii. Tausanovitch, Chris, and Christopher Warshaw, 2013. "Measuring Constituent Policy Preferences in Congress, State Legislatures, and Cities." *The Journal of Politics* 75 (2): 330-342
- iv. Justin Phillips, “Public Opinion and Morality,” in *Politics in the American States, A Comparative Analysis, Tenth Edition*.

October 15. The Politics of Income Inequality

- i. Gilens, Martin. 2005. Inequality and Democratic Responsiveness. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 69: 778 - 796.
- ii. Rigby, Elizabeth and Gerald C. Wright (2013). "Political Parties and Representation of the Poor in the American States." *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(3):552-565.
- iii. George Krause and Daniel Berkowitz, "Can Partisan Governments Influence the Income Distribution? Theory and Evidence from Affluent Citizens in the American States," available at <http://sppc2014.indiana.edu/Papers/Krause%20and%20Berkowitz.pdf>
- iv. Gelman, A., Shor, B., Bafumi, J., & Park, D. (2008). Rich State, Poor State, Red State, Blue State: What's the Matter with Connecticut? *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 2(4), 345-367. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1561/100.00006026>
- v. (Just browse to see what data is available) Raj Chetty et al. 2014. "Is the United States Still a Land of Opportunity? Recent Trends in Intergenerational Mobility." http://obs.rc.fas.harvard.edu/chetty/mobility_trends.pdf

October 22. Attend Pikkety Symposium on Inequality

October 29. Do People Get What they Want from State Governments?

- i. *Statehouse Democracy*, Chapters 4,7,8.
- ii. Jeffrey Lax and Justin H. Phillips. The Democratic Deficit in the States, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 56(1): January 2012.
- iii. Caughey, Devin, and Chris Warshaw, 2014, "Dynamic Representation in the American States." APSA paper, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2455441.
- iv. Ansolabehere, Stephen, Alan Gerber, and Jim Snyder. "Equal Votes, Equal Money" *American Political Science Review*, August 2002
- v. Butler, Daniel M., and David W. Nickerson. 2011. "Can Learning Constituency Opinion Affect how Legislators Vote? Results from a Field Experiment" *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 6: No 1, pp 55-83.
- vi. *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (3): 463-477.

November 5. Parties in State Legislatures.

- i. Keith Krehbiel, 1993. "Where's the Party?" *British Journal of Political Science* 23:235-66.
- ii. John Aldrich and James S. Battista, 2000. "Conditional Party Government in the States," *American Journal of Political Science* 46: 235-56.
- iii. Gerald Wright and Brian Schaffner, 2002, "The Influence of Party: Evidence from the State Legislatures," *American Political Science Review*, 96: 367-390.
- iv. Cox, Gary W., Thad Kousser, and Mathew McCubbins. 2010. "Party

Power or Preferences? Quasi-Experimental Evidence from the American States.”
Journal of Politics.72:799-811.

- v. Jesse Richman. “Parties, Pivots and Policy the Status Quo Test” *American Political Science Review*. February 2011.

November 12. Governors and Legislative-Executive Bargaining.

- i. Rod Kiewiet and Mat McCubbins, 1988, “Presidential Influence on Congressional Appropriations Decisions,” *American Journal of Political Science* 32:713-36.
- ii. Margaret Ferguson, “Governors and the Executive Branch,” in *Politics in the American States, A Comparative Analysis, Tenth Edition*.
- iii. James Alt and Robert Lowry, 2000, “A Dynamic Model of State Budget Outcomes Under Divided Partisan Government,” *Journal of Politics* 62:1035-1070. Note: do not get too bogged down in the econometrics.
- iv. Thad Kousser and Justin H. Phillips, forthcoming, *The Power of American Governors: Winning on Budgets and Losing on Policy* (Cambridge University Press), Chapters 1-3.

November 19. Policy Innovation and Diffusion.

- i. Jack Walker, 1969, “The Diffusion of Innovations Among the American States,” *American Political Science Review* 63: 880-899.
- ii. Virginia Gray, 1973, “Innovation in the States: A Diffusion Study,” *American Political Science Review* 67: 1174-1185.
- iii. Robert Eyestone, 1977, “Confusion, Diffusion, and Innovation,” *American Political Science Review* 71:441-447 and Robert Savage, 1978, “Policy Innovativeness as a Trait of American States,” *Journal of Politics* 40: 212-224.
- iv. Frances Stokes Berry and William D. Berry, 1990, “State Lottery Adoptions as Policy Innovations: An Event History Analysis,” *American Political Science Review* 84:395-416.
- v. Michael Mintrom, 1997, “Policy Entrepreneurs and the Diffusion of Innovation,” *American Journal of Political Science* 41:738-770.

December 3. Legislative Structure: Term Limits and Professionalism

- i. Nelson W. Polsby, 1968, “The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives,” *American Political Science Review* 62:145.
- ii. Keith E. Hamm and Gary F. Moncrief, 2012, “Legislative Politics in the States,” in *Politics in the American States, A Comparative Analysis, Tenth Edition*.
- iii. John Carey, Gary Moncrief, Richard Niemi, and Lynda Powell, 2006, “The Effects of Term Limits on State Legislatures: Evidence from a New Survey of the 50 States,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 31(1)105:134.
- iv. Rocio Titiunik, “Drawing Your Senator From a Jar: Term Length and Legislative Behavior”. *Political Science Research and Methods*, forthcoming.
- v. Keele, Luke, Neil Malhotra, and Colin McCubbins. 2013. “Do Term Limits Restrain State Fiscal Policy? Approaches for Causal Inference in Assessing the Effects of Legislative Institutions.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 38(3): 291-326.