

1977

State and Local Government 1977 Syllabus

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PSC 230
STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Textbooks

Oregon Department of Education, Government in Oregon
Stedman, State and Local Governments

Term Calendar

First Quiz: Thursday, April 19

Midterm Exam: Thursday, May 3

Second Quiz and Essay Exam: Thursday, May 17

Essay Exam or Term Paper Due: Thursday, May 24

Final Exam: Thursday, May 31

Midterm Readings: Stedman, chs. 1-7

Oregon, pts. I, III, IV to page 117

Final Readings: Stedman, chs. 8-17

Oregon, pts. II, IV from page 117

RESEARCH PROJECT

The purpose of the project is to introduce students to local political institutions, familiarize them with relevant information sources, and help them sharpen their research and writing skills. The project will involve the following components: library research, field experience, and a written paper.

Library Research. First, select a suitable public agency, political party, campaign, or interest group for investigation. You may want to check several such organizations in the telephone directory before making your final selection. Then, locate information about the agency from the library and other resources. Other sources might include the Historical Society, State Archives, the agency's own records, newspaper "mergues," or files kept by political action groups. Relevant information might include newspaper or magazine articles, books, agency publications, or minutes of public meetings. In your bibliography, note at least six references which should include one each of any four of the following: a) newspaper articles, b) magazine articles, c) books, d) official publications, e) editorials, f) minutes of meetings, g) enabling legislation or statutes, h) lawsuits or other court cases, i) archival records, or j) by-laws of the organization. You will have some latitude in determining whether a particular resource is "relevant" to your field research.

Field Research. This may be the best place to start because members of the agencies themselves can direct you to good sources of information. First, call the agency to determine if and when public meetings are held. It would be best to choose an organization that has regular weekly or monthly meetings. Some agencies, like campaign organizations, may or may not welcome non-members. By law, however, public agencies like city councils must hold regular meetings that are open to the public. Then, take notes on the structure and substance of the meeting. What issues are raised? Do you detect personal or ideological conflicts? How well attended are the meetings? What is accomplished? Ask questions or conduct interviews, either at the meeting or later, if you want to get better acquainted with the process, the personalities, or the issues.

Written Paper. The term paper should be about 4-6 pages in length, typewritten, double-spaced, footnoted, and followed by a separate bibliographic page. You will be graded on form and content. Consult handouts on footnote and bibliographic forms. Comment on the specific articles, books, and pamphlets you consulted by noting what they are about and how useful they are for your purposes. Your paper should include a thesis statement (theme of your paper), specific illustrations of your theme, and a conclusion. Proofread your papers for grammar, spelling, and sentence structure. It would be helpful to make an outline of what you want to say before you start writing. Remember, papers are due the last week in May. Plagiarized papers will not be accepted, nor will papers that fail to meet the above requirements. Please leave me an extra copy of your bibliography.

Local Political Institutions. Check the Oregon Blue Book or the telephone directory for listings in the area. Many political parties and interest groups are listed in the white pages: for example, the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, the Socialist Workers Party, the John Birch Society, the League of Women Voters, Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG), Common Cause, the Oregon State Bar, American Friends Service Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, 1000 Friends of Oregon, City Club of Portland, Greenpeace, and various professional associations. The Libertarian Party is headquartered in Eugene. Many lobbying organizations, like the Association of Oregon Counties and the League of Oregon Cities, are located in Salem.

Information Sources. The school library contains such research tools as the card catalogue, periodical indexes like Readers' Guide, almanacs, and encyclopedia yearbooks. The card catalogue is the best place to begin since it is most likely to have some local sources. Portland State University has a much wider selection but PCC students are not permitted to borrow the materials. PSU has a large number of indexes, including various newspaper indexes. Many of these are on microfilm. The Multnomah County Library has several branches and is a public library. More specialized libraries may be found at the Oregon Historical Society, the University of Oregon Health Sciences Center, and the Northwestern School of Law at Lewis and Clark College. Besides these resources, many public agencies and private organizations issue newsletters and keep information collections. The Archives Division and Legislative Research in Salem are both good sources of public policy information.