

POLITICAL SCIENCE 4125: AMERICAN STATE POLITICS

Tuesday and Thursday, 2:20 to 3:40 p.m.

McPherson Lab Room 2015

Spring 2015

Professor Vladimir Kogan

Office: Derby Hall 2004

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9 to 11 a.m., and by appointment

E-mail: kogan.18@osu.edu

Teaching Assistant: Lauren Elliott

E-mail: elliott.466@osu.edu

Top Hat Course URL: tophat.com/e/780333

Top Hat Course Code: **780333**

SMS Response Number: **+1 (315) 636-0905**

Course Description:

States play a critical — although often underappreciated — role in American democracy. They help pay for essential public services, administer safety net programs for vulnerable residents, and often serve as a source of innovation in public policy, generating new ideas that eventually become adopted by the national government. In this course, we will examine state politics and policymaking in a comparative context, paying particularly close attention to the importance of state institutions, the role of voters, and the intergovernmental dynamics across and within states.

Course Goals:

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Understand the basic institutional structure of state government and how this varies across states;
2. Be able to identify key forces and actors that shape state policy outcomes and rate their relative influence on state government;
3. Appreciate the strategic interplay between different political actors in state government, the competitive and cooperative relationships states develop with one another, and the evolving relationship between the states and the federal government;
4. Be able to apply general theories and models of politics to state governments, and identify key differences between the state and national political contexts and institutions.

Course Materials:

1. *All required course readings are posted on Carmen*

2. *Students are required to purchase a Top Hat license (\$20 to \$38, depending on type)*

Top Hat is a mobile audience response system has been adopted campus-wide at OSU starting this year. We will use it extensively throughout the course for both reading quizzes and class participation. You can access the system via the URL on the front page of the syllabus or use an app on your iOS or Android device. At minimum, you will need a phone capable of sending SMS text messages, but to take advantage of the full functionality of the system, I strongly encourage those who do not have a laptop or tablet they can bring to class to purchase one. An inexpensive Android tablet can be found online for \$50 or less. A limited number of iPads are available for checkout for free at the library.

You can purchase your Top Hat license directly on the company's website (tophat.com), or from the OSU bookstore if you are using financial aid. A one-semester license, which can be used for all of the courses this semester, costs \$20, while a five-year license costs \$38.

Additional information about using the Top Hat system and purchasing your license are posted on Carmen.

Assignments:

1. **Class Participation (20% of Overall Grade)**

Students can earn participation points by using Top Hat on their mobile devices to respond to questions incorporated into the course lecture and by taking part in class discussions. The bulk of the participation points will be earned through Top Hat. To receive full points in this category, students should expect to also speak in class and participate in class discussions once a week.

Points for Top Hat participation will be tracked automatically and can be viewed on the Top Hat course website. They will be updated on Carmen regularly as well. Points for taking part in class discussions will be posted on Carmen after each class. Extra credit will be available to students who participate regularly (more than once a week) in class discussions.

2. **Daily Reading Quiz (25% of Overall Grade)**

Students are required to complete the required readings for each day *prior* to the start of class. In the beginning of each lecture, students will use Top Hat to complete a short multiple-choice quiz testing basic comprehension and recall of major facts from the readings assigned for that day. There will be no trick questions. *Quizzes missed due to absences cannot be made up, but the lowest four quiz scores will be dropped prior to the calculation of the final grades.*

3. **Midterm (15% of Overall Grade)**

The midterm will consist of two parts. Two take-home essay questions will be distributed on Thursday, Feb. 12 and are due at the beginning of class on Thursday, Feb. 19. On Feb. 19, students will also complete an in-class multiple-choice exam. Students

will have previously seen at least of half of the multiple choice questions during the daily quizzes. I will also use the Top Hat “tournament” feature to allow you to review and study *all* of the questions prior to the exam. The tournament will become available approximately one week prior to the midterm.

4. Group Research Presentations (20% of Overall Grade)

Students will work in groups to research a current political controversy in state politics. Topics will be chosen in class on Tuesday, Feb. 24. Students will be able to pick their preferred research topic and will work in groups to carry out the necessary research. Each group will prepare a 15-minute presentation to share its findings to the class. *Each student must participate in one major speaking role during the presentation. One presentation grade will be assigned to all group members.*

5. Final Exam (20% of Overall Grade)

The final exam will have the same format as the midterm. Two take-home questions will be handed out on Tuesday, April 7. These will be due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, April 24. Students will complete the multiple-choice portion of the exam in class during the regularly scheduled final exam time on Wednesday, April 29.

*****A copy of all take-home exam questions must be uploaded to the appropriate dropbox on Carmen. The upload feature on Carmen sometimes does not work on Google Chrome, so I encourage you to install a backup browser (Firefox, Internet Explorer, Safari, etc.) ahead of time just in case. Assignments will be considered late and a penalty will be assessed unless they are uploaded by the beginning of the class when they are due. No printed hard copies will be accepted in lieu of online submissions.*****

Academic Integrity:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. *Instructors are obligated* to report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Students are required to upload their written exams to Carmen, which utilizes Turnitin.com for plagiarism detection. This online service analyzes student submissions for plagiarism from published or online sources and compares their work to submissions made by other students (including students who have taken the course in previous semesters). To avoid plagiarism charges, students must cite all sources from which they get their information and use quotation marks when quoting directly from these sources, including the readings assigned for class. Students are responsible for knowing how to correctly cite their sources; ignorance about proper citation standards will not be accepted as an excuse for plagiarism.

Late and Make-Up Policy:

All take-home exam questions are due *at the beginning* of class or scheduled exam time, unless noted otherwise below. Assignments submitted more than 15 minutes after the due date will be assessed a

5 percentage point late penalty. There will be an additional 10 percentage point penalty for each subsequent day that the assignment is late. *No assignments will be accepted more than one week late.*

Make-up exams will be approved only in the event of a medical or family emergency or a university-sanctioned event. *Extensions must be arranged ahead of time.* You must have documentation of your emergency (for example, a doctor's note) to be able to take a make-up exam. After you provide this documentation, a decision will be made regarding your request. Similarly, any request for an incomplete must be accompanied by written medical documentation.

Grade Appeals:

You have one week from when the grades are posted on Carmen to appeal the grade. You must submit a typed, double-spaced statement to the teaching assistant explaining why you are appealing your grade and justify it with evidence from your paper, exam, readings, lectures, and/or answer keys. If you choose to appeal your grade, we reserve the right to decrease the original grade if a grading mistake or oversight resulted in it being erroneously high.

Accommodations for Disabled Students:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Other Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers):

1. *I have a personal/medical emergency or must miss class for other legitimate reasons. How can I make up the points I lose?*

A few years ago, I decided to stop making the distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences, because it put me in the uncomfortable position of having to decide what constituted a sufficient reason to make an absence an “excused” one. To accommodate all of our student's diverse experiences, challenges, and needs without drawing arbitrary lines, I simply allow every student to miss up to four classes without penalizing their quiz grade, regardless of the reason for the absence(s).

As for the participation portion of your grade, students who miss points due to an absence have an opportunity to make up (at least some) of these points by participating regularly in class discussions on the days they do attend. Note that you will earn extra credit if you participate more than once a week (see “Class Participation” above), and this can be used to offset points you lose due to absences.

2. *What if I have to miss more than four classes?*

If you expect to miss more than four classes, I strongly encourage you not take this class. Although it will still be possible to pass the course, you will likely miss a great deal of material and will likely not get the grade you want. If unexpected circumstances result in you missing many classes during the course of the semester, your best course of action is to withdraw prior to the deadline. If you must withdraw after the deadline due to an

emergency, I am happy to write a letter of support to get your withdrawal processed retroactively. Please see an academic advisor to learn about your options.

3. *What if I am absent on the day of an exam?*

If you are ill, you need to: (1) contact me *prior* to the start of the exam to arrange for an extension; and (2) go to an urgent care center to get necessary help and receive appropriate medical documentation. Unless you have *both* contacted me ahead of time and have the necessary documentation, you will not be allowed to make up the exam. If you are absent for other university-approved reasons, the same policy applies. You must notify me ahead of time and have the documentation to support your absence.

The policy above applies only for the in-class portion of the exams. Since you have at least an entire week to complete the take-home questions, no extensions will be given for these assignments. Do not wait until the last minute to start working on these; if an emergency comes up that prevents you from finishing the assignment, the usual late penalty will apply.

4. *How can I review the quiz questions I missed?*

The gradebook on Top Hat will indicate which questions you answered correctly and which you got wrong. It will also show you the first few words of each question. If you would like to see the full question and/or the correct answer, please come see me at office hours. (This option is available only to students who attended class on the day the quiz was given.) Also, feel free to write down/take a screen shot of each question for study purposes, although remember that the questions will also be available to you for review prior to the exam using the Top Hat tournament.

5. *Can I access the quiz and discussion questions if I'm not in class?*

Students who are logged in to Top Hat remotely will see exactly the same questions as the students in class. In theory, this means that it is possible to complete these without being present. Note, however, that the questions are available only for a limited period of time during the course of the class. If you're going to sit around by your phone or computer waiting for the questions to appear, you might as well come to class.

6. *Is attendance required?*

I will take attendance every day using Top Hat. However, this information will be used *only for record-keeping purposes*. None of your grade is based on attendance (with the exception described below). But keep in mind that participation makes up 25 percent of your final course grade and daily quizzes make up another 25 percent. It will be very hard to do well on these portions of your grade without actually attending class regularly.

There is one exception to this: Attendance *is required* on days when guest speakers are scheduled to join us or when other groups are presenting their research projects. These people have taken time out of their busy schedule to share their insights with you, and I expect you to be there. Students who attend on these days will receive 10 participation points; those who are absent will not receive those points. Please look over the detailed course schedule below and note the days on which guest speakers are coming and when the presentations will be made, so you can schedule your other commitments accordingly.

7. *I am having problems connecting to the OSU wi-fi during class. How can I complete the reading quiz and participation questions if I can't connect to the internet?*

Make sure that you have registered your cell phone number on your Top Hat student account and have your phone with you in class. This will allow you to submit answers via SMS text message if you run into internet problems. Another option is to connect to Top Hat using your mobile internet, if you have a data plan.

If the internet connection is lost unexpectedly during a Top Hat session and you are using the Top Hat app on your phone or mobile device, the app will give you the option of saving your answers in "Offline Mode." Your responses will be automatically uploaded to Top Hat when the internet connection is re-established. You can find more information about Offline Mode here: <https://support.tophatmonocle.com/hc/en-us/articles/200200514-Offline-Submission-Mode-Video-Tutorial>. Note that Offline Mode is available only to students who are logged in while the question is active, and the app records an internal timestamp to verify that this is indeed the case. You cannot use this feature to submit answers late if you were not logged in when the questions are available.

*****Please be sure that you understand all of these options and know what to do if you run into problems using Top Hat. You will be responsible for making sure your answers are submitted and recorded correctly. Please contact Top Hat directly at support@tophat.com if you run into problems with anything.*****

8. *My internet connection is fine, but for some reason Top Hat will not let me submit my response.*

If you encounter an error message saying "Submission Failed, Please Retry" or see that the submission button is disabled (but there is still time available to submit an answer), click the answer you are trying to submit and take a screenshot of the question. Send the screenshot to support@tophat.com. Be sure to CC me on your e-mail.

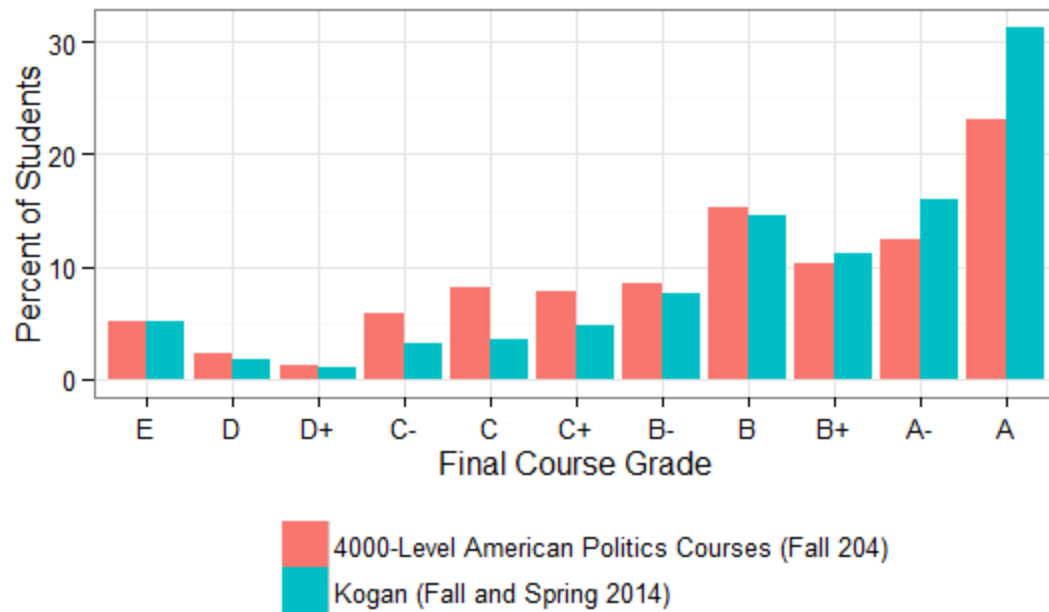
If the question won't load on your device, submit your response via SMS text message.

9. *I've submitted my response via SMS text message, but Top Hat responded with an error message saying the question code is incorrect. I verified the question code I'm using and it is indeed correct.*

Carefully check the question code again. If it is correct, your response was likely recorded successfully, despite the error message. You can check in the Top Hat gradebook to verify that this was the case. If the response was not recorded, take a screenshot of your text message (including timestamp and error message) and e-mail it to Top Hat technical support at the e-mail listed above. Again, CC me on the e-mail.

10. *Is there a curve?*

No. As you can see in the figure below, students generally do significantly better in my classes than other 4000-level American politics courses. (This is consistent with findings from experimental studies, which show that daily quizzes significantly increase student achievement in college courses.) Students who earn a grade below a "B-" usually miss courses frequently, do not come to class with the assigned readings complete, or turn work in late. Avoid these pitfalls, and you will do well.



I do reserve the right to adjust the weights given to individual components of your final grade if doing so improves your overall course grade. These adjustments will never be made in a way that gives you a lower grade than you would earn using the weights listed above.

11. *I'm trying to submit the take-home essay questions on Carmen, but I am having problems.*

The upload feature on Carmen sometimes does not work on Google Chrome, so I encourage you to install a backup browser (Firefox, Internet Explorer, Safari, etc.) ahead of time just in case.

Assignments need to be submitted in one of the following formats:

- Microsoft Word (.doc and .docx)
- Corel WordPerfect
- HTML
- Plain text (.txt)
- Rich Text Format (.rtf)
- Portable Document Format (.pdf)

Note that neither Apple Pages nor OpenOffice files are currently supported. If you use one of these programs to compose your papers, be sure to export them to one of the formats listed above prior to submission.

Documents that cannot be opened due to incorrect file type or other issues will not be accepted and a late penalty will accrue until a valid file is uploaded. Double check after you've finished uploading to make sure your document works.

Note that computer problems are always a possibility. For this reason, I encourage you to always use Buckeye Box (<https://box.osu.edu/>) to regularly back up your work. If your computer is having issues, you can access your backed-up files from anywhere and upload your assignments from a different computer. Since you have free access to Buckeye Box and should be using it, computer problems will not be accepted as excuse for turning in your work late. The usual late penalty will apply.

12. *What if I can't attend class on a day when a guest speaker is coming in or other groups are presenting their research?*

See the policy about absences on exam days (No. 3 above), as it applies on these days as well. You need to notify me prior to the absence and bring necessary supporting documentation. You will need to complete an alternative written assignment (e-mail me for details) to make up the lost participation points.

Course Overview and Schedule:

PART I: AMERICAN FEDERALISM

Week 1

Thursday, January 13: **Introduction and Course Overview**

Tuesday, January 15: **Federalism: Theory and Practice**

Reading:

- *The Federalist Papers* #15, 44, 45, and 46.
- Derthick, Martha, "Ways of Achieving Federal Objectives," in *American Intergovernmental Relations: Foundations, Perspectives, and Issues*, Laurence J. O'Toole, Jr., ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2000).
- Perlman, Ellen, "The Gorilla That Swallows State Laws," in *American Intergovernmental Relations: Foundations, Perspectives, and Issues*, Laurence J. O'Toole, Jr., ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2000).

Week 2

Tuesday, January 20: **Competitive Constraints**

Reading:

- Story, Louise, "As Companies Seek Tax Deals, Governments Pay High Price," *New York Times*, Dec. 1, 2012.
- Story, Louise, "Lines Blur as Texas Gives Industries a Bonanza," *New York Times*, Dec. 2, 2012.
- Peterson, Paul E., and Mark Rom, 1989, "American Federalism, Welfare Policy, and Residential Choice," *American Political Science Review* (Volume 83, Number 3): 711-728.

Thursday, January 22: **Guest Speaker: Matt Carle, campaign manager for Kasich/Taylor for Ohio**

Week 3

Tuesday, January 27: **Interstate Cooperation**

Reading:

- Hiltzik, Michael, *Colossus: Hoover Dam and the Making of the American Century*. (New York: Free Press, 2010): Chapter 5 (“Hoover Steps In”).
- Henry, Tom, “Detroit River a Suspect in Lake Erie Algal Growth,” *Toledo Blade*, Nov. 16, 2014.

PART II: STATE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Thursday, January 29: **State Legislative Professionalism**

Reading:

- Thompson, Joel A., and Gary F. Moncrief, “The Evolution of the State Legislature: Institutional Change and Legislative Careers,” in *Changing Patterns in State Legislative Careers*, Gary F. Moncrief and Joel A. Thompson, eds. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992).
- Thompson, Joel A., 1986, “State Legislative Reform: Another Look, One More Time, Again,” *Polity* (Volume 19, No. 1): pp. 27-41.

Week 4

Tuesday, February 3: **Legislative Term Limits**

Reading:

- Carey, John M., Richard G. Niemi, and Lynda W. Powell, 1998, “The Effects of Term Limits on State Legislatures,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (Volume 23, Number 2): pp. 271-300.
- Arlook, Ira, “Term Limits: Reform for a System That Can’t Fix Its Problems,” *Cincinnati Post*, April 30, 1992.
- Green, William Christopher, “Term Limits: Thorny Thicket,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Sept. 11, 1992.

Thursday, February 5: **Executive-Legislative Bargaining — Who Wins and Why?**

Reading:

- Kousser, Thad, and Justin Phillips, *The Powers of American Governors: Winning on Budgets and Losing on Policy*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012): Chapters 2 (“The Roots of Executive Power”) and 4 (“Gubernatorial Success”).

Week 5

Tuesday, February 10: **Judicial Elections**

Reading:

- Gibson, James L., 2008, “Challenges to the Impartiality of State Supreme Courts: Legitimacy Theory and ‘New-Style’ Judicial Campaigns,” *American Political Science Review* (Volume 102, Number 1): pp. 59-75.
- Shepherd, Joanna, and Michael S. Kang, 2014, *Skewed Justice: Citizens United, Television Advertising and State Supreme Court Justice’s Decisions in Criminal Cases*, report for the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy.
- Welsh-Huggins, Andrew, “Death-row Inmate Wants 2 Justices Off New Review,” *Associated Press*, Nov. 12, 2014

Thursday, February 12: **Direct Democracy**

Reading:

- Cronin, Thomas E., *Direct Democracy: The Politics of Initiative, Referendum, and Recall*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989): Chapter 4 (“The Question of Voter Competence”).
- Todd Rogers and Joel Middleton, 2015, “Are Ballot Initiative Outcomes Influenced by the Campaigns of Independent Groups? A Precinct-Randomized Experiment Showing That They Are,” *Political Behavior*.

****Take-home portion of midterm exam handed out****

Week 6

Tuesday, February 17: **Guest Speaker: Dale Butland, Democratic political consultant**

Thursday, February 19: **MIDTERM**

****Take-home questions due at 2:20 p.m.****

PART III: DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT — CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Week 7

Tuesday, February 24: **The Democratic Deficit in the States**

Reading:

- Lax, Jeffrey R., and Justin H. Phillips, 2012, “The Democratic Deficit in the States,” *American Journal of Political Science* (Volume 56, Issue 1): pp. 148-166.

****Group research topics assigned****

Thursday, February 26: **Elections and Collective Accountability**

Reading:

- Rogers, Steven, 2013, “Accountability in State Legislatures: How Parties Perform in Office and State Legislative Elections,” working paper.

Week 8

Tuesday, March 3: **Who's Responsible for Performance?**

Reading:

- Brown, Adam R., 2010, "Are Governors Responsible for the State Economy? Partisanship, Blame, and Divided Federalism," *Journal of Politics* (Volume 72, Number 3): pp. 605-615.

Thursday, March 5: **Guest Speaker: Brian Perera, assistant vice president for state relations, Ohio State University**

Week 9

Tuesday, March 10: **The Problem of Information**

Reading:

- 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* (Volume 6, Issue 1): pp. 55-83.
- Kogan, Vladimir, 2015, "When Voters Pull the Trigger: Can Direct Democracy Restrain Legislative Excesses?" working paper.

Thursday, March 12: **Party Leadership and Agenda Control**

Reading:

- Binder, Mike, Vladimir Kogan, and Thad Kousser, "How G.A.V.E.L. Changed Party Politics in Colorado's General Assembly," in *State of Change: Colorado Politics in the Twenty-First Century*, John Straayer, Robert Duffy, and Courtney Daum, eds. (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2011).

Week 10

Tuesday, March 17: **Spring Break**

Thursday, March 19: **Spring Break**

Week 11

Tuesday, March 24: **Interest Group Influence**

Reading:

- Powell, Lynda, *The Influence of Campaign Contributions in State Legislatures: The Effects of Institutions and Politics*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012): Introduction, Chapters 1 ("Measuring the Influence of Campaign Contributions in the Legislative Process") and 6 ("The Influence of Campaign Contributions in Legislative Chambers").
- Johnson, Alan, "Ohio House Bill to Weaken 'Puppy Mill' Provisions," *Columbus Dispatch*, Nov. 21, 2014.

PART IV: PUBLIC POLICY IN THE STATES

Thursday, March 27: **State Budgets**

Reading:

- Oliff, Phil, Chris Mai, and Vincent Palacios, 2012, “States Continue to Feel Recession’s Impact,” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
- Klarner, Carl E., Justin H. Phillips, and Matt Muckler, 2012, “Overcoming Fiscal Gridlock: Institutions and Budget Bargaining,” *Journal of Politics* (Volume 74, Number 4): pp. 992-1009.

Week 12

Tuesday, March 31: **Gay Rights in the States**

Reading:

- Lax, Jeffrey R., and Justin H. Phillips, 2009, “Gay Rights in the States: Public Opinion and Policy Responsiveness,” *American Political Science Review* (Volume 103, Number 3): pp. 367-386.
- Lupia, Arthur, Yanna Krupnikov, Adam Seth Levine, Spencer Histon, and Alexander Von Hagen-Jamar, 2010, “Why State Constitutions Differ in Their Treatment of Same-Sex Marriage,” *Journal of Politics* (Volume 72, Number 4): 1222-1235.

Thursday, April 2: **Guest Speaker: Susan Ackerman, executive director, Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee**

Week 13

Tuesday, April 7: **Education Policy**

Reading:

- Manna, Paul, *Collision Course: Federal Education Policy Meets State and Local Realities* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2010): Chapters 2 (“Logic and Levers of NCLB”) and 3 (“System Leaders Implement the Law”).
- *Take-home portion of final exam handed out****

Thursday, April 9: **No Class**

PART V: GROUP RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Week 14

Tuesday, April 14: **Group Research Presentations**

Thursday, April 16: **Group Research Presentations**

Week 15

Tuesday, April 21: **Group Research Presentations**

Thursday, April 23: **Group Research Presentations**

****TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS DUE: Friday, April 24, 11:59 p.m.****

****IN-CLASS FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, April 29, 2 to 3:45 p.m.****