College of Arts and Sciences
POLS 210: State & Local Government
Fall 2017—3 Credit Hours, Online

Instructor  Malene A. Little
Office Hours  Tuesdays, 1-3 pm Central time

Phone  605-659-5557

E-mail Addresses  malittle@d2l.sdbor.edu  Malene.Little@usd.edu

Changes will be posted on the D2L “News” widget.
Feel free to call during office hours.
Please use D2L e-mail as your primary method of correspondence. You can expect a reply within 48 hours.

Course Duration: Monday, August 21—Wednesday, December 13
Last Day to Drop the Course with a Refund: Thursday, August 31
Last Day to Drop the Course with a WD: Friday, November 3

I. INSTRUCTOR—MALENE A. LITTLE
This course is delivered online via Desire2Learn (D2L) (http://d2l.sdbor.edu). I will be accessible to you through e-mail, virtual office hours, phone calls, and posts on D2L.

Please use D2L e-mail as your primary method of correspondence. You can contact me at malittle@d2l.sdbor.edu from your D2L e-mail address. You can only send D2L e-mails from your D2L address. If you need to contact me before or after D2L access is available, please e-mail me at Malene.Little@usd.edu.

I will hold virtual office hours each week on Tuesday afternoons from 1-3 pm. If I need to change those hours for any reason, I will post the changes in the D2L “News” area. If you want to talk to me outside of office hours, please e-mail me at malittle@d2l.sdbor.edu so we can schedule a mutually convenient time.

605-659-5557 is my cell number. Phone calls will be received and returned during office hours and scheduled appointments. Please do not call outside of office hours or scheduled appointments unless it is urgent. I will respond to e-mails and phone calls within 48 hours.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Description
An analysis of the legal status, powers and functions, intergovernmental relations and political problems of state and local governments.
**Additional Course Description**
POLS 210 is an introduction to state and local governments in the United States. After taking this course, students will better understand the institutions of state and local government and their effect on students’ lives. In addition, students will be able to answer questions about policy and politics using the comparative method.

**III. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**
This course is delivered online via Desire2Learn (D2L) (http://d2l.sdbor.edu). Through D2L, you will be able to access the discussion forums, assignments, grades, and everything else you will need for this course. Although this is an online course, *it is not a self-paced course*. Instead, you will be required to complete each assignment by the date noted in the instructions.

**IV. COURSE PREREQUISITES**
There are no prerequisites for this course. However, the University of South Dakota requires that you satisfy certain technology requirements, which can be found in the Online Student Handbook: http://www.usd.edu/continuing-and-distance-education/upload/Online-Orientation-Guide.pdf.

For this class, you must have access to e-mail, the Internet, Adobe Reader, Microsoft Office, and Google Docs. As a USD student, you have access to Microsoft Office 365 and Google Docs at no additional cost.

USD has also established minimum requirements for participation in online courses. You can learn more about these requirements in the “Technology Support and Requirements” section of the Online Student Handbook available at http://www.usd.edu/continuing-and-distance-education/upload/Online-Orientation-Guide.pdf.

You must use your USD e-mail address to receive information about your courses, related campus communications, and instructions on how to access and complete the IDEA course evaluation at the end of the term.

If you require technical assistance with Desire2Learn or with your myUSD login credentials, please submit a request online to the ITS Help Desk at www.usd.edu/technology. Alternately, you can contact the ITS Help Desk by e-mail at helpdesk@usd.edu or by phone at 877-225-0027.

**V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Supplemental Readings**
Additional readings may be posted on D2L in the “Content” section.
**Suggested Resources**
You are encouraged to stay informed about state and local government issues. You can read local media outlets such as the *Rapid City Journal* ([http://rapidcityjournal.com/](http://rapidcityjournal.com/)) or *Argus Leader* ([http://www.argusleader.com/](http://www.argusleader.com/)). You can also read national media sources that relate to issues concerning state and local government. Additional suggested resources will be posted on D2L in the “Content” section.

**VI. UNIVERSITY POLICIES**
Please familiarize yourself with University of South Dakota policies, including the policies below and those dealing with issues such as adding and dropping classes, class cancellations/school closings, etc. Please contact me if you have any questions.

**Academic Integrity**
The College of Arts and Sciences considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty inimical to the objectives of higher education. The College supports the imposition of penalties on students who engage in academic dishonesty, as defined in the “Conduct” section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook.

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:
- a. Given a zero for that assignment.
- b. Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- c. Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
- d. Dropped from the course.
- e. Failed in the course.

**Freedom in Learning**
Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the dean of the college or school that offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

**Disability Accommodation**
Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class or as soon as possible after the diagnosis of a disability. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester.

Please note: if your home institution is not the University of South Dakota but one of the other South Dakota Board of Regents institutions (e.g., SDSU, SDSMT, BHSU, NSU, DSU), you
should work with the disability services coordinator at your home institution.

Ernetta L. Fox, Director  
Disability Services, Room 119 Service Center  
(605) 677-6389  
Web Site:  www.usd.edu/ds  
E-mail: disabilityservices@usd.edu

**Diversity and Inclusive Excellence**  
The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected.

**VII. COURSE POLICIES**  
Please read the following course policies and contact me if you have any questions.

**Attendance Policy**  
Attendance will be taken for each week of class. Attendance is measured by your completion of course assignments for that week. If you fail to post to the discussion or submit the required assignment(s), I will treat you as absent for that week. I reserve the right to facilitate an instructor-initiated drop (that is, the right to dismiss you from the course) if you have repeated absences. As explained elsewhere in the syllabus, late assignments will not be counted for credit. It is critical to your success in this class that you complete your assignments in a timely manner. **You are required to post to the introduction topic by 11:59 pm Central time on Saturday, August 26, 2017 or you will be removed from the class for nonparticipation.** If you have any questions about this topic, please contact me.

**Withdrawal**  
If you wish to withdraw prior to the last day of class, you must contact the Division of Continuing & Distance Education office by e-mail at cde@usd.edu or by phone at 800-233-7937. You may withdraw and receive a full refund by 8/31/2017. You may withdraw and still receive a WD by 11/3/2017. The full Academic Calendar is available at http://www.usd.edu/registrar/calendars/academic-calendar-2017-18.

**Classroom Decorum**  
You are expected to behave in a professional manner. Civility is required in every discussion. You are welcome to challenge any opinion expressed, but please do so in a respectful way. You will receive no points for an assignment or discussion in which you use foul language, engage in name calling, or personally attack a member of the class (including yourself, e.g. “I may be stupid for asking this, but…” or “I know I’m an idiot but I don’t understand…”). Please read the Netiquette guidelines available in the *Online Student Handbook* at http://www.usd.edu/continuing-and-distance-education/upload/Online-Orientation-Guide.pdf. The *Online Student Handbook* is also posted on the course homepage.

**Make-Up Policy**  
Except in the case of a documented emergency, or an absence caused by a university-sponsored activity, *late submissions will receive no credit.*
If you have a family crisis, ill health, or any other issue that affects your studies, I expect you to contact me before the day the assignment is due or at the earliest opportunity to request an extension. If you know you are going to be absent because of a university-sponsored activity, I expect you to contact me before the day the assignment is due to request an extension.

I reserve the right to grant an extension if I feel the situation is extenuating. The burden of proof regarding the reason for the late submission rests with you, the student. **Assignments submitted by the due date of the extension are considered on time.** If you have not received an extension from me, your assignment is due on the date indicated by the class schedule. Late submissions will receive no credit.

**Preparation Policy**
You are expected to be adequately prepared for each class. Class preparedness is demonstrated by completing assignments with the thoroughness and clarity expected of a University of South Dakota student. In addition to required texts, please use the resources below to prepare for class.

**D2L Resources**
In the D2L Content section, you will find a guide to research, writing, and APA Style. You will also find links to online resources.

**Library Resources**
As a student of the University of South Dakota, tremendous library resources (online journal databases, eBooks, newspaper access, citation help, etc.) are available to you. If travel to campus is not feasible, you can access the library at [http://www.usd.edu/library](http://www.usd.edu/library). To familiarize yourself with the library’s resources, go through the Information Literacy lessons at [http://www.usd.edu/library/tutorials](http://www.usd.edu/library/tutorials).

**University Writing Center**
I expect you to use appropriate writing skills, including proper grammar, American English spelling, correct punctuation and mechanics, paragraph development, and logical sequences of thought. The University Writing Center is available to help you with your work from formulating initial ideas to proofreading your final writing. You can access the University Writing Center website at [http://www.usd.edu/academics/academic-commons/writing-center.cfm](http://www.usd.edu/academics/academic-commons/writing-center.cfm), or you can contact it by e-mail at wcenter@usd.edu or by phone at 605-677-5626. If you visit campus, you may go to the University Writing Center in Room 133 of the Academic Commons in the I. D. Weeks Library.

**Resources for Academic Integrity**
If you use the words or ideas of someone else, you must cite your source. In order to maintain academic integrity, I utilize Turnitin ([http://turnitin.com/](http://turnitin.com/)). Please note that self-plagiarism is also wrong and is detected by Turnitin. Please refer to the Academic Integrity policy (above) for more information on the consequences of cheating and plagiarism.

**Resource for APA Style**
In this course, you must use the APA style manual. For purposes of this course, the following website will provide you with the information you need so you can use APA in your
assignments: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/). A PowerPoint is also available in the “Content” section of D2L. Of course, you can always contact me if you have questions on how to use APA for an assignment.

VIII. COURSE GOALS
You will meet System General Education Requirements #3 and its student learning outcomes by completing assignments as detailed below.

**System General Education Requirements #3**
Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences.

**Student Learning Outcomes**
As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:
1. Identify and explain basic concepts, terminology, and theories of the selected social science disciplines from different spatial, temporal, cultural and/or institutional contexts,
2. Apply selected social science concepts and theories to contemporary issues, and
3. Identify and explain the social or aesthetic values of different cultures.

In addition, as a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of at least one of the following:
4. The origin and evolution of human institutions,
5. The allocation of human or natural resources within societies, and
6. The impact of diverse philosophical, ethical or religious views.

The student learning outcomes will be satisfied as follows:

**Outcome One: Identify and explain basic concepts, terminology, and theories of the selected social science disciplines from different spatial, temporal, cultural and/or institutional contexts.** Through quizzes, discussion forum posts, and a final paper, you will demonstrate knowledge of basic concepts, terminology, and theories in the political science field of state and local government. Through these same means, you will discuss the basic concepts, terminology, and theories in state and local government, with comparative references to different spatial, temporal, cultural and/or institutional contexts. As an example, you will be asked to “employ the comparative method to identify and explain the similarities and variance of a concept, such as the role of government, in various regions or states which possess different geographic features, lengths of existence, cultural norms, and institutional features.”

**Outcome Two: Apply selected social science concepts and theories to contemporary issues.** Through quizzes, discussion forum posts, and a final paper, you will apply selected social science concepts and theories to contemporary issues. As an example, you will be asked to “explain your opinion about which level(s) (e.g. state, county, municipal) is/are best able to address education policies.”

**Outcome Three: Identify and explain the social or aesthetic values of different cultures.** Through quizzes, discussion forum posts, and a final paper, you will identify and explain the social and aesthetic values of different cultures. As an example, you will be asked to “identify
and describe Daniel Elazar’s classic study on the different political cultures of the various states in the union.”

**Outcome Four: Gain knowledge of the origin and evolution of human institutions.** Through quizzes, discussion forum posts, and a final paper, you will demonstrate knowledge of the origin and evolution of various state and local institutions of government. As an example, you will be asked to “write about the creation and evolution of state constitutions and how such origins and evolutions have impacted the state institutions governed by state constitutions.”

**Outcome Five: Gain knowledge of the allocation of human or natural resources within societies.** Through quizzes, discussion forum posts, and a final paper, you will demonstrate knowledge of the allocation of human or natural resources within societies. As an example, you will be asked to “demonstrate how interest groups affect the political process.”

**Outcome Six: Gain knowledge of the impact of diverse philosophical, ethical, or religious views.** Through quizzes, discussion forum posts, and a final paper, you will demonstrate knowledge of the impact of diverse philosophical, ethical, or religious views. As an example, you will be asked to “demonstrate the philosophical beliefs which underlined the progressive movement and the subsequent call for direct democracy mechanisms.”

**IX. EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

Your final grade will be based on your quizzes, discussion forum posts, group projects, and a final paper. For each assignment, a detailed assignment sheet and rubric will be posted to D2L. After classes begin on **Monday, August 21**, you will need to post to the “Introductions” forum under the “Discuss” tab. More instructions will be available at that time. You will receive no points for this post, but you may be dismissed from the course for nonparticipation if you do not post to this forum by 11:59 pm Central on **Saturday, August 26**.

Extra-credit assignments may be offered, but you must complete all required coursework to be eligible to submit them. In other words, you can’t skip posting to a discussion forum and make up those points with extra credit.

**Final Grade Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>900-1000</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>Superior, outstanding work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>800-899.99</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>Excellent, high quality work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>700-799.99</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>Average, satisfactory work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>600-699.99</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>Below average, passing work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-599.99</td>
<td>below 60%</td>
<td>Failing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Points will not be rounded up.

**Grading Schedule**

You can expect to receive your grade for an assignment within 2 weeks after the assignment’s due date. Please contact me if you have any questions about your grades.