

PADM 523 Administration of State and Local Government

Credits hours: 3

Professor Agustin Leon-Moreta

Spring 2025

Course format: Asynchronous online

Office hours: 3 to 5 pm on Friday face-to-face, and Zoom call appointments at other times

Address: Social Sciences 3006

Email: Email is the best to get in touch. *Allow 24 hours for a response to emails.*

apleonmoreta@unm.edu

Phone: Call (505) 277-1092 if you need immediate assistance.

EXPECTED BACKGROUND

PADM 500 or equivalent coursework

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to PADM 523 Administration of State and Local Government. This course aims to give students an overview of the importance of public administration at the state and local levels of government in the United States. All state and local governments in the US constitutional system develop and administer policies and programs to carry out their responsibilities to their citizens, fulfill responsibilities to governments at other levels, and collaborate with similar jurisdictions when it is required or advantageous to do so.

In addition, the federal government has specific duties and responsibilities for state and local governments that inform, direct, and monitor state and local administrations; the federal government also receives demands and inputs from them. The course thus takes a perspective of intergovernmental relations that highlights the network of governmental entities, their dependencies, and their interdependencies. The course examines the primary operations and essential issues in administering governments at the state and local levels and the similarities and differences of their contexts, institutions, organizations, and processes.

COURSE GOALS

This course addresses the following goal: Students will demonstrate knowledge of state and local government administration and policy processes.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course addresses the following MPA learning outcomes. Students will be able to analyze:

- State and local government institutions by applying appropriate concepts from public administration and related fields
- State and local services and practices by applying appropriate concepts from public administration and related fields

COURSE POLICIES

No Late/Makeup Assignments: **Late or makeup submissions won't be accepted.** I reserve the right to consider a late submission for reduced credit only under extraordinary circumstances.

Workload/Credit Hours: This is a three-credit-hour course of the MPA program that requires **independent work and study**. To learn the course material successfully, graduate **students should commit at least 10 hours per week** to the course outside of class.

Student Feedback: We welcome and appreciate your feedback on the course. We'll ask for it throughout the semester.

Email Communication: Electronic communication is encouraged using your UNM email account.

Syllabus Changes: This **syllabus will be updated** as needed. I reserve the right to change any syllabus content including the grading rubrics, weighting, and assignments. Assignments may be changed or added at any point. I will upload updated versions of the syllabus over the semester. Please use **the most current version of the syllabus on Canvas**.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity and Consequences: The University of New Mexico believes that academic honesty is a foundation principle for personal and academic development. All University policies regarding academic honesty apply to this course. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating or copying, plagiarism, claiming credit for the words or works of another from any type of sources such as print, internet or electronic database, failing to cite the source, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of tests and exams, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the professor, and/or using another student's work. All course assignments are independent, individual work. **I will check if your work is suspect of AI or plagiarism through Turnitin**. The University's statement on academic honesty and the consequences for failure to comply are available in the Catalog and the Pathfinder.

Accommodations: UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As the professor, I aim to facilitate an inclusive classroom where students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact the Accessibility Resource Center (<https://arc.unm.edu/>) at arcsrvs@unm.edu or by phone at 505-277-3506.

Title IX: The University of New Mexico and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and providing an environment free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. The University's programs and activities, including the classroom, should always provide a space of mutual respect, kindness, and support without fear of harassment, violence, or discrimination. Discrimination based on sex includes discrimination based on assigned sex at birth, sex characteristics, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, sexual orientation and gender identity. If you have encountered any form of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, domestic or dating violence, we encourage you to report this to the University. You can access the confidential resources available on campus at the LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center (<https://loborespect.unm.edu>), the Women's Resource Center (<https://women.unm.edu>), and the LGBTQ Resource Center (<https://lgbtqrc.unm.edu>). If you

speak with an instructor (including a TA or a GA) regarding an incident connected to discrimination based on sex, they must notify UNM's Title IX Coordinator that you shared an experience relating to Title IX, even if you ask the instructor not to disclose it. The Title IX Coordinator is available to assist you in understanding your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus. For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct and reporting, please see <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html> and CEEO's website. If you are pregnant or experiencing a pregnancy-related condition, you may contact UNM's Office of Compliance, Ethics, and Equal Opportunity at ceeo@unm.edu. The CEEO staff will provide you with access to available resources and supportive measures and assist you in understanding your rights. Support information is available at <https://ceeo.unm.edu/programs/pregnancy-and-parenting-support/index.html>.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Tests: Tests will be worth 20 out of 100 total points. They will assess weekly reading assignments. Weekly readings will be based on the textbooks, but additional readings may be assigned during the semester. Tests may include a variety of questions. Tests are essential to this course because they give you opportunities for skill application and practice toward the final exam. Each test offers three attempts for you to take and reach the highest possible grade. Submit your test weekly by Friday at 11:59 pm.

Reflection Questions: Reflection questions will be worth 10 out of 100 total points. Every week, you will upload a one-page Word document outlining a set of reaction questions on an article assigned for reading. As you write your reflection questions, please justify your reasons or rationale for proposing those questions for class discussion. Your reflection questions should ask thoughtful questions, add new insights, or connect with real-world cases. Evaluate the central issues of readings, critique them, discuss their implications for your research project, or raise unresolved issues. Reflection questions will be graded based on their quality and your analytical justification. Reflection questions won't receive full credit if they are simply a summary or show minimal engagement. Upload your Word document weekly by Friday at 11:59 pm.

Discussion Board: Class discussions will be worth 10 out of 100 total points. You'll participate in discussions to engage with peers. (1) Post one of the above reflection questions with its rationale for discussion on the Board (minimum 100 words); (2) reply to at least one classmate's post (minimum 50 words). I'll evaluate posts based on their analytical depth, engagement with peers, writing clarity, contribution to a productive dialogue, and originality. **Post your initial question before Friday**, and reply to another classmate's post by Friday at 11:59 pm.

Final Exam: The final exam will be worth 30 out of 100 total points. The exam format will be similar to the tests but comprehensive of all course materials. This final exam will be open from May 10 to the 12th.

Research Project: A research project will be worth 30 out of 100 total points. For this research, you'll select a substantive problem that concerns state government, local government, or both. Examples include housing and community development, public schools, law enforcement, criminal justice, welfare, health care, sustainability, and economic development. For the selected research problem, you'll focus on a specific state or local government. You'll write the research

paper sections in several steps and submissions. I will check your work through Turnitin for plagiarism/AI detection. See the grading rubric and appendix for additional guidelines. I'm happy to provide additional information regarding this research project upon request. Upload your research paper by May 16.

GRADING

Tests	20
Reflection questions	10
Discussion board	10
Final exam	30
Research project	30
Total grade	100 points

Grading Rubric

(A+) Excellent: Outstanding work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, comprehensive, creative, original, innovative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of the highest professional, scholarly quality.

(A/A-) Very good: Strong work for a graduate student. Work at this level shows creativity, is thorough and well-reasoned, indicates a strong understanding of appropriate methodological or analytical approaches, and meets professional standards.

(B+) Good: Good work for a graduate student; it is well-reasoned and methodologically sound. This grade indicates that the student has accomplished the basic objectives of the course.

(B) Adequate: Competent work for a graduate student even though some weaknesses are evident. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but shows some indication that understanding of some critical issues is less than complete. Methodological or analytical approaches are adequate, but the student is not thorough or shows other weaknesses or limitations.

(B-) Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student; it barely meets the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Understanding of salient issues is incomplete. Methodological or analytical work performed in the course is minimally adequate. If consistent in graduate courses, overall performance would not suffice to sustain graduate status in good standing.

(C/-/+) Deficient: Inadequate work for a graduate student; doesn't meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed or flawed due to numerous errors and misunderstandings of important issues. Methodological or analytical work performed is weak and fails to demonstrate the knowledge or technical competence expected of graduate students.

(F) Fail: The work fails to meet even minimal expectations for course credit for a graduate student. Performance has been consistently weak in methodology and understanding, with severe limits in many areas. Weaknesses or limitations are pervasive. There is evidence of **plagiarism and AI** without permission.

TEXTBOOK AND SUPPLIES

- Your Canvas page is automatically loaded with the textbook by RedShelf. The bookstore will charge your bursar account for the cost of the ebook. If you want a print book or more information, check out [1UNM InclusiveAccess](#) or contact inclusiveaccess@unm.edu. **Opt out before the deadline** if you prefer to buy the book from another vendor. Bowman, Ann, Richard Kearney, and Carmine Scavo. 2022. *State and Local Government*, 11th edition, posted on Canvas.
- Articles are posted on Canvas.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Week 1 due on Friday, January 24

Textbook:

1. State and Local Government: New Directions

Article:

- Conlan, Timothy J. “The changing politics of American federalism.” *State and Local Government Review* 49, no. 3 (2017): 170-183.

Week 2 due on Friday, January 31

Textbook:

2. Federalism and the States: Sorting Out Roles and Responsibilities

Article:

- Briffault, Richard. “What about the ‘ism’-normative and formal concerns in contemporary federalism.” *Vand. L. Rev.* 47 (1994).

Week 3 due on Friday, February 7

Textbook:

3. State Constitutions: The Fundamental Rules of State Government

Article:

- Holland, Randy J. “State Constitutions: Purpose and Function.” *Temp. L. Rev.* 69 (1996).

Week 4 due on Friday, February 14

Textbook:

4. Citizen Participation and Elections: Engaging the Public in Government

Article:

- Lupia, Arthur, and John G. Matsusaka. “Direct democracy: new approaches to old questions.” *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 7 (2004): 463-482.

Week 5 due on Friday, February 21

Textbook:

5. Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Campaigns

Article:

- Burstein, Paul, and April Linton. “The impact of political parties, interest groups, and social movement organizations on public policy: Some recent evidence and theoretical concerns.” *Social Forces* 81, no. 2 (2002): 380-408.

Week 6 due on Friday, February 28

Textbook:

6. State Legislatures: The People's Representatives

Article:

- Squire, Peverill. "The professionalizing of state legislatures since 1900," in *The evolution of American legislatures: Colonies, territories, and states, 1619-2009*, pages 266-316. University of Michigan Press, 2012.

Week 7 due on Friday, March 7

Textbook:

7. Governors: Power, Politics, and Executive Leadership

Article:

- Dometrius, Nelson C., and Deil S. Wright. "Governors, legislatures, and state budgets across time." *Political Research Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (2010): 783-795.

Week 8: Friday, March 14

Textbook:

8. Public Administration: Budgeting and Service Delivery

Article:

- Brown, Trevor, Matthew Potoski, and David Van Slyke. "Managing public service contracts: Aligning values, institutions, and markets." *Public Administration Review* 66, no. 3 (2006): 323-331.

Spring Break: Friday, March 21

Week 9: Friday, March 28

Textbook:

9. The Judiciary: Independence versus Accountability

Article:

- Tarr, G. Alan. 2014. "The Federal and State Court Systems." In *Judicial Process and Judicial Policymaking*, 6th ed., 23-44. Boston: Cengage Learning.

Week 10: Friday, April 4

Textbook:

10. Local Government: Types and Functions

Article:

- Leon-Moreta, Agustin, and Vittoria Totaro. "What Can Local Governments Do? Variation Across States." In *Cooperation and Conflict Between State and Local Government*, edited by Eric S. Zeemering. New York: Routledge, 2021.

Week 11: Friday, April 11

Textbook

11. Local Leadership and Governance: Continuity and Change

Article:

- Frederickson, H. George, Gary Alan Johnson, and Curtis Wood. The changing structure of American cities: A study of the diffusion of innovation. *Public Administration Review* 64, no. 3 (2004): 320-330.

Week 12: Friday, April 18

Textbook:

12. State-Local Relations: Fifty Different Systems

Article:

- Frug, Gerald E., and David J. Barron. *City bound: How states stifle urban innovation*. Cornell University Press, 2008. Part I: City Structures, pages 31-52.

Week 13: Friday, April 25

Textbook:

13. Taxing and Spending: Where the Money Comes from and Where It Goes

Article:

- Chapman, Jeffrey. State and local fiscal sustainability: The challenges. *Public Administration Review* 68 (2008): S115-S131.

Week 14: Friday, May 2

Textbook:

14. Economic Development: Competing for Growth

Article:

- Blumenthal, Pamela, Harold L. Wolman, and Edward Hill. Understanding the economic performance of metropolitan areas in the United States. *Urban Studies* 46, no. 3 (2009): 605-627.

Sections I, II and III of the research paper due on on Friday, May 9

Final exam from May 10 to the 12th

Research paper due on Friday, May 16 at 11:59 pm

APPENDIX Guidelines for Research Paper

I. Introduction (1 page)

In this research, you'll introduce the state or local government you study for the semester. Introduce the administrative/policy problem that you propose to study. You'll choose a specific state or local government to analyze the proposed problem of research. If you are interested in local government, I recommend studying a major US city with a large population.

II. Socioeconomic, Political, and Administrative Characteristics

In this section, you'll describe your state or local government's socioeconomic, political, and administrative characteristics. For example, you can discuss your chosen government's form of

government and administrative organization. Then you'll analyze how those governmental characteristics affect your study's administrative/policy problem.

III. Administrative/Policy Assessment

In this section, you'll analyze the administrative/policy challenges studied that are relevant to your state/local government. You'll examine the sources of the policy challenges for your government. For example, you can assess law enforcement in Chicago, housing policy in New Mexico, sustainability programs in California, and other topics.

IV. Administrative/Policy Options

In this section, you'll propose management or policy options that your state/local government may pursue to resolve the proposed research problem. Compare your proposed options in terms of administrative and policy feasibility. Based on that assessment, discuss what administrative or policy options you recommend for potential adoption and implementation by your state/local government.

V. Conclusion (1 page)

In the concluding section, synthesize your findings regarding the identified policy challenges and the administrative/policy options you recommend for your state/local government. Also, discuss how your conclusions would apply to other state/local governments in the US.

Format of the Paper

Format: APA style.
Length: About 10 pages double-spaced, aside from appendices. There's no upper limit.
Appendices: Put references, graphs, or tables in appendices (not within the text)
Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt.
Margins: 1 inch

Suggestions

You can incorporate preliminary ideas and analyses of your projects from the weekly reaction questions and in-class discussions. You may research and cite additional sources of information for your research project.