

PLSC 565: Local Governments and Politics
Winter 2016
(CRN 26552)

Arnold Fleischmann
Pray-Harrold 601A
734.487.3113, afleisch@emich.edu

Livonia Office Hours: Wednesday, 4:30-5:45,
and by appointment on Main Campus

Focus of the Course

The primary goal of this course is to understand the context – political, historical, demographic, spatial, and economic – within which local governments operate. PLSC 565 also functions as a gateway for those taking the local government concentration in the MPA program. It will be more “academic” than most of the other courses in the sequence. PLSC 625, for instance, will concentrate on management practices and problems at the local level; PLSC 580 will examine development policies and strategies as they relate to the local economy, quality of life, and sustainability; PLSC 645 examines the relationships among governments at all levels and between governments and nonprofits; and PLSC 655 looks at planning and politics at the local level. There are also related courses in Geography, and Urban & Regional Planning, and the College of Business.

Some of you will have completed several core MPA courses by now. Others might be in PLSC 540 or 578 this semester; both courses are good complements to our work. Comparable background in planning, geography, sociology, or economics can also serve you well.

Assignments & Evaluation

Your grade includes critical essays (4 @ 10%), a policy brief (40%) with accompanying synopsis and presentation (5%), and discussion (15%, weighted toward weeks as discussion leader). Grading is done on a 0-100 scale with the following thresholds: A = 93, A- = 90, B+ = 87, B = 84, B- = 80, and letter grades below 80(almost never needed in graduate classes) having cutoffs with comparable second digits.

Written work must conform to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, whose author-date format is used for assigned readings in this syllabus. You can also use Chicago style for numbered endnotes. Poor writing may be penalized up to one letter grade; late work will be penalized one letter grade per 24 hours and prorated for fractions thereof.

Reading. We will use a mix of books, book chapters, journal articles, and material from research organizations and professional associations. Each week includes both required reading followed by supplementary reading, which can be helpful for learning more about a topic and doing your essays.

There are two required books:

- Oliver, J. Eric. 2012. *Local Elections and the Politics of Small-Scale Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Gallagher, John. 2013. *Revolution Detroit: Strategies for Urban Reinvention*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Journal articles should be accessed from the [Halle Library web site](#) using the “Journals by Title” search tab. Material from outside organizations is available at their web sites or on CANVAS; book chapters will be posted to CANVAS. Reading assignments might be changed during the semester.

Discussion. Think of our weekly seminar like a staff meeting in terms of your preparation and participation. With the exception of a few weeks, we will build the first 15-20 minutes of each class

around significant trends or events that local managers should know about. It would be especially helpful if the readings matched the topic for the week. Anyone can bring up items, but two people will be leaders for each week on a rotating basis. The reading(s) should have appeared the previous week in a professional outlet (a few suggestions are at the end of the syllabus). To get discussion started, anyone can (leaders must) post a short reading or link by 4:00 PM the Sunday before our class. Leaders should suggest questions related to the reading and help to guide the discussion during class. We will focus on both the contents of the reading and its implications for local governments.

There will be limited class time devoted to lectures. You are expected to come prepared and to participate so that we can best understand each week's reading. I will give you an overview to each section of the course, as well as questions each week to guide the following week's class. Repeating what you have read is minimally acceptable graduate work. Identifying strengths and weaknesses in a study, presenting competing alternatives or evidence, and laying out the study's implications for policy, governing, or management are the skills that differentiate excellent from ordinary discussion.

Essays. You will write one essay for each of the four sections of the course. Each essay is worth 10 percent of your grade and is due by 6:00 PM on the Monday before we discuss them. Due dates are Jan. 18, Feb. 8, March 21, and April 4. Guidelines are in CANVAS with deadlines, which are also below.

Policy Brief. This report is an analysis of a local service/process or some federal or state urban program. It must cover both an overview of the service, process, or program and its status in a specific jurisdiction (municipality, township, or county). Detailed guidelines are posted to CANVAS. Deadlines for the brief's three preliminary steps are listed there and in the schedule below.

Important EMU Policies. Disability accommodations must be arranged through the Disability Resource Center: <https://www.emich.edu/drc/>. Policies on academic honesty are administered by the Student Conduct Office: <http://www.emich.edu/studentconduct/index.php>. Especially because this is a seminar in a graduate program, plagiarism will result in a grade of zero on the assignment in question.

Seminar Schedule

Week 1: January 6

Overview of the Course and Some Urban "Basics"

Part 1: The Local Government Setting

The Status of American Local Governments

- The local government landscape (from the *Census of Governments*). Go the Census Bureau's page "[Lists and Structure of Governments](#)" and then to the box for the "Number of Governments" menu. Start with Table 2 and the compare it to Tables 1 and 4.
- Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. 2013. "[State Governments Viewed Favorably as Federal Rating Hits New Low](#)" (April 15).
- Martin, Lawrence L., Richard Level, and Jena Caley. 2012. 'The 'New Normal' for Local Government.'" *State and Local Government Review* 44:special issue (August): 17-28.

Week 2: January 13

Lecture: A Brief History of Urban America

A Changing Urban Landscape?

- Ehrenhalt, Alan. 2012. *The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City*. New York: Knopf: Prologue (pp. 3-21). [CANVAS]
- Frey, William. 2014. *Diversity Explosion*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press: chap. 1. [CANVAS]
- Kneebone, Elizabeth. 2014. [“The Growth and Spread of Concentrated Poverty, 2000 to 2008-2012.”](#) Washington: Brookings Institution (July).
- Oliver: chap. 1.

Supplementary Reading:

- Bradley, Jennifer. 2015. [“The Changing Face of the Heartland: Preparing America’s Diverse Workforce for Tomorrow.”](#) Brookings Essays (March). Washington: Brookings Institution.
- Glaeser, Edward. 2011. *Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier, and Happier*. New York: Penguin Press.
- Florida, Richard. 2005. *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York: Routledge. [Florida’s views on economic development have spawned a cottage industry and lots of consulting for him.]

January 18: Essay #1 due by 6:00 PM.

Week 3: January 20

Conditions in Michigan

- Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). 2012. [“Retrenchment and Renewal: The Economic and Demographic Outlook for Southeast Michigan Through 2040.”](#) Detroit: SEMCOG (March).
- Horner, Debra, and Thomas Ivacko. 2015. “Confidence in Michigan’s Direction Declines Among State’s Local Leaders,” *Michigan Public Policy Survey* (Spring 2015). Ann Arbor: Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy. [CANVAS]

Discussion: Essay #1

Supplementary Reading:

- Sugrue, Thomas J. 2005 [1996]. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, rev. ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Maraniss, David. 2015. *Once in a Great City: A Detroit Story*. New York: Simon & Schuster [interesting narrative of events in Detroit during 1962-1964].
- Hochschild, Jennifer. 2012. “Race and Cities: New Circumstances Imply New Ideas.” *Perspectives on Politics* 10:3 (September): 647-658.

Part 2: Local Institutions & Political Participation

Week 4: January 27

Government Structure

- Frederickson, H. George, Gary Alan Johnson, and Curtis Wood. 2004. "The Changing Structure of American Cities: A Study of the Diffusion of Innovation." *Public Administration Review* 64:3 (May/June): 320-330.
- Schaffner, Brian F., Matthew Streb, and Gerald Wright. 2001. "Teams Without Uniforms: The Nonpartisan Ballot in State and Local Elections." *Political Research Quarterly* 54 (March): 7-30.
- Krebs, Timothy B., and John P. Pelissero. 2010. "Urban Managers and Public Policy: Do Institutional Arrangements Influence Decisions to Initiate Policy?" *Urban Affairs Review* 45:3 (January): 391-411.

Supplementary Reading:

- Carr, Jered B. 2015. "What Have We Learned about the Performance of Council-Manager Government? A Review and Synthesis of the Research." *Public Administration Review* 75:5 (September/October): 673-689.
- Choi, Cheon Geun, Richard C. Feiock, and Jungah Bae. 2013. "The Adoption and Abandonment of Council-Manager Government." *Public Administration Review* 73:5 (September/October): 727-736.
- Kropf, Martha, Timothy Vercellotti, and David C. Kimball. 2013. "Representative Bureaucracy and Partisanship: The Implementation of Election Law." *Public Administration Review* 73:2 (March/April): 242-252.
- Trounstein, Jessica, and Melody E. Valdin. 2008. "The Context Matters: The Effects of Single-Member versus At-Large Districts on City Council Diversity." *American Journal of Political Science* 52:3 (July): 554-569.
- Smith, Adrienne R., Beth Reingold, and Michael Leo Owens. 2012. "The Political Determinants of Women's Descriptive Representation in Cities." *Political Research Quarterly* 65:2 (June): 315-329.

February 1: Policy Brief proposal due by 6:00 PM.

Week 5: February 3

Local Elections: Who Runs and Who Votes?

- Oliver: chaps. 2 & 3.

Discussion: Policy Briefs

Supplementary Reading:

- Hajnal, Zoltan, and Jessica Trounstein. 2014. "What Underlies Urban Politics? Race, Class, Ideology, Partisanship, and the Urban Vote." *Urban Affairs Review* 50:1 (January): 63-99.
- Carr, Jered B., and Antonio Tavares. 2014. "City Size and Political Participation in Local Government: Reassessing the Contingent Effects of Residential Location Decisions Within Urban Regions." *Urban Affairs Review* 50:2 (March): 269-302 [based on a survey of Michigan residents about voting, contacting, and attending public meetings].

- Adams, Brian E. 2007. "Fundraising Coalitions in Open Seat Mayoral Elections." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 29 (December): 481-499.
- Gerber, Elizabeth R., and Justin H. Phillips. 2003. "Development Ballot Measures, Interest Group Endorsements, and the Political Geography of Growth Preferences." *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (October): 625-639.

February 8: Essay #2 due by 6:00 PM.

Week 6: February 10

Local Elections: Campaigns and Outcomes

- Oliver: chaps. 4, 5, & 6.
- Roscoe, Douglas D. 2014. "Yes, Raise My Taxes: Property Tax Cap Override Elections." *Social Science Quarterly* 95:1 (March): 145-164.

Discussion: Essay #2

Supplementary Reading:

- Carr, Jered B., and Antonio Tavares. 2014. "City Size and Political Participation in Local Government: Reassessing the Contingent Effects of residential Location Decisions Within Urban Regions." *Urban Affairs Review* 50:2 (March): 269-302 [Examines Oliver's claims with survey data from Michigan cities and finds mixed support for Oliver].
- Adams, Brian E. 2012. "Citizens, Interest Groups, and Local Ballot Initiatives." *Politics & Policy* 40:1 (February): 43-68.
- McNitt, Andrew Douglas. 2010. "Tenure in Office of Big City Mayors." *State and Local Government Review* 42:1 (April): 36-47.
- Trounstein, Jessica, and Melody E. Valdin. 2008. "The Context Matters: The Effects of Single-Member versus At-Large Districts on City Council Diversity." *American Journal of Political Science* 52:3 (July): 554-569.

Part 3: The Policy Process

Week 7: February 17

Local Policy Making

- Liu, Xincheng, Eric Lindquist, Arnold Vedlitz, and Kenneth Vincent. 2010. "Understanding Local Policymaking: Policy Elites' Perceptions of Local Agenda Setting and Alternative Policy Selection." *Policy Studies Journal* 38:1 (February): 69-91.
- Heidbreder, Brianne, Nathan Grasse, Douglas Ihrke, and Brian D. Cherry. 2011. "Determinants of Policy Conflict in Michigan Municipalities." *State and Local Government Review* 43:1 (April): 32-45.
- Keene, James, John Nalbandian, Robert O'Neill, Jr., Shannon Portillo, and James Svara. 2007. "How Professionals Can Add Value to Their Communities and Organizations." *Public Management* 89:2 (March): 32-39.

Supplementary Reading:

- Feiock, Richard C., James C. Clinger, Christopher Stream, Barbara Coyle McCabe, and Shamima Ahmed. 2001. "Political Conflict, Fiscal Stress, and Administrative Turnover in American Cities." *State and Local Government Review* 33 (Spring): 101-108.
- Gerber, Elisabeth R., and Daniel J. Hopkins. 2011. "When Mayors Matter: Estimating the Impact of Mayoral Partisanship on City Policy." *American Journal of Political Science* 55:2 (April): 326-339.
- Cooper, Christopher A., Anthony J. Nownes, and Steven Roberts. 2005. "Perceptions of Power: Interest Groups in Local Politics." *State and Local Government Review* 37:3 (Fall): 206-216.
- McCabe, Barbara Coyle. 2011. "Homeowners Associations as Private Governments: What We Know, What We Don't Know, and Why It Matters." *Public Administration Review* 71:4 (July/August): 535-542.
- Thomas, John Clayton, and Julia Melkers. 1999. "Explaining Citizen-Initiated Contacts with Municipal Bureaucrats: Lessons from the Atlanta Experience." *Urban Affairs Review* 34 (May): 667-690.
- Hock, Scott, Sarah Anderson, and Matthew Potoski. 2013. "Invitation Phone Calls Increase Attendance at Civic Meetings: Evidence from a Field Experiment." *Public Administration Review* 73:2 (March/April): 221-228.
- Svara, James H. 1985. "Dichotomy and Duality: Reconceptualizing the Relationship Between Policy and Administration in Council-Manager Cities." *Public Administration Review* 45:1 (January/February): 221-232. [This is one of the "classic" works on government structure and the politics-administration dichotomy.]

February 29: Policy Brief synopsis due to the class by 6:00 PM.

Week 8: March 2

Policy Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts

- Jones, Bryan D. 1982. "Assessing the Products of Government." In *Analyzing Urban-Service Distributions*, edited by Richard C. Rich, 155-169. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
[CANVAS]
- Nelson, Kimberly L., Gerald T. Gabris, and Trenton J. Davis. 2011. "What Makes Municipal Councils Effective? An Empirical Analysis of How Council Members Perceive Their Group Interactions and Processes." *State and Local Government Review* 43:3 (December): 196-204.
- Yang, Kaifeng, and Sanjay K. Pandey. 2011. "Further Dissecting the Black Box of Citizen Participation: When Does Citizen Involvement Lead to Good Outcomes?" *Public Administration Review* 71:6 (November/December): 880-892.

Discussion: Policy Briefs

Supplementary Reading

- Cooper, Christopher A., H. Gibbs Knotts, and Kathleen M. Brennan. 2008. "The Importance of Trust in Government for Public Administration: The Case of Zoning." *Public Administration Review* 68 (May-June): 459-468.
- Shipan, Charles R., and Craig Volden. 2012. "Policy Diffusion: Seven Lessons for Scholars and Practitioners." *Public Administration Review* 72:6 (November/December): 788-796.

- Ammons, David N., and William C. Rivenbark. 2008. "Factors Influencing the Use of Performance Data to Improve Municipal Services: Evidence from the North Carolina Benchmarking Project." *Public Administration Review* 68:2 (March/April): 304-318.

Week 9: March 9

Providing Local Services

- Osborne, David, and Ted Gaebler. 1992. *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley: Appendix A (pp. 332-348).
- Warner, Mildred E., and Amir Hefetz. 2008. "Managing Markets for Public Service: The Role of Mixed Public-Private Delivery on City Services." *Public Administration Review* 68:1 (January/February 2008): 155-166.
- International City/County Management Association. 2007. "Profile of Local Government Service Delivery Choices, 2007." Washington: ICMA. [CANVAS]

Supplementary Reading:

- Sclar, Elliott D. 2000. *You Don't Always Get What You Pay For: The Economics of Privatization*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hefetz, Amir, and Mildred Warner. 2012. "Contracting or Public Delivery? The Importance of Service, Market, and Management Characteristics." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 14:2 (April): 289-317.

Week 10: March 16

Intergovernmental Cooperation and Regionalism

- Hilvert, Cheryl, and David Swindell. 2013. "Collaborative Service Delivery: What Every Local Government Manager Should Know." *State and Local Government Review* 45:4 (December): 240-254.
- Gerber, Elisabeth R., and Carolyn G. Loh. 2014. "Spatial Dynamics of Vertical and Horizontal Intergovernmental Collaboration." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 37 (August): 270-288.
- LeRoux, Kelly, and Jered B. Carr. 2007. "Explaining Local Government Cooperation on Public Works: Evidence From Michigan." *Public Works Management & Policy* 12 (July): 344-358.

Supplementary Reading:

- Rusk, David. 2013. *Cities Without Suburbs: A Census 2010 Perspective*, 4th edition. Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

March 21: Essay #3 due by 6:00 PM.

Week 11: March 23

Dealing with the States and the Feds

- Bowman, Ann O'M., and Richard C. Kearney. 2012. "Are U.S. Cities Losing Power and Authority? Perceptions of Local Government Actors." *Urban Affairs Review* 48:4 (July): 528-546.
- Sapatichne, Joshua, Erika Rosebrook, Eric A. Scorsone, Danielle Kaminski, Mary Doidge, and Traci Taylor. 2015. "Beyond State Takeovers: Reconsidering the Role of State Government in

Local Fiscal Distress, with Important Lessons for Michigan and its Embattled Cities.” East Lansing: Michigan State University, Cooperative Extension Service (August). [CANVAS]

Discussion: Essay #3

Supplementary Reading:

- Wood, Curtis. 2011. “Exploring the Determinants of the Empowered U.S. Municipality.” *State and Local Government Review* 43:2 (August): 123-139.
- Leland, Suzanne M., and Kurt Thurmaier, editors. 2010. *City-County Consolidation: Promises Made, Promises Kept?* Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- Feiock, Richard C., editor. 2004. *Metropolitan Governance: Conflict, Competition, and Cooperation*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.

Week 12: March 30

Policy Brief Presentations

Part 4: The Future of Urban Michigan

April 4: Essay #4 due by 4:00 PM.

Week 13: April 6

Working Against the Tide in Detroit (Discussion: Essay #4)

- Gallagher: all.
- Bomey, Nathan, and John Gallagher. 2013. [“How Detroit Went Broke.”](#) *Detroit Free Press* (September 15) [archived article require scrolling a bit before getting to the body of the story].
- Bomey, Nathan, John Gallagher, and Mark Stryker. 2014. [“How Detroit Was Reborn: The Inside Story of Detroit’s Historic Bankruptcy Case.”](#) *Detroit Free Press* (November 9) [some of the chapters will be more useful than others].

Week 14: April 13

What’s Down the Road?

- Nelson, Kimberly L. 2012. “Municipal Choices during a Recession: Bounded Rationality and Innovation.” *State and Local Government Review* 44:special issue (August): 44-63.
- Katz, Bruce, and Jennifer Bradley. 2013. *The Metropolitan Revolution: How Cities and Metros Are Fixing Our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press: chap. 6 (“The Rise of Innovation Districts”).

Supplementary Reading:

- Ammons, David N., Karl W. Smith, and Carl W. Stenberg. 2012. “The Future of Local Government: Will Current Stresses Bring Major Permanent Changes?” *State and Local Government Review* 44:special issue (August): 64-75.

April 22: Policy Brief due by 7:30 PM (hard and electronic copy)

HELPFUL WEB SITES

Selected News Feeds for Local Update Discussions

<i>Governing</i> (free subscription and daily news feed)	http://www.governing.com/
Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program (research and bi-weekly newsletter)	http://www.brookings.edu/about/programs/metro
CityLab	http://www.citylab.com/
Citizens Research Council of Michigan	http://crcmich.org/
Center for Michigan (<i>The Bridge</i>)	http://bridgemi.com/

Professional Organizations

International City/County Management Association	http://icma.org/en/icma/home
National League of Cities	http://www.nlc.org/
U.S. Conference of Mayors	http://www.usmayors.org/
Michigan Municipal League	http://www.mml.org/home.html
Michigan Local Government Management Assn.	http://mlgma.org/

Government Agencies

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments	http://www.semCog.org/
U.S. Census Bureau	http://www.census.gov/#
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD

Research Sites

Google Scholar	http://scholar.google.com/
Pew State and Consumer Initiatives	http://www.pewstates.org/
Data Driven Detroit	http://datadrivendetroit.org/
U-M Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy	http://closup.umich.edu/