

PLSC 330: Urban Politics
Fall 2018
(Tu/Th, 11:00-12:15, Pray-Harrold 416, CRN 14281)

Instructor

Arnold Fleischmann
Office: Pray-Harrold 601M
734.487.3113; afleisch@emich.edu

Office Hours

T/R, 12:30-2:30 pm
Thursday, 9:00-10:30 am
and most days by appointment

Focus and Organization

PLSC 330 examines local politics in the United States, with extra attention devoted to Michigan. The course has five parts: (1) the development of American urban areas; (2) local government institutions; (3) political participation at the local level; (4) local government policy making, services, and finances; and (5) several types of local government policies.

The work will be easier if you have had courses in American politics or public administration (e.g., PLSC 202, 210, 270, 352, or 357), or URP 115 (The American City). PLSC 330 is also a good complement to related social science courses (e.g., GEOG 332, 335, 361; HIST 362; and SOCL 306, 334).

Required Material

- Timothy B. Krebs and Arnold Fleischmann, *Understanding Urban Politics: Institutions, Representation, and Policies* (listed below as Krebs & Fleischmann). Our draft chapters are located in the appropriate CANVAS module and are free of charge thanks to our publisher.
- Academic journals are available at the EMU Library web site (noted below as “[[L](#)]”). Retrieve articles yourself (pdf version) and have them in class when they are assigned for discussion.
- Other readings are posted to CANVAS or have URLs in the syllabus.

The required reading is subject to change and will be complemented by additional reading and videos. Reading must be completed **before** the class when it is discussed.

Assignments and Grading

Grading Policies. All grading is on a 0-100 scale. The cutoffs for course grades are as follows: A = 94, A- = 90, B+ = 87, B = 84, B- = 80, C+ = 77, C = 74, C- = 70, D+ = 67, D = 64, D- = 60, F < 60. Late work will be penalized one letter grade per 24 hours or fraction thereof. Poorly written work, including improper citations and formatting, can also be penalized up to one letter grade. Course averages just below each cutoff might be given the higher grade if there is significant progress over the semester.

For all of your work, you will be given sufficient guidance and time to do a good job. Also, please use office hours, appointments, and e-mail. There’s nothing wrong with asking for help, but please don’t expect instant email replies, especially late at night before something is scheduled.

You must have a verifiable reason (e.g., health, religious holidays) for late or missed work, including exams. Make-ups will be scheduled at my discretion. Please note important EMU [deadlines](#), which include the last day for a 100% refund (Sept. 14) and last day to withdraw with a “W” grade from an individual course (Nov. 13) or completely (Dec. 11).

Grade Distribution. Your grade in the course is a weighted average based on the following:

• midterm examination	10%
• final examination	20%
• article analyses (2 @ 5%)	10%
• research exercises (4 @ 10%)	40%
• participation	10%
• quizzes	5%
• bonus: best exercise or exam	5%

The bonus allows your best performance to make up for stumbling elsewhere during the semester. It should help anyone on “the bubble” for final grades.

You are expected to do your own work. The Department of Political Science follows [EMU policy on academic honesty](#), which is in the *Student Handbook*. The penalty for plagiarism or other forms of dishonesty can range from zero on an assignment to “F” in the course with referral to Student Conduct.

Exams. Each exam will include a combination of terms and essays. For each term, you must provide a definition and explain its significance. There will be a longer list of terms from which to pick. For essays, you will be given a list of possible questions. The questions on the exam will be taken from the list. You will do one essay on the midterm. For the final, you will answer one essay on material since the midterm and one comprehensive essay. You are required to submit a “blue book” at least one class period prior to each exam. The guides for the midterm and final exams are in the first module in CANVAS.

Article Analyses. You will do two homework assignments (2-3 double-spaced pages) based on assigned academic journal articles. The assignments can be completed using a Word document in CANVAS. We will do a practice version of another article on October 25.

Research Exercises. Instead of a large research paper, you will complete four exercises from chapters in the text. In addition to applying the general patterns described in the text to local conditions, the exercises are designed to develop your analytical skills. They are covered in detail in CANVAS.

The Classroom. Classes will be a combination of lecture, discussion, presentations, group work, and media. I treat class like a staff meeting in any workplace, which means that discussions should be civil, and disagreements should be based on evidence and logic, not personal. My job is to organize material and to highlight and extend (but not replace) your reading. Getting you to think will often mean asking you questions and arguing positions that are not my own. This view of the classroom has several effects:

- **Electronics.** Except when authorized, cell phones and laptops cannot be used during class. The first violation lowers your participation grade to 60; the second violation reduces it to zero.
- **Note Taking.** I seldom use PowerPoint. Instead, reduced versions of my outlines are posted as “NOTES” to CANVAS. Print them, bring them to class, and fill in the gaps. Retyping the notes to include your handwritten material is great way to review.
- **Participation (10%)** is a combination of attendance and discussion. You start with a grade of 100 and lose 5 points per absence not covered by documented illness or EMU policies. For discussion, you can volunteer or be called on at any time, especially to discuss assigned reading. You will be evaluated based on the quality of your analysis, not how much you talk. Describing something accurately or repeating facts is “C” work. Higher grades require careful analysis: “B” means that

you examine alternative explanations for something; “A” work entails critically analyzing assumptions and implications, as well as alternative ways of thinking about a question. I may **add up to 25 points to your participation grade** at the end of the semester based on discussion.

Quizzes (5%). You will take 8 quizzes, and I will count your 5 best. These will take 10-15 minutes at the start of class, with all missed quizzes scored as a zero. Each quiz will be a combination of multiple choice, fill-in, or short answer. To give you a sense of the quizzes and how to complete assigned reading, a practice quiz on Chapter 1 will be distributed on September 6 and discussed on the 11th.

Reading the Text. *Understanding Urban Politics* is a work in progress and will not be published for about a year. My coauthor and I have been unhappy about the existing urban politics texts and decided to write our own. You are reading draft chapters, so there will be occasional differences in format, lapses in writing, and related issues. We are still finishing some chapters, which will be uploaded later.

The best way to cover each chapter is to start with the guiding questions, which are like the ones on exams, and the learning objectives. Jump to the key terms and discussion questions at the end, which will give you a sense of major items in the chapter and the kind of issues I will ask you to discuss. Then read the chapter. You will notice that there are places in the text indicating where figures or tables will go when the book is published. Stop reading and look at the image, which is at the end of the chapter, and ask yourself a basic question (as I will in class): What’s the pattern here? Then move on in the chapter. Also, pay attention to the research exercises if one is assigned for that chapter.

Other Resources. There are several sources of great value to those following local politics: [CityLab](#), [Governing](#), and the [Brookings Institution Cities & Regions Programs](#), all of which have e-newsletters to which you can subscribe. Also check the daily *Detroit Free Press* and *New York Times*.

Support Services. EMU offers a range of services to help you improve your academic performance.

- [Disability Resource Center](#) (Student Center 246). Students with disabilities must register with the DRC so we can arrange accommodations to promote your participation and success in the course. The center also provides referrals and other services.
- [University Writing Center](#) offers workshops and one-on-one consulting related to reading, writing, research, and analysis. A satellite center is in Pray-Harrold 211.
- [Holman Success Center](#) (Halle Library G04) offers workshops, tutoring, and other services.
- [Office for International Students & Scholars](#) (Student Center 240) assists students with F and J visas and provides advising, help with documents, and other services.

Class Schedule

September 6	Overview of the Course
September 11	Studying Urban Politics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 1 practice quiz• Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 1.• Urban areas and local governments in Michigan (exercise with U.S. Census Bureau data – bring laptops)<ul style="list-style-type: none">-- Michigan Metropolitan & Micropolitan Areas-- 2012 Census of Governments – Organization (Table 4, Table 1)

Part 1: Urban Development in the U.S.

- September 13, 18 Urban Development through World War II
- **Quiz: Chapter 2 (Sept. 13)**
 - Krebs & Fleischmann: chapter 2.
- September 20 Postwar Urban Development
- **Quiz: Chapter 3**
 - Krebs & Fleischmann: chapter 3.
- September 25 Detroit's Development
- Farley, Reynolds, Sheldon Danziger, and Harry J. Holzer. 2000. *Detroit Divided*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, chap. 2. [C]
 - in-class work time: Chapter 2, Exercise #3 (bring laptops for this task).
- NO AFTERNOON OFFICE HOURS TODAY
- September 27 Discussion: **Chapter 2, Exercise #3 (typed version due at the end of class)**
-

Part 2: Political Institutions and Local Politics

- October 2 Intergovernmental Relations
- **Quiz: Chapter 4**
 - Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 4.
 - Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS). 2017. [“Michigan Local Leaders’ Views on State Preemption and How to Share Policy Authority.”](#) Ann Arbor: Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy, University of Michigan (June).
- October 4 Mayors and Managers
- Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 6.
- October 9, 11 City Councils and County Commissions
- **Quiz: Chapter 5 (Oct. 9)**
 - Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 5.
 - Quinn, Mattie. 2017. [“The City Councils Where Women Are Least Represented.”](#) *Governing* (August 24).
 - preview: Chapter 6, Exercise #4
- October 16 Discussion: **Chapter 6, Exercise #4 (typed version due at the end of class)**
- preview: midterm exam
- October 18 MIDTERM EXAM**

Part 3: Participation in Local Politics

October 23	Overview of Participation Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiz: Chapter 7• Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 7.
October 25	Election Campaigns <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 8.• Kapps, Kriston. 2016. “In the U.S., Almost No One Votes in Local Elections.” <i>CityLab</i> (November 1).• article analysis practice: Fleischmann, Arnold, and Lana Stein. 1998. "Campaign Contributions in Local Elections." <i>Political Research Quarterly</i> 51 (September): 673-689 [L]. (Bring a copy of the article analysis work sheet with you.)
October 30	Elections (concluded) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• article analysis #1 due at the start of class: Schaffner, Brian F., Matthew Streb, and Gerald Wright. 2001. “Teams Without Uniforms: The Nonpartisan Ballot in State and Local Elections.” <i>Political Research Quarterly</i> 54 (March): 7-30. [L]• preview: Chapter 7, Exercise #1.
November 1	Other Forms of Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 9.• Adams, Brian E. 2012. “Citizens, Interests Groups, and Local Ballot Initiatives.” <i>Politics & Policy</i> 40 (February): 43-68. [L]• video: the 1967 Detroit civil unrest (from “Eyes on the Prize”)
November 6	discussion: Chapter 7, Exercise #1 (typed copy due at the start of class)

Part 4: Policy Making, Services, and Finances

November 8	Local Policy Making & Service Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiz: Chapter 10• Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 10.• Savas: diagram of alternative service methods [C]• in-class exercise on alternative service methods
November 13	Guest speaker: Andy LaBarre, Chair, Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners (MPA, Eastern Michigan University)
November 15, 20	Local Government Finances <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiz: Chapter 11 (Nov. 15)• Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 11.
November 20	Discussion: Chapter 10, Exercise #2 (typed copy due at the end of class)

Part 5: Local Government Policies

- November 27, 29 Local Economic and Neighborhood Development
- **Quiz: Chapter 12 (Nov. 29)**
 - Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 12.
 - preview: article analysis #2.
 - Goldstein, Matthew. 2017. "Detroit: From Motor City to Housing Incubator." *New York Times* (November 4) [C].
 - view: HBO. 2017. "People Are Making Big Money Kicking Detroit Residents Out of Their Homes" *Vice News* (December 7) [C].
- December 4 view: "Land Grab" (shown in class)
- December 6 Land Use and the Environment
- Krebs & Fleischmann: Chapter 12, pp. TBA.
 - **article analysis #2 due at the start of class:** Folz, David H., and Jacqueline N. Giles. 2002. "Municipal Experience with 'Pay-as-You-Throw' Policies: Findings from a National Survey." *State and Local Government Review* 34 (spring): 105-115. [\[L\]](#)
- December 11 The Future of Urban America
- Ehrenhalt, Alan. 2012. *The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City*. New York: Knopf, "Prologue." [C]
 - Florida, Richard. 2016. ["The Downsides to the Back-to-the-City Movement."](#) *CityLab* (September 29).
 - preview: final exam
- December 13 **Final exam (11:00 AM-12:30 PM)**