

New Jersey Politics Class Outline: RU-NB Thursday PM

Date _____ *Class Topic and Required Reading*

Thursday January 19: Class Topic: History of NJ Politics – How did we get here?
State Powers, Political Parties, Government
Subdivision and Powers

Reading Due: http://www.state.nj.us/nj/about/history/short_history.html
A Brief discussion of New Jersey's past, present and future and what makes New Jersey
such a unique place.

Thursday, January 26: Class Topic: Local Governments – Municipal Madness
Powers of local government, changes over time,
home rule, state vs. local authority.

Reading Due: http://www.njslom.org/bureau_mun_info.html
<http://www.njslom.org/>
Students are to look at the web site and examine the services offered, the topics discussed
and the get a general understanding of what the League of Municipalities does.
Note: Guest Speaker

Thursday, February 2: Class Topic County Government – Freeholders – County
Executives – County Managers
Note: Midterm Papers will be discussed – they are
due 3/10

Reading due: <http://www.njac.org>
Students should familiarize themselves with what County Government's do and the
major issues the NJAC, the lobby arm for New Jersey's Counties, is interested in.
Note: Guest Speaker

Thursday, February 9: Class Topic Voters, Constituents, Interests – Who are they?
2 Party system, political bosses, committee system

Reading due: <http://www.njelections.org/publications/elections-faq-0921-2012.pdf>
This class will look at who can vote and why. Students should read the above link and be
prepared to discuss the basics of the election process.

Thursday, February 16: Class Topic: The power of the Governor
Cabinet, Appointments, Rules, Regulations
EO

Reading Due: <http://www.state.nj.us/governor/>

New Jersey has the most executively powerful Governor in the United States based on overall power to implement policy. Students should come prepared to discuss the Governor's powers and what Governor Christie's cabinet and his office do.

Thursday, February 23: Class Topic: The Legislature
Breakdown, power, committee's, partisan staff

Reading Due <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/legislativepub/history.asp>

This class will focus on the power of the legislature and its history. Where are they from? What do they do? What powers do they have – Senate vs. Assembly.

Guest Speaker

Thursday, March 2: Class Topic Lobbying / Special Interest
Go over midterm papers due following week

Reading Due: <http://www.elec.state.nj.us/index.htm>

The New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission helps to track and regulate what candidates can raise and spend money on. Students should look at the web site and browse through the some of the candidate, party or industry contribution reports to get an understanding of who gets money and who gives money in New Jersey's political world.

Thursday, March 9: Class Topic Independent Authorities

Reading Due: <http://www.state.nj.us/nj/gov/deptserv/>

New Jersey has a long tradition of placing policy, financial and political power in the hands of Independent Authorities. Turnpike, Sports Authority, Economic Development Authority and many others control billions of dollars worth of contracts and decisions. Students should focus on what those authorities are and how they are different from the Cabinet and other offices we have discussed.

NOTE: MID TERM PAPERS DUE

SPRING BREAK MARCH 16

Thursday, March 23: Class Topic Federal Representatives – House and Senate and how they work with New Jersey’s representatives. Federal offices and their interaction with state offices and authorities. Who trumps whom!
We will begin discussion on the final presentation

Reading Due: Students are expected to look up their Congressional Representatives web site and look at the issues he or she supports.

Students should become familiar with who their Congressional Representative is and what he or she’s major issues are. We will discuss why Congress is so important and what New Jersey’s role had been in helping to shape some of the major decisions. We will also look at issues like term limits and how congress raises money and why.

Thursday, March 30: Class Topic: Power of Money, appointment and contracts
Bidding laws, public disclosure, OPRA, financial Disclosures.

Required Reading:

http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/purchase/doing_business_brochure_NEW1.pdf

This class will look at who does work with the state, local or county governments. How does the state award contract and for how much? Who gets them and why? Students should look at the state’s procurement website and be prepared to discuss how the state and local governments do business.

Thursday, April 6: Class Topic: The Courts and Education
Education and the Courts – why are the linked?
Powers of Courts, Powers of School Boards
Politics of the Board

Reading Due:

<http://www.edlawcenter.org/cases/abbott-v-burke/abbott-history.html>

New Jersey has a long history of progressive education and continues to be one of the best-educated and most expensive school systems in America. Students should read the history of the abbott v burke case that tested New Jersey’s education funding system.

Thursday, April 13: Class Topic Elections, Referendum – I and R – Ballot Questions
Issue Framing
Who participates, why and how they control
policy.

Reading Due: <http://ballotpedia.org/>

[New Jersey Initiative and Referendum on Fiscal Policy Amendment %282014%29](#)

This class will focus on the Initiative and Referendum issue. What does a Ballot question mean here in New Jersey? Is it binding? Who participates? Should citizens have the right to change the law without the legislature and governor?

PREP FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Thursday, April 20: The politics meets the policy – A look at the support behind the
machines: Lawyers, professional services, consultants, engineers,
education, etc.

Reading Due: NJ Biz Handout provided

Note: Oral Presentations will begin for some

Thursday, April 27: **Oral Presentations**

Adam Zellner

adamzllnr@gmail.com

work: azellner@gbdtoday.com (for scheduling meetings)

office 732-253-7717