

State and Local Politics

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- 1 Procedural Stuff
- 2 Supreme Court Cases (cont.)
- 3 States and Federalism
- 4 Local-level Politics
- 5 Direct Democracy
- 6 Activity

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Procedural Stuff

- Exam

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- Activity planned for 10:00-11:00 session

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- Presentations for next week (on Partisan politics)

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Activity: Important Cases (continued)

- List of important SCOTUS cases
- Research the cases online
- Share with the class and discuss

Discussion

- What role does Supreme Court decisions have for politics and policymaking?
- Why is that role good or bad for American politics?

Questions about judiciary?

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Federalism

- National government
- States
- Counties
- Cities
- Regional (within-state) governments
- Direct democracy

Between-State Institutional Variations

All states have:

- Governor as executive
- Bicameral legislature (except NE)
- Judiciary (but form varies)

Between-State Institutional Variations

Lots of variation on:

- Separation of authority between state, counties, and cities
- Role of counties
- Presence and types of regional governments
- City-level authority and jurisdiction (related to size)
- How schools are governed

Between-State Policy Variations

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- Congressional laws apply universally across states
- States have jurisdiction in all other matters
- Some overlapping jurisdiction between state and national gov'ts

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- Federal authority through “block grants”

Example: Taxes

- National government can only raise funds through income tax and tariffs
- States can tax almost anything
- Local governments have limited, but variable, taxing powers

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Local Governments

- Meaning: city, township, county, etc.
- Depend on type of population
 - Urban
 - Suburban
 - Rural
- Sometimes strange politics
- Elections unlike those on national level

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Background

- No national direct democracy
- Direct election of Senators (17th Amend.; 1913)
- Most prevalent in Western states
 - esp. CA; also AZ, CO, MT, NV, ND, OR
- All states (except DE) have referenda on state constitutional amendments

Forms of Direct Democracy

- Legislature-initiated amendments (49 states)
- Legislature-initiated statutes (24)
- Citizen-initiated constitutional amendments (18)
- Citizen-initiated statutes (21)
 - Direct (referendum is law-making)
 - Indirect (referendum is referring only)
- “Veto referendum” (25)
- Recall of elected officials (18)

Questions about direct democracy in the U.S.?

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Activity: State Policy Variation

- Work in pairs
- Pick a policy area
- Figure out state-to-state variations
 - How do state policies vary?
 - Why?
- Prepare a 5-minute presentation for next week

