

PSC 2211: State and Urban Politics

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Lecture: T/Th, 3:45-5:00 pm via Blackboard
Office Hours: W, 2-4 pm or by appointment

Semester Fall 2020

“There is no Republican or Democratic way to pick up the garbage.”
- Fiorello La Guardia, Mayor of New York City 1934-45

Course Description

This course will introduce you to the politics of states and local government in the United States. We will begin by surveying the mechanics of these entities. Next, we will unpack what social science can tell us about who gets what and why in the state and local context. Finally, we will dive into specific policy areas, addressing current debates using the social science lens we’ve developed. Along the way, you will compile a political science policy paper on a topic of your choice.

Learning Goals

The goal of this course is to improve your ability to:

1. Navigate the array of decisions and policies controlled by state and local governments.
2. Apply concepts of institutional and behavioral political science to the local and state policy arena.
3. Convey policy ideas through written argument, incorporating cutting edge social science evidence and analysis.

Course Prerequisites

PSC 1002. Introduction to American Politics and Government.

Expected Time Commitment

You will spend 2.5 hours per week in direct instruction or guided interaction. The average minimum amount of out-class learning expected per week is 8 hours (<https://cte.rice.edu/workload>) for a total of 120 hours per semester.

Readings

This class does not have a required textbook. All readings will be posted on Blackboard (<http://blackboard/gwu/edu>). ‘Supplemental Readings’ are things I find useful but are not necessary for the week’s class. Read-

ings are subject to change up to one week before their assigned class. Please check the syllabus posted on Blackboard for updates.

Course Assignments and Grading

Grades will be composed of the following:

- 40% Weekly quizzes
- 5% Paper 1: Introduction and framework
- 5% Paper 2: Literature review and evidence
- 5% Paper 3: Political science theory
- 25% Final paper
- 20% Final exam

Quizzes

Special thanks to Prof. Danny Hayes for this material.

Short quizzes will be used at the start of each class to incentivize active reading. The quizzes consist of 5 multiple choice, content-based questions. The quizzes will cover material from that day's assigned reading. Showing up to take the quiz earns you 25 points. Each question is worth 15 points. If you answer four questions correctly, for instance, you would receive an 85. The quizzes will not be particularly difficult, but you will do well only if you keep up with the reading assignments. There will be 25 quizzes over the course of the semester. I will drop your lowest 5 scores and average the rest. Your quiz average will constitute 40% of your grade.

Why have frequent quizzes instead of a few exams? Good question. There is evidence that frequent quizzes improve students' learning significantly. For example, in one recent study in a large introductory psychology class, instituting on-line quizzes appeared to improve students' performance.¹ Students taking that class also did better in their other courses that semester, and in the classes they took the next semester. This suggests that regular assessment helps students develop study habits that are beneficial in other courses, not just the course that assigns quizzes. Frequent quizzes also help me ascertain how well certain concepts are understood, so that I can adjust the content of lectures accordingly.

Because I am dropping the 5 lowest quiz grades, there will be no makeups (other than for religious observances [see policy below] or GW athletic or other events that you are required to participate in).

Political Science Policy Paper

The capstone assignment is a policy paper on a topic of your choice. You will submit components of this paper every 3 weeks as short assignments (roughly 2 pages each):

- Framework - What do you plan to research and propose? Why does this policy area present a problem? Who does the problem affect? What are the foreseeable costs and benefits?
- Literature review and evidence - Cite specific research about the problem and the efficacy of proposed solutions.
- Political science theory - How does political science explain the status quo problem? Why is your proposed solution politically feasible?

The final 10 page paper will be a composite of these assignments, incorporating my feedback from the individual short assignments.

Extra Credit

You are eligible for 1 additional percentage point of extra credit. To receive this percentage point, you must make a meme incorporating one of the lessons or readings from this class. Your meme will be anonymously

¹Pennebaker, James W., Samuel D. Gosling, and Jason D. Ferrell. 2013. "Daily online testing in large classes: Boosting college performance while reducing achievement gaps." *PLoS one* 8 (11) : e79774.

displayed in front of the class and subject to a vote. If more than 50% of the class agrees that your meme is “high quality/not low effort,” you will receive the extra credit. If your meme falls short of the 50% threshold, you may submit a new meme and try again. Each student is only eligible to receive 1 point of extra credit.

Lateness and Participation Policy

You are required to come to class on time. If you are not present at the beginning of class, you will not be eligible to take the day’s quiz. Within class, you are expected to actively contribute to the discussion, both in small groups and as a whole. A component of participation is respect for your peers.

Important Dates

- 9/10 - PSC 2211 canceled for the APSA Annual Meeting
- 9/24 - Paper 1: Introduction and framework due
- 10/15 - Paper 2: Literature review and evidence
- 11/12 - PSC 2211 canceled for the APPAM Annual Meeting
- 11/25 - Paper 3: Political science theory
- 11/26 - No class, Thanksgiving
- 12/8 - Designated Friday, no PSC 2211
- 12/10 - Final paper due
- 12/15 - Final exam, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

Course Calendar

Module 1. Mechanics

- 9/1 Why study state and local politics?
 - PSC 2211 Syllabus

Supplemental Reading

- Trounstine, Jessica. 2020. “Local Political Economy: The State of the Field: Past, Present, and Future.” *Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy* 1 (3): 319-40.

- 9/3 Social science literacy

- Bailey, Michael A. 2016. *Real Stats: Using Econometrics for Political Science and Public Policy*. Oxford University Press. 1-23.
- Bronner, Laura. 2020. “Why Statistics Don’t Capture The Full Extent Of The Systemic Bias In Policing.” *FiveThirtyEight*, June 25. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-statistics-dont-capture-the-full-extent-of-the-systemic-bias-in-policing/>.

Supplemental Reading

- Locke, Susannah. 2014. “15 ways to tell if that science news story is hogwash.” *Vox*, Apr. 22. <https://www.vox.com/2014/4/22/5636960/a-rough-guide-to-spotting-bad-science>.
- Hutson, Matthew. 2020. “The Trouble with Crime Statistics.” *The New Yorker*, Jan. 9. <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/annals-of-inquiry/the-trouble-with-crime-statistics>.

- 9/8 What are states, politically?
 - 2020. “State and Local Revenues.” *Urban Institute*. <https://www.urban.org/policy-centers/cross-center-initiatives/state-and-local-finance-initiative/state-and-local-backgrounders/state-and-local-revenues>.
 - 2020. “State and Local Expenditures.” *Urban Institute*. <https://www.urban.org/policy-centers/cross-center-initiatives/state-and-local-finance-initiative/state-and-local-backgrounders/state-and-local-revenues>.
 - Gordon, Tracy, Megan Randall, Eugene Steuerle, and Aravind Boddupalli. 2019. “Fiscal Democracy in the States”. Urban Institute. 1-26.
 - Smialek, Jeanna, Alan Rappeport, and Emily Cochrane. 2020. “State and Local Budget Pain Looms Over Economy’s Future”. *New York Times*, Aug. 14. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/14/business/economy/state-local-budget-pain.html>.

Supplemental Reading

- Alt, James E, and Robert C Lowry. 1994. “Divided Government, Fiscal Institutions, and Budget Deficits: Evidence from the States.” *American Political Science Review* 88 (4): 811-828.
- 9/10 *PSC 2211 canceled for the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting*
- 9/15 What are local governments, politically?
 - Burns, Nancy. 1994. *The Formation of American Local Governments: Private Values in Public Institutions*. Oxford University Press. 3-22.
 - Judd, Dennis R, and Todd Swanstrom. 2016. *City Politics: Private Power and Public Policy*. Pearson. 309-330.

Supplemental Reading

- Judd, Dennis R, and Todd Swanstrom. 2016. *City Politics: Private Power and Public Policy*. Pearson. 1-48.
- 9/17 Federalism as vertical conflict
 - Zimmerman, Joseph F. 2001. “National-state relations: Cooperative federalism in the twentieth century.” *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 31 (2): 15-30.
 - Allen, Danielle. 2020. “A More Resilient Union.” *Foreign Affairs* 99: 33.

Supplemental Reading

- Madison, James. 1788. The Federalist Papers 44, 45, 46.
- Payson, Julia A., Forthcoming. “The Partisan Logic of City Mobilization: Evidence from State Lobbying Disclosures.” *American Political Science Review*.
- Burns, Nancy, Laura Evans, Gerald Gamm, and Corrine McConaughy. 2009. “Urban Politics in the State Arena.” *Studies in American Political Development*. 23 (1): 1.
- Nestor M. Davidson, Cooperative Localism: Federal-Local Collaboration in an Era of State Sovereignty, 93 VA. L. REV. 959 (2007)
- 9/22 Federalism as horizontal conflict
 - Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Harvard University Press.
 - Tiebout, Charles M. 1956. “A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures.” *Journal of Political Economy* 64 (5): 416-424.
 - Peterson, Paul E. 2001. “Interests of a Limited City.” *The Politics of Urban America - A Reader*.

Supplemental Reading

- Volden, Craig. 2002. “The Politics of Competitive Federalism: A Race to the Bottom in Welfare Benefits?.” *American Journal of Political Science* 46 (2): 352-363.
- <https://itep.org/millionaire-population-swells-in-blue-states-despite-migration-fearmongering/>
- 9/24 How do states *vary*, politically?
 - Grumbach, Jacob M. 2018. “From Backwaters to Major Policymakers: Policy Polarization in the States, 1970–2014.” *Perspectives on Politics* 16 (2): 416-435.
 - Caughey, Devin, Yiqing Xu, and Christopher Warshaw. 2017. “Incremental Democracy: The Policy Effects of Partisan Control of State Government.” *The Journal of Politics* 79 (4): 1342-1358.

Supplemental Reading

- Soss, Joe, Sanford F. Schram, Thomas P. Vartanian, and Erin O’Brien. 2001. “Setting the Terms of Relief: Explaining State Policy Choices in the Devolution Revolution.” *American Journal of Political Science* 45 (2): 378-395.
- 9/29 How do municipalities *vary*, politically?
 - Jensen, Amalie, William Marble, Kenneth Scheve, and Matthew J. Slaughter. 2019. “City Limits to Partisan Polarization in the American Public”. Working Paper.
 - de Benedictis-Kessner, Justin, and Christopher Warshaw. 2016. “Mayoral Partisanship and Municipal Fiscal Policy.” *The Journal of Politics* 78 (4): 1124-1138.

Supplemental Reading

- Tausanovitch, Chris, and Christopher Warshaw. 2014. “Representation in Municipal Government.” *American Political Science Review* 108 (3): 605-641.

Module 2. Politics

- 10/1 Segregation within and across cities
 - Trounstein, Jessica. 2018. *Segregation by Design: Local Politics and Inequality in American Cities*. Cambridge University Press. 1-45.

Supplemental Reading

- Judd, Dennis R, and Todd Swanstrom. 2016. *City Politics: Private Power and Public Policy*. Pearson. 252-277.
- Schelling, Thomas C. 1969. “Models of Segregation.” *The American Economic Review*. 59 (2): 488-493.
- 10/6 What happens when elections are smaller?
 - Oliver, J. Eric, Shang E. Ha, and Zachary Callen. *Local Elections and the Politics of Small-Scale Democracy*. Princeton University Press, 2012. 1-52.

Supplemental Reading

- Heerwig, Jennifer, and Brian J. McCabe. 2019. “High-Dollar Donors and Donor-Rich Neighborhoods: Representational Distortion in Financing a Municipal Election in Seattle.” *Urban Affairs Review* 55 (4): 1070-1099.

- 10/8 What happens when voter turnout is low? Like, really, really low?
 - Hajnal, Zoltan, and Jessica Trounstein. 2005. “Where Turnout Matters: The Consequences of Uneven Turnout in City Politics.” *The Journal of Politics* 67 (2): 515-535.
 - Berinsky, Adam J. 2005. “The Perverse Consequences of Electoral Reform in the United States.” *American Politics Research* 33 (4): 471-491.

Supplemental Reading

- Michener, Jamila. 2013. “Neighborhood Disorder and Local Participation: Examining the Political Relevance of ‘Broken Windows’.” *Political Behavior* 35 (4): 777-806.
- 10/13 How are our political attitudes affected by those around us?
 - Enos, Ryan D. 2017. *The Space Between Us: Social Geography and Politics*. Cambridge University Press. 1-33, 108-142.

Supplemental Reading

- Hopkins, Daniel J. 2010. “Politicized Places: Explaining Where and When Immigrants Provoke Local Opposition.” *American Political Science Review*. 104 (1): 40-60.
- Velez, Yamil Ricardo, and Grace Wong. 2017. “Assessing Contextual Measurement Strategies.” *The Journal of Politics* 79 (3): 1084-1089.
- 10/15 How are our political attitudes affected by those around us?
 - Enos, Ryan D. 2017. *The Space Between Us: Social Geography and Politics*. Cambridge University Press. 143-170.
 - Sands, Melissa L, and de Kadt, Daniel, Forthcoming. “Local Exposure to Inequality Among the Poor Increases Support for Taxing the Rich.” *Nature*.

Supplemental Reading

- Sands, Melissa L. 2017. “Exposure to Inequality Affects Support for Redistribution.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 114 (4): 663-668.
- Hill, Seth J., Daniel J. Hopkins, and Gregory A. Huber. 2019. “Local Demographic Changes and US Presidential Voting, 2012 to 2016.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116 (50): 25023-25028.
- 10/20 Who is organized in state and local politics and what advantages do they gain?
 - Feigenbaum, James, Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, and Vanessa Williamson. 2018. “From the Bargaining Table to the Ballot Box: Political Effects of Right to Work Laws.” No. w24259. National Bureau of Economic Research.
 - Kogan, Vladimir, Stéphane Lavertu, and Zachary Peskowitz. 2018. “Election Timing, Electorate Composition, and Policy Outcomes: Evidence from School Districts.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 62 (3): 637-651.

Supplemental Reading

- Anzia, Sarah F. 2011. “Election Timing and the Electoral Influence of Interest Groups.” *The Journal of Politics*. 73 (2): 412-427.
- Frymer, Paul, and Jacob M. Grumbach. Forthcoming. “Labor Unions and White Racial Politics.” *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Federalist 10.
- 10/22 How do people participate beyond voting?

- Broockman, David E., and Christopher Skovron. 2018. “Bias in Perceptions of Public Opinion Among American Political Elites.” *American Political Science Review* 112 (3): 542-563.
- Einstein, Katherine Levine, Maxwell Palmer, and David M. Glick. 2019. “Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes.” *Perspectives on Politics* 17 (1): 28-46.

Supplemental Reading

- Hertel-Fernandez, Alexander, Matto Mildemberger, and Leah C. Stokes. 2019. “Legislative Staff and Representation in Congress.” *American Political Science Review*. 113 (1): 1-18.
- 10/27 Does the design of state government matter?
 - Kousser, Thad. 2005. *Term Limits and the Dismantling of State Legislative Professionalism*. Cambridge University Press. 3-28.
 - Hertel-Fernandez, Alexander. 2014. “Who Passes Business’s ‘Model Bills’? Policy Capacity and Corporate Influence in US State Politics.” *Perspectives on Politics* 12 (3): 582-602.

Supplemental Reading

- Lax, Jeffrey R, and Justin H Phillips. 2012. “The Democratic Deficit in the States.” *American Journal of Political Science* 56 (1): 148-166.
- 10/29 Does the design of local government matter?
 - Schaffner, Brian F, Gerald Wright, and Matthew Streb. 2001. “Teams Without Uniforms: The Nonpartisan Ballot in State and Local Elections.” *Political Research Quarterly* 54 (1): 7-30.
 - Sances, Michael W. 2016. “The Distributional Impact of Greater Responsiveness: Evidence from New York Towns.” *The Journal of Politics* 78 (1): 105-119.

Supplemental Reading

- Kirkland, Patricia A, and Coppock, Alexander. 2018. “Candidate Choice Without Party Labels.” *Political Behavior* 40 (3): 571-591.
- 11/3 How do local rules affect racial representation and equity?
 - Sances, Michael W, and Hye Young You. 2017. “Who Pays for Government? Descriptive Representation and Exploitative Revenue Sources.” *The Journal of Politics*. 79 (3): 1090-4.
 - Abott, Carolyn, and Asya Magazinnik. Forthcoming. “At-Large Elections and Minority Representation in Local Government.” *American Journal of Political Science*.

Supplemental Reading

- Trounstine, Jessica and Melody E. Valdini. 2008. “The Context Matters: The Effect of Single-Member versus At-Large Districts on City Council Diversity.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (3): 554-69.
- Trebbi, Francesco, Philippe Aghion, and Alberto Alesina. 2008. “Electoral Rules and Minority Representation in US Cities.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123 (1): 325-357.

Module 3. Outcomes

- 11/5 Redistribution - Why do liberal states and cities seem to pass moderate policies?
 - Dube, Arindrajit. “Designing Thoughtful Minimum Wage Policy at the State and Local Levels.” Brookings.

- Fellowes, Matthew C., and Gretchen Rowe. 2004. “Politics and the New American Welfare States.” *American Journal of Political Science* 48 (2): 362-73.
- Bean, Lydia, and Maresa Strano. 2019. “Punching Down: How States are Suppressing Local Democracy.” New America Foundation.

Supplemental Reading

- Ravenscraft, Eric. 2019. “What a ‘Living Wage’ Actually Means.” *The New York Times*, June 15. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/05/smarter-living/what-a-living-wage-actually-means.html>.
- 11/10 Development and incentives - Can states and cities be saved by tax breaks?
 - Logan, John R., and Harvey L. Molotch. 2007. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. University of California Press. 50-98.
 - Pinnamneni, Sruthi. “Negative Mount Pleasant”. *Reply All Podcast*. <https://gimletmedia.com/shows/reply-all/wbhjwd>.

Supplemental Reading

- Watch *American Factory*
- 11/12 PSC 2211 canceled for the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management Annual Meeting
- 11/17 Distributing benefits and costs - Why is housing so hard to build?
 - Stone, Deborah A. 2012. *Policy Paradox*. W.W. Norton & Company. 238-243.
 - Arnstein, Susan R., 1969. “A Ladder of Citizen Participation.” *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35 (4): 216-224.
 - Hankinson, Michael, and Magazinnik, Asya. “The Supply-Equity Trade-off: The Effect of Spatial Representation on the Local Housing Supply.” Working Paper.

Supplemental Reading

- Hankinson, Michael, 2018. “When Do Renters Behave Like Homeowners? High Rent, Price Anxiety, and NIMBYism.” *American Political Science Review* 112 (3): 473-493.
- Marble, William, and Nall, Clayton. Forthcoming. “Where self-interest trumps ideology: liberal homeowners and local opposition to housing development.” *The Journal of Politics*.
- 11/19 Immigration and non-compliance - When do states and cities defy federal requests?
 - Bulman-Pozen, J. and Gerken, H.K., 2008. “Uncooperative federalism.” *Yale LJ*, 118, p.1256.
 - Thompson, Daniel M. 2020. “How partisan is local law enforcement? Evidence from sheriff cooperation with immigration authorities.” *American Political Science Review* 114 (1): 222-236.

Supplemental Reading

- Farris, Emily M., and Mirya R. Holman. 2017. “All politics is local? County sheriffs and localized policies of immigration enforcement.” *Political Research Quarterly* 70 (1): 142-154.
- Varsanyi, Monica W., Paul G. Lewis, Doris Marie Provine, and Scott Decker. 2012. “A multi-layered jurisdictional patchwork: Immigration federalism in the United States.” *Law & Policy* 34 (2): 138-158.
- 11/24 Police and Criminal Justice - What are the political hurdles to police reform?
 - Finnegan, William. 2020. “How Police Unions Fights Reform”. *The New Yorker*, July 27. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/08/03/how-police-unions-fight-reform>.

- Goldstein, Rebecca, Michael W. Sances, and Hye Young You. 2020. “Exploitative revenues, law enforcement, and the quality of government service.” *Urban Affairs Review* 56 (1): 5-31.
- Mazumder, Shom. 2020. “What Protests Can (And Can’t) Do.” *FiveThirtyEight*, Aug 27. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/what-protests-can-do/>.

Supplemental Reading

- Gunderson, Anna. 2020. “Why Do States Privatize their Prisons? The Unintended Consequences of Inmate Litigation.” *Perspectives on Politics*.
- Ash, Elliot, Jeffrey Fagan, and Allison Harris. 2018. “Local Public Finance and Discriminatory Policing: Evidence from Traffic Stops in Missouri.” *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics*.
- Soss, Joe and Vesla Weaver. 2017. “Police are our government: Politics, political science, and the policing of race and class subjugated communities.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 565–591.
- 11/26 No class, Thanksgiving
- 12/1 Climate change - What is climate policy in the absence of federal action?
 - Gerber, Elisabeth R. 2013. “Partisanship and Local Climate Policy.” *Cityscape*, 107-124.
 - Trachtman, Samuel. 2020. “What Drives Climate Policy Adoption in the U.S. States?” *Energy Policy* 138.

Supplemental Reading

- Stokes, Leah C. 2016. “Electoral backlash against climate policy: A natural experiment on retrospective voting and local resistance to public policy.” *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (4): 958-974.
- Bromley-Trujillo, Rebecca, Mirya R. Holman, and Andres Sandoval. 2019. “Hot Districts, Cool Legislation: Evaluating Agenda Setting in Climate Change Bill Sponsorship in U.S. States.” *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 19 (3): 375-395.
- Trachtman, Samuel. 2019. “Building Climate Policy in the States.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 685.1: 96-114.
- 12/3 Education - Do children have equal opportunity?
 - Chingos, Matthew M. and Blagg, Kristin. 2017. “Do Poor Kids Get Their Fair Share of School Funding?” Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
 - Wolbrecht, Christina, and Michael T. Hartney. 2014. “‘Ideas about Interests’: Explaining the Changing Partisan Politics of Education.” *Perspectives on Politics* (2014): 603-630.

Supplemental Reading

- Hackett, Ursula, and D. S. King. 2019. “The reinvention of vouchers for a color-blind era: a racial orders account.” *Studies in American Political Development* 33 (2).
- 12/8 ‘Designated Friday’, No PSC 2211
- 12/10 Nationalization of American politics and COVID-19
 - Hopkins, Daniel J. 2018. *The Increasingly United States: How and Why American Political Behavior Nationalized*. University of Chicago Press. 1-58.

Supplemental Reading

- Martin, Gregory J., and Joshua McCrain. 2019. “Local News and National Politics.” *American Political Science Review* 113 (2): 372-384.
- 12/15 Final exam, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

University Policies

Observance of Religious Holidays

In accordance with University policy, students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. For details and policy, see: provost.gwu.edu/policies-procedures-and-guidelines.

Academic Integrity Code

Academic Integrity is an integral part of the educational process, and GW takes these matters very seriously. Violations of academic integrity occur when students fail to cite research sources properly, engage in unauthorized collaboration, falsify data, and in other ways outlined in the Code of Academic Integrity. Students accused of academic integrity violations should contact the Office of Academic Integrity to learn more about their rights and options in the process. Outcomes can range from failure of assignment to expulsion from the University, including a transcript notation. The Office of Academic Integrity maintains a permanent record of the violation.

More information is available from the Office of Academic Integrity at studentconduct.gwu.edu/academic-integrity. The University's "Guide of Academic Integrity in Online Learning Environments" is available at studentconduct.gwu.edu/guide-academic-integrity-online-learning-environments. Contact information: rights@gwu.edu or 202-994-6757.

Virtual academic support

A full range of academic support is offered virtually in fall 2020. See coronavirus.gwu.edu/top-faqs for updates. Tutoring and course review sessions are offered through Academic Commons in an online format. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/tutoring. Writing and research consultations are available online. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/writing-research-help. Coaching, offered through the Office of Student Success, is available in a virtual format. See studentsuccess.gwu.edu/academic-program-support. Academic Commons offers several short videos addressing different virtual learning strategies for the unique circumstances of the fall 2020 semester. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/study-skills. They also offer a variety of live virtual workshops to equip students with the tools they need to succeed in a virtual environment. See tinyurl.com/gw-virtual-learning.

Writing Center

GW's Writing Center cultivates confident writers in the University community by facilitating collaborative, critical, and inclusive conversations at all stages of the writing process. Working alongside peer mentors, writers develop strategies to write independently in academic and public settings. Appointments can be booked online. See gwu.mywconline.

Academic Commons

Academic Commons provides tutoring and other academic support resources to students in many courses. Students can schedule virtual one-on-one appointments or attend virtual drop-in sessions. Students may schedule an appointment, review the tutoring schedule, or access other academic support resources at academiccommons.gwu.edu. For assistance contact academiccommons@gwu.edu.

Disability Support Services (DSS)

202-994-8250 Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact Disability Support Services to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations: disabilitysupport.gwu.edu.

Counseling and Psychological Services

202-994-5300 GW's Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success: healthcenter.gwu.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services.

Safety and Security

- In an emergency: call GYPD 202-994-6111 or 911
- For situation-specific actions: review the Emergency Response Handbook at safety.gwu.edu/emergency-response-handbook
- In an active violence situation: Get Out, Hide Out or Take Out. See seego.gwu.edu/shooterprep
- Stay informed: safety.gwu.edu/stay-informed