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FINAL PROJECT - Informed Action through Community Engagement

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FINAL PROJECT

Informed Action through Community Engagement

RATIONALE

Within local communities, municipalities conduct elections and convene governing bodies that operate within the state and federal systems of governance. Municipalities include cities, villages, townships, and more. The actions of municipal governments play a significant role in the quality of life in any area. As many news providers continue to struggle financially or close, it becomes more critical for community media organizations to collect information about the actions of local governments and inform the public. The data we gather in this step will be used to provide context when documenting local meetings.

In various contexts, such as education, advocacy, or social change, the concept of informed action emphasizes the importance of being well-informed before engaging in any significant activity or making decisions that may have consequences. By engaging in an intentional informed action project, students will increase transparency in local governance and devise plans for social change based on their increased understanding of concepts in state and federal constitutional government over the course of the semester.

ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES

1. Increase community participation and transparency in local government.
2. Explain how multiple factors, including race, gender, class, ethnicity, migration, sexuality, belief systems, technology, and/or the environment, have shaped major changes in the United States Constitution and/or state constitutions.
3. Explain, from multiple perspectives, the causes and consequences of key historical events on constitutional government in the United States.
4. Construct persuasive arguments supported by pertinent primary- and secondary-source evidence.

Instructions

Utilizing your annotated bibliography and considering your understanding of the scope of federalism in American history, assess the current state of federalism in Illinois. Create an action plan for a project that would address the application of federalism locally in Illinois. You will identify the issue, write a stakeholder analysis, develop an action plan, and then reflect on the ways in which history can inform present policy.

I. DATA COLLECTION (2–3 PAGES)

Collect data on a local issue through municipal research on a chosen institution (town council, school board, etc.). Students should attend a meeting or interview stakeholders for the project to answer these questions.

1. What is the name of the municipality?
2. Where is it located?
3. Why is this place important? (i.e., Who lives/works here? What are the demographics? Is there any other important historical or recent information we might want? What are the challenges for citizens and the local government?)
4. How is this area governed? Do they elect a mayor, a city manager, alderpersons, a city council, or a combination of these?
5. What is the length of terms for elected officials?
6. How often does the local government hold public meetings?
7. Where can we find information about locations/dates of public meetings?
8. Which local media organizations cover these meetings?

II. WRITE A STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS (1–2 PAGES)

Using your collected data, write a short explanation of governance in your municipality. Use hyperlinks that lead to more information whenever it might be helpful. Identify appropriate stakeholders and understand their influence on the policy process, their motivators given any proposed policy change, and strategies for engaging the stakeholder in the policy process.

You may use this table as an organizational tool prior to writing up your final analysis:

Actor Name, function	Agenda mandate/mission, strategic objectives	Arena Field of action, outreach	Alliances Relationships with other actors
Actor 1			
Actor 2			
Actor 3			
Actor n			

Example: Here is an [explainer article](#) using Governors State as a subject.

III. DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN (2–3 PAGES)

Developing an action plan is a critical first step toward ensuring project success. An action plan may lend credibility to your organization and its initiative, increase efficiency, and provide accountability. In addition, the action plan provides a tool for mobilizing the community or group and encouraging members to share responsibility for solving the problems and improving the situation you have decided to change.

You may use this table as an organizational tool prior to writing up your final plan:

Action Steps	By Whom	Resources and Support Available/Needed		Potential Barriers or Resistance	Communication Plan for Implementation
What needs to be done?	Who will take actions?	Resources Available	Resources Needed (financial, human, political, and other)	What individuals and organizations might resist? How?	What individuals and organizations should be informed about/involved with these actions?
Step 1:					
Step 2:					
Step 3:					
Step 4:					

IV. REFLECTION (2 PAGES)

How does this issue and your action plan relate to issues of federalism and constitutional governance? Using your annotated bibliography, cite 3–4 sources that recognize and analyze the historical roots of local issues.

Rubric

Criteria	Exceptional	Proficient	Basic	Limited
Understanding of Federalism in American History (25 points)	Student demonstrates a thorough understanding of federalism in American history and its relevance to the project. Learning from the course is well-integrated.	Student demonstrates a good understanding of federalism in American history and its relevance. Learning from the course is integrated.	Student demonstrates a basic understanding of federalism in American history but lacks deeper connections to the project.	Student demonstrates a limited understanding of federalism in American history and its relevance to the project.
Data Collection (25 points)	Student collects comprehensive and relevant data related to the chosen application of federalism locally in Illinois.	Student collects sufficient and mostly relevant data related to the chosen application of federalism locally in Illinois.	Student collects limited and somewhat relevant data related to the chosen application of federalism locally in Illinois.	Student collects minimal and irrelevant data related to the chosen application of federalism locally in Illinois.
Stakeholder Analysis (25 points)	Student conducts a comprehensive and insightful stakeholder analysis, considering various perspectives.	Student conducts a thorough stakeholder analysis, considering multiple perspectives.	Student conducts a basic stakeholder analysis, considering a few perspectives.	Student conducts a minimal stakeholder analysis, considering only one perspective.
Action Plan (35 points)	Student develops a detailed and well-structured action plan that clearly addresses the application of federalism locally and proposes effective solutions.	Student develops a sound action plan that addresses the application of federalism locally and proposes viable solutions.	Student develops a basic action plan but lacks clarity in addressing the application of federalism locally or proposing effective solutions.	Student develops a vague or incomplete action plan that does not effectively address the application of federalism locally or propose solutions.

Reflection (35 points)	Student reflects thoughtfully on the ways in which history can inform present policy and provides meaningful insights through the use of course readings and the integration of the annotated bibliography.	Student reflects on the ways in which history can inform present policy and provides insights.	Student reflects on the ways in which history can inform present policy but lacks depth or meaningful insights.	Student provides a superficial or limited reflection on the ways in which history can inform present policy.
Presentation and Organization (10 points)	Student presents work in a clear, logical, and organized manner, with excellent use of visuals and appropriate citations.	Student presents work in a clear and organized manner, with good use of visuals and appropriate citations.	Student presents work in a somewhat clear and organized manner, with limited use of visuals or appropriate citations.	Student presents work in a disorganized or unclear manner, with little or no use of visuals or appropriate citations.
Final Score ____/150				