2013

397 Political Internship

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Recommended Citation
Mariani, Mack, "397 Political Internship" (2013). Political Science Syllabi Summer 2013. 3.
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Xavier University
POLI 397: Political Internship
http://politicalinternships.pbworks.com

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Office Hours: By appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This is a guided internship course taken in conjunction with a 12-14 week internship. Students are required to work between 10 and 20 hours per week during the course of the internship (10-15 hours is recommended in the Fall and Spring semesters, 16-20 hours is recommended in the summer). Course readings, assignments and discussions will prepare students to succeed in their internship and help them use their experiences as an intern to gain a broader understanding of politics, campaigns, and political institutions.

OFFICE HOURS
My office is located at Schott #710. My office hours for the interns are by appointment, but my schedule is flexible. I am always available by cell phone (513-508-6849) or e-mail if you want to discuss something or set up another time to meet. If you text me, please be sure to include your name at the end of the text.

REQUIRED BOOKS
• NOTE: You will have to order these books online or individually through the bookstore (online would be quicker). E-book/Kindle versions of these books are available at a significant discount from hard-copy prices.

COURSE POLICIES
• Academic needs – Xavier University will make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me privately during the first few weeks of the semester or contact the Learning Assistance Center at (513) 745-3280 for assistance.
• Late Papers – Late papers will receive a one-third letter grade penalty per-class period (an A paper becomes an A-, an A- becomes a B+ etc.).

ASSIGNMENTS
• See the course wiki for Assignments and Due Dates.
**GRADING**
Grades will be based on your overall performance in course assignments and your successful completion of all course requirements.

Grade Distribution:
20% Participation (based on evaluations and meetings with instructor)
15% Mid-Term Journals
15% Journals 2
50% Final Paper

The following point totals are needed to secure the following grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>85%</td>
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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. **INTERNSHIP HOURS**: Students are required to work between 10 and 20 hours per week during the course of the internship (see course description above for recommended hours). As a general rule, the more hours you put in, the more opportunities you will have to learn about the office and get high-quality assignments.

2. **PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**: Students are expected to perform well in the internship and to behave in a professional manner at all times. To ensure that this is accomplished, students must be evaluated by their internship supervisors at the mid-point and end of the internship. Evaluation forms will be provided and must be e-mailed or faxed to the professor directly from the internship supervisor. Likewise, students will have the opportunity to evaluate the quality of the experience and to share their views on the work opportunities they received during the course of the internship.

3. **JOURNAL**: Students are required to maintain a journal. The journal entries should be at least one single-spaced typewritten sheet for each week of your internship. A copy of the journals should be e-mailed to the instructor on the dates listed on the course wiki. Final journals (include all of them) are due with your portfolio on the date listed on the course wiki.

**IMPORTANT**: Your journal entries should not merely descriptions of things you did. You need to also connect these observations to the broader world of politics. Every activity you participate in during this internship is an observation of sorts – what do your observations tell you about how politics works, whose views matter, and how institutions (such as campaign finance laws, or congressional districts, or the electoral college, or a board of directors at a non-profit) shape what you and the people around you are doing.

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4. **PAPER PROPOSAL:** Students are required to write a one-page paper proposal and hand in a reading list of supplementary books and articles relevant to your research question. Due date is listed on the course wiki.

5. **RESEARCH PAPER:** Students are required to write a 10-page research paper on a topic that is approved in advance by the professor. This should not be a “what I did on my internship” paper. Rather, students should use their internship experience as one of many sources to test their thesis or research question. The paper should be included in your final portfolio and handed in by the due date that is listed on the course wiki.

6. **FINAL PORTFOLIO:** Your final portfolio should include all course materials, including your midterm and final evaluations, midterm and final journal entries, your paper proposal and initial book list, and a copy of your final research paper. You may also include examples of work that you did during the course of the internship.

**COURSE READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**NOTE:** SOME OF THE READING DESCRIPTIONS LISTED BELOW INCLUDE PROMPTS FOR YOUR JOURNALS. You are expected to respond to these prompts.

**Before the Internship**
The first reading assignment is Joe Cammarano, “How to Read your Internship,” in *The Insider’s Guide to Political Internships* (chapter 2). Please read this right away, as it will help you understand how to approach your internship to a broader study of politics. The approach outlined in this chapter will be extremely helpful to you as you think about your journal entries.

**Week 1 and 2**
Next, take a look at Part 2 of *The Insider’s Guide* (Basic Rules to Live By, Chapter 3-8). Focus in particular on chapters that relate more directly to your experience, but skim through the other chapters. There is a lot of good advice here for how to succeed in your internship and how to avoid some common intern mistakes. In your journals, take some time to describe the organization and goals of the office in which you work.

**Week 3**
Take a look at Part 3 in the Insider’s Guide (Conducting Research, Chapters 9-11). Read carefully any chapters that relate specifically to the type of research conducted by your organization, otherwise, skim.

**Week 4**
Take a look at Part 4 in the Insider’s Guide (Writing in the Political Environment, Chapters 12-14). The chapters on letter writing (constituent letters) and press releases should be helpful to those of you who aspire to do higher-level work within your organization. In
your journals, consider what skills staff members in your office need to do their jobs well. Take some time to ask staff members how they learned those skills - college courses? Staff training opportunities? On the job experience?

Week 5-6
Read the first chapter of Reeher, First Person Political. Think carefully about how political actors you encounter in your internship are viewed by the public, and how they are portrayed in the media.

Week 6-7
Read chapters 2-3 of Reeher, First Person Political. Talk with the people in your office about their motivations for pursuing a career in politics. What do they like? Dislike? Why pursue this career rather than another? What were the routes that the people in your office took to gain their positions in politics/public service (in other words, how did they get there?).

Week 8-9
Read chapters 4-5 of Reeher, First Person Political. Talk with people in your office about where they see themselves in the future. What are their career goals? Family goals? How have their current positions prepared them to achieve their future goals? Consider how a career in political service affects other family members as well as quality of life in general. Take some time to think about your own personal and career goals. Based on what you have seen, would you like to work in your office/organization after you graduate? Why or why not?

Week 10 and Beyond
Readings from this point on should reflect your individual paper proposal. Professor Mariani may suggest readings that relate directly to your research proposal. You should also consider getting recommendations from your colleagues in the office. What readings do they recommend?

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Department of Political Science and Sociology
Grading Guidelines

In the assignment of grades, the following grading guidelines will be used:

Range of

A- to A = Superior critical reading, thinking and analytical skills. Detailed understanding of course readings. Generally clear, well-organized writing that develops important issues in a thoughtful way. Analysis of texts is without technical or factual errors. An excellent essay will significantly surpass the expectations of a good essay by demonstrating critical mastery of the logic, assumptions, and evidence of research sources. Excellent use of quotations and proper citation of texts.

Class discussion is frequent and thoughtful; shows a very good grasp of the issues.

B- to B+ = Good to Very Good critical reading, thinking and analytical skills. Solid understanding of course readings. Generally clear, well-organized writing that reports important issues in some detail. Analysis of texts is generally without technical or factual errors. A good to very good essay will have a thesis, define and incorporate concepts appropriately, present a coherent argument, and make a persuasive case for its thesis using convincing evidence; it may also need to consider plausible and reasonable alternatives systematically. Good use of quotations and proper citation of texts.

Class discussion is regular and helpful; shows a solid grasp of the issues.

C- to C+ = Adequate critical reading, thinking and analytical skills. Basic understanding of course readings. Generally competent writing that identifies important issues but leaves them insufficiently explained or examined. Analysis of texts may be technically or factually defective in minor ways. An adequate essay will have a thesis, define and incorporate concepts appropriately, and present a coherent argument. Correct use of quotations and citation of texts.

Class discussion is occasional and generally adequate; may reveal some misunderstanding of the issues.

D- to D+ = Inadequate critical reading, thinking and analytical skills. Poor or incompetent understanding of course readings. Below average writing that omits or misunderstands important issues. Analysis of texts may be technically or factually defective in substantial ways. An inadequate essay may not have a clear thesis, or may not define and incorporate concepts appropriately, or it may not present a coherent argument. There may be ineffective use of quotations and inadequate citation of texts.

Class discussion is infrequent; may reveal a lack of engagement with the issues or serious misunderstanding.

F = Unacceptable. No serious engagement of course readings. An unacceptable essay shows little or no serious attempt to understand important issues. Writing is unclear, or unorganized, or undeveloped to the degree that the essay is deemed a failure. Analysis of texts may contain egregious errors. There may be a failure to cite texts.

Class discussion is infrequent and ill informed; reveals no real understanding of even basic issues.

Approved by the Political Science & Sociology Department
12/06
In order to help you understand my written comments, please see the list of common notations that I use when grading papers.

Awk=awkward
w.c. = Word choice
d=diction
p= passive
c = clarity
u.p. = unclear pronoun
! = You made me take notice. Usually a good thing, though sometimes indicates sarcasm.
? or “huh?” = This makes no sense to me. I have no idea what your are talking about. Problem is either one of logic (I don’t follow) or language (unclear).
I.M. = Short for “Inigo Montoya,” a character in the princess bride who said, “I do not think that means what you think it means.” Another way of saying w.c.
+ or √ = Good point. I like what I see, etc...
Underlined section with no comments on the side = A key point. I’m following your logic here. Etc...
Underlined section with comments on the side = see comments on the side
Circled word or section indicates some problem with spelling, punctuation, diction or word choice.
m.w. = missing word
I.S. = Incomplete sentence
∏ = Pi Symbol, short for “paragraph”
H = Hasselhoff – something that is unintentionally funny, or a bit cheesy.
3 Amigos! – Use of an unnecessarily fancy or awkward sounding word (such as “plethora,” or “explicate”) when a simpler word will do just fine.
HULK SMASH! - Particularly long paragraph. Break it up, as appropriate.