

2016

397 Political Internship

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Xavier University
POLI 397: Political Internship

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Office Hours: MWF 12-3 (by appointment)
Cell: (513) 508-6849

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. I am available to meet most Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays between 12 and 3 pm, depending on my schedule for the week. Please e-mail me or text me to make an appointment. I am always available by cell phone (513-508-6849) or e-mail if you need to talk with me. If you text, please be sure to include your name at the end of the text. *If you have an important message for me, don't send it to me through Canvas. Instead, use my Xavier e-mail!*

REQUIRED BOOKS

Reeher and Mariani (eds.), The Insider's Guide to Political Internships: What to Do Once You're in the Door, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002.

Reeher, Grant. First Person Political. New York: New York University Press 2006.

NOTE: The bookstore may have a few copies of the books, but if they do not, E-book/ Kindle versions of these books are available on Amazon.

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 and assignments will receive a one letter grade penalty per-class period (an A paper becomes a B, etc...). Assignments more than one week late may face a larger penalty.
- **Workplace Professionalism** - As an intern, you represent Xavier University and the Department of Political Science. To receive credit for this course, you must follow through on your responsibilities, show up for your hours, adhere to the rules of your office, and uphold standards of professionalism, honesty or good judgment. The key to this is communication. If you are not able to make a particular shift at the office, let your supervisor know as soon as possible. If there is a problem in the office that you aren't sure how to address, discuss it with your supervisor (and feel free to contact professor Mariani to discuss it as well). If you engage in unprofessional or dishonest behavior, or if you have excessive absences from your internship, you will receive a failing grade in the course.

- **Liability Waiver** - Xavier University requires students who are participating in off-campus internships and co-ops to fill out a liability waiver. This document must be filled out and submitted on canvas before you start your internship.

SAFETY

Internships take place in the real world. Use good judgment and make sure you take reasonable precautions to keep yourself safe in and around your workplace. If you have concerns about safety or a workplace issue that needs to be addressed, please contact me immediately. Please be sure to provide up to date contact information in the Contact Information assignment on canvas. Also, be sure to read the Title IX information sheet provided on canvas. If you have questions or concerns, call me at 513-508-6849.

ASSIGNMENTS

See Canvas for Assignments and Due Dates. All assignments and papers should be submitted on canvas. Do not e-mail them to professor Mariani. There will be an assignment due every Sunday night (before midnight). Please manage your time wisely, while you can hand in your assignments a few days early, assignments that are not handed in on time will be immediately assessed a one-letter grade penalty. Assignments that are more than one week late will receive a two-letter grade penalty.

Note that the engagement reading assignments are designed to build off of one or more of your readings. Students are expected to incorporate the readings into their assignments. Below is a list of the readings that go along with each of the assignments.

Engagement Assignments:

- Engagement Assignment 1: For this first assignment, please read Joe Cammarano, "How to Read Your Internship," in *The Insiders' Guide to Political Internships*. If you do not own the book, it can be downloaded from Amazon in less than one minute. Please read this right away, as it will help you understand how to approach your internship and tie it to a broader study of politics. Note that the approach outlined in this chapter will also be extremely helpful to you as you think about your journal entries during the second half of the semester.
- Engagement Assignment 2: Next, take a look at part 2 of the *Insiders' Guide* (Basic Rules to Live by, Chapters 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 on how to succeed in an internship and how to avoid some common intern mistakes. Note: You are encouraged to also review the chapters in the *Insiders' Guide* on conducting research (Chapters 9-11). Those chapters may be relevant to some of you.
- Engagement Assignment 3: For this assignment, take a look at part 4 of the *Insiders' Guide* (writing in the political environment, chapters 12-14). The chapters on letter writing and press releases should be helpful to those of you who aspire to do higher-level work within your organization.
- Engagement Assignment 4: For this assignment, you will consider how political actors you encounter in your internship are viewed by the public and how they are portrayed by the media. Please incorporate examples!
- Engagement Assignment 5: For this final assignment, read chapters 1-3 in Grant Reeher, First Person Political. Next, interview members of the office staff to determine what motivated each of them to pursue a career in public service (or whatever service you would describe them to be in, depending on your internship) and consider some of the patterns that you observe in your interviews and what lessons you might draw regarding your own career path. Please be sure to discuss how your interview findings are consistent with (or inconsistent with) Reeher's findings from his study of the Connecticut legislature.

Journals

There are five journal assignments. Each assignment should be approximately 600-700 words long (one single spaced page on a word document, or three decent sized paragraphs). The journal topic will depend on your own observations and reflections, so you can pick and choose what to write about. Strong journals will include both concrete descriptions of your observations in the field and careful reflection about what those observations tell us about the political world. Late journals receive a full letter grade penalty (from A to B) and so on.

INTERNSHIP HOURS

To receive credit, 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).

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

To receive credit and a passing grade, students are expected to perform well in the internship and to behave in an honest and 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 you are responsible for submitting the completed evaluation forms on canvas. Likewise, you will have the opportunity to evaluate the quality of the experience and to share your views on the work opportunities you received during the course of the internship.

GRADING

Grades will be based on your overall performance in course assignments and your successful completion of all course requirements. Failure to perform well in the internship or unethical/dishonest/unprofessional behavior may result in a grade of F for the course.

Grade Distribution:

10%	Evaluations
15%	Journal Assignments
15%	Engagement Assignments
20%	Do Internships Matter Paper
40%	Research Paper

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

95%	A	79%	C+
92%	A-	75%	C
89%	B+	72%	C-
85%	B	69%	D+
82%	B-	<61%	F

CLASS MEETING SCHEDULE

There are no fixed times for the internship class to meet as a group, but I will call a group meeting approximately one time per month. I am always available to meet if you would like to discuss your internship. I will send an announcement on Canvas with meeting dates.
