

EMU - Department of Political Science  
PLSC 480/486/488/688, INTERNSHIP SEMINAR

Fall, Winter, Summer terms  
Office Hours: TBA each semester  
and by appointment  
601G Pray-Harrold

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## I. INTRODUCTION.

Participation in the seminar is one of the requirements for all students enrolled in any one of the undergraduate political science or graduate Master of Public Administration Program internship/practicum/cooperative education courses. Students meet on a regular basis for fourteen or fifteen weeks (Summer is now a 15 week period also) for approximately 60 minutes to:

- share experiences in their respective placements;
- discuss common issues and aspects of the learning process; and
- provide feedback to the internship director concerning progress throughout the term.

## II. COURSE ADMINISTRATION.

**SEMINAR.** Regular attendance at the seminar is required. Class sessions will usually focus on specific topics or issues of general interest to all interns. In the event that a student finds that he/she is unable to attend the weekly seminar or will miss more than three planned sessions, the student will be required to prepare a ten page research paper in which an academic topic from a political science course is linked to the student's intern experience. See Dr. Rosenfeld for further details.

**JOURNAL.** Weekly submissions of a journal are required utilizing the eCollege site and the appropriate *dropbox*. Journals are due by Tuesday at 6 pm prior to the seminar. Journals are due even when seminar does not meet. Journal entries need not conform to typical academic writing standards (no footnotes!), but should be carefully considered and grammatical. The journal should be used as a learning device and record to:

- encourage personal reflection on internship experiences;
- stimulate thinking about similarities/differences between theory and practice in your internship field; and
- enable the internship director to facilitate and evaluate the learning process.

In writing your journal, be sure to go beyond merely describing what you are doing (tasks) in your placement. Write about experiences, processes, feelings, growth, learning, connection to previous courses, things you observe about your organization and co-workers, and personal reactions. Journals should be approximately one to 1.5 page in length. Journals will be graded as follows: 1 = below expectations; 2 = meets expectations; 3 = surpasses expectations; 4 = outstanding and insightful.

Journals will be graded each week, and comments will be conveyed through eCollege feedback systems. It is important that journals be submitted as they are due.

**SPECIAL EXERCISES.** Several special exercises/assignments are expected throughout the internship. (1) The semester begins with a "first day" exercise describing the setting and people in your placement. (2) Within the first few weeks, you will be expected to complete a "goals and objectives statement" identifying what you hope to accomplish in your internship; this statement needs to be signed off on by your intern supervisor. (3) A few weeks later, you will be expected to describe the organizational structure in your placement organization. (4) At the mid-semester point, you will be asked to write a little longer journal than usual, to defend the award of academic credit for the internship experience. (5) Toward the end of the term, one seminar session will be devoted to class critiques of each intern's job description as he/she would

write it in a resume. (6) The final special journal assignment requires the intern to write a self-assessment. More details on these assignments may be found in the exercises that are posted online.

**GRADES.** Your grade will be based on four factors: regular attendance and participation in the weekly seminar discussions; timely submission of weekly journals and special exercises/assignments; quality of journals evaluated on basis of factors listed above, and an evaluation form completed by your placement supervisor at the end of the term.

**ADDITIONAL FORMS.** Students will be given a *Letter of Agreement* form to be completed and signed by the supervisor and the student and handed in by the second week of the semester. This form primarily outlines the time commitments. Students must also hand in a signed Risk/Release form no later than the second week of the semester. Students also will be given a *Time Record* that should be handed in on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and final week of the term.

### III. TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS. *(a form with specific dates and assignments is available for each term)*

First week	Seminar introductions; administrative detail; letters to supervisors.
Second week	<u>First day exercise due (#1)</u> ; continue introductions; discuss expectations and evaluations, nature and purpose of journals. <u>Letter of Agreement is due.</u> <u>Risk/release form due.</u>
Third week	<u>Goals and objectives exercise due (#2)</u> ; coping with first month problems; dealing with stress on the job.
Fourth week	<u>Organization chart exercise due (#3)</u> ; organization issues: formal and informal power and authority; organizational structure in your placement. <u>First Time Record is due.</u>
Fifth & sixth week	Communication; interpersonal and organizational; processes, experiences, attitudes, feelings, listening, understanding, forms of communications, lines of communications.
Seventh week	<u>Defending the internship exercise (#4)</u> ; prepare a summary statement describing your placement to date and justifying the award of academic credit for the placement and seminar.
Eighth week	What are the ingredients of an effective organization? Do citizens understand how to work within government organizations?
Ninth week	No class
Tenth week	Interpersonal issues; office politics, conflict and cooperation; crying and laughing in the office.
11 <sup>th</sup> week	Dealing with differences; race and gender in the workplace. <u>Second Time Record is due.</u>
12 <sup>th</sup> week	Sexual harassment in the workplace; what is it and what do the courts say? Do you know it when you see it? If there is a policy in your workplace, bring a copy to class.
13 <sup>th</sup> week	<u>Resume exercise (#5)</u> ; Career considerations; recruiting; interviewing; resume writing.
14 <sup>th</sup> week	<u>Evaluating the internship exercise (#6)</u> ; final summation
15 <sup>th</sup> week	Agency supervisor's evaluation due; <u>Final Time Record is due.</u>