

Course Syllabus

Government 241 - Public Affairs Internship

Professor Wilcox

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Hours: 5-6 M, Th and by appt

This course provides an intellectual supplement to the experience of working as an intern in government, political parties, interest groups, campaigns, and for other actors in the political process. There are two sections of the course - one for 3 credit hours and one for 6 credit hours. The requirements are somewhat different, but students attend the same sessions.

All students are expected to work at an internship for 25 hours or more a week. We will also meet 10 times during the summer term, and in these sessions we will discuss readings and also current politics that are related to different student's internship placements.

Students who take the class for 3 hours credit will also produce two short papers, described below. Students who are enrolled for 6 hours credit will complete the first short paper, but will then write a longer policy paper.

Please be aware of the university's policy on academic honesty, and the definition of plagiarism, defined at length at the University's web page <http://www.georgetown.edu/honor/plagiarism.html> . Students who turn in papers that are plagiarized will fail the course, and I will turn over all evidence to the Honor Council.

This internship is set in Washington, D.C., which is the ultimate company town. You can learn a lot about politics by observing what goes on outside your internship. Students are strongly advised to attend a committee session in Congress, to watch a floor debate, to get over to the Supreme Court, and to in other ways take advantage of the Washington location.

You will also learn from each other. Be prepared to discuss the politics of your internship in class, to answer other student questions, and to share opportunities (speakers, events) with other students

Finally, we will use contemporary political events as opportunities to discuss more abstract concepts and theories. You should regularly read the *Washington Post* or some other national newspaper, and follow closely policymaking in the three branches of government.

This summer, the course will take place at a time when political actors are polarized in their positions on many key issues. With a new party in control of Congress, interest groups are adapting to new realities. And we are preparing for a new election cycle that is conducted under new campaign finance rules, and in which neither the president nor vice president is seeking the presidency - the first such truly open presidential election in many years. The course readings will highlight these themes.

IMPORTANT: *Students are expected to provide contact information for their internship supervisor to me by the end of the 2nd week. This includes your supervisor's name, phone number, e-mail address, and complete mailing address including zip code. If this changes during the term you are responsible for getting that information to me.*



The following books are available at the bookstore. They may also be available at a lower price at Amazon.com.

Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America, by Morris Fiorina. 2nd edition. Longman.

A Divider, not a Uniter, by Gary Jacobson. Longman.

Books (continued)

Is This Any Way to Run a Democratic Election, by Stephen Wayne, 3rd edition.

The Election After Reform, by Michael Malbin. Rowman & Littlefield.

Interest Group Society, 4th edition, by Jeffrey Berry and Clyde Wilcox. Longman *

* I will donate any royalties I earn from this class to the N Street Village, a non-profit that helps the homeless in Washington, DC.

Readings.

Students are expected to have completed the readings before class, and to be prepared to discuss them. Class participation grades depend in part on your familiarity with the assigned readings. The class will be seminar style; I will not lecture from these readings but instead we will discuss them. All readings should be completed by the first day that we discuss a book.

This is the tentative course schedule, subject to change. Please keep track of your Georgetown e-mail in case I have to move a class session.

Sessions	Topic	Assignment
June 4	Introduction to course	No readings
June 7	Policymaking in Washington	No readings
June 18	Polarization in Politics	Fiorina
June 21	Polarization take 2	Jacobson

June 25	Elections	Wayne
June 28	Elections	Wayne
July 9	Campaign Finance	Malbin
July 19	Campaign Finance	Malbin
July 23	Interest Groups	Berry
July 26	Interest Groups	Berry
July 26	Final papers due	

Grading.

Grades will be based on:

Assignment

3 credit

6 credit

Evaluations of your internship performance	15%	15%
Short paper	25%	20%
Longer paper	30%	35%
Class participation	30%	30%

Papers

One short paper, 3-5 pages in length, is due on June 18 at the start of class for both the 3 hour and 6 hour versions of the course. This paper will examine the organization in which you are interning, describing the structure of the office, and its function in the larger organization. The nature of this paper will differ depending on where you are interning. Please see me for any questions. The purpose of this paper is for you to understand the role of your internship in the larger organization, and to see any opportunities for more interesting assignments. This paper should be 3-5 pages.

For students in the 3 hour version, a second short paper is due July 26 at the start of class. This paper is 5-7 pages, and will discuss an insight into politics gleaned from your internship experience. The paper will be graded on the novelty of your

insight and the documentation that you provide from events that occurred in your internship.

For those in the 6 hour version of the course, a longer paper is due on July 26, instead of the 2nd short paper described above. This paper should be 15-25 pages long. You should examine a policy proposal that is currently on the active agenda of Congress, the president, or the Court. The paper could take a variety of forms, but I do not want you to primarily give me your opinion on the policy. You should either write about the politics of the issue -- the policy environment, major actors, and political fault lines, or you should provide a policy analysis of the issue. **You must interview at least one person involved in the issue for the paper.** Students may consult with me about the paper as the term progresses. I answer e-mail regularly, so even if we are not meeting a particular week you should feel free to ask me questions. This is a summer term, so it is important to start a project like this early in the semester.