

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3910, GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP

Enrolling and Requirements

Academic Year 2007-2008

The Political Science Department recognizes that an internship experience can make a very valuable contribution to a student's educational development, and strongly recommends that students take advantage of these opportunities when they become available. Internships are often valuable simply for the experience they provide. However, under certain conditions it is possible to earn academic credit for an internship. The award of academic credit for an internship requires an element of reflection, research, and writing about the work you undertake. This academic component can strongly enhance what you gain from the opportunity and improve your ability to articulate knowledgeably the requirements, benefits and lessons of work in the public or non-profit sector.

Students may enroll for Political Science 3910, Government Internship, for up to three hours of academic credit in a semester. The maximum credit allowed for internships is six hours.

If you have identified an internship opportunity and want to consider obtaining academic credit, follow these steps in order to enroll in Psc 3910:

1. Obtain from Ms. Kerry Ashford, the Academic Counselor for the Department, this internship statement of requirements and the application form.
2. Internships must be supervised by a member of the faculty. The faculty member can be someone you know and have worked with in a previous class, or someone whose area of expertise fits with the work you will be doing in the internship. Ms. Ashford will advise you on obtaining the agreement of an appropriate faculty member to supervise your internship. The departmental internship coordinator (currently Prof. Peters) is available upon request to supervise an internship.

NB: Only undergraduate students with a minimum 2.50 overall GPA, and with forty-five completed credit hours, including nine completed hours in political science, are eligible for internship credit in Psc 3910.

The Department of Political Science will accept responsibility for supervising interns only when the internship is part of a coherent educational plan.

Internship credit will not be granted retroactively.

Psc 3910 is graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.

Psc 3910 may be taken for either two credits or three credits. One-credit enrollments are not available.

For two credit enrollments, it is expected that a student will perform about 100 hours of work in the internship and complete about ten pages of writing related to the internship. For three credit hours, the expectation is about 150 hours of work and about 15 pages of writing.

3. Discuss the proposed internship with the faculty member, and complete the application form and the special permission card required for enrollment in PSc. 3910.
4. Make arrangements to have the supervisor for whom you will work in the internship itself fill out the form indicating agreement to your work. When the supervisor's statement of agreement is complete, it should be mailed to your faculty supervisor.
5. Discuss with your faculty supervisor the academic component of your work. You should expect to complete a writing and reading assignment, which may include the following: A report at the end of the internship about what you did and what you think about your experience; plus a research element relating your own experiences to what has been written by scholars about the area of public life in which you were involved.

Questions? Please contact Ms. Kerry Ashford, Academic Counsellor, Department of Political Science; or Prof. Ann-Marie Szymanski.

The Internship Folder/Portfolio

For academic credit, we encourage you to build a folder or, to use a fancier term, a portfolio about your work in order to qualify for credit on completion of the assignment. The folder/portfolio is essentially just a complete record of your internship. Having it available may help you when you seek employment. If a prospective employer asks “do you have any experience,” a nicely developed folder/portfolio can be presented as evidence of a useful work experience and as proof that you have documented it carefully.

I. At the beginning of the internship, you will need to provide three items in order to enroll:

A): Your application for internship credit.

B): A letter from your employer/supervisor, using the attached form. This letter should agree to accept you as an intern for a stated period of time. In addition, the supervisor or employer should agree to provide an evaluation at the end of your internship, indicating what kind of work you have done and indicating whether your performance was satisfactory or not satisfactory.

Sometimes it is not practicable to get this supervisor’s agreement in advance. In such cases, get it when your internship starts and mail the completed form to your supervising faculty member.

C): A transcript of college work.

II: At the conclusion of your internship, you should add to your portfolio three more items.

A): A curriculum vitae or resume.

B) A paper about your internship experience once you have completed it. This paper should include a description and a more reflective account of your own experiences.

C) A research-based study examining in some detail a public issue connected with your internship experience. See the Internship Paper statement for more detailed guidelines.

By the conclusion of your internship, you will have gained valuable experience, academic credit, and a prepared folder/portfolio that you can show to a future employer who wants to have a sample of what you can do.

Questions? Please contact Ms. Kerry Ashford, Academic Counsellor, Department of Political Science, or Prof. Ann-Marie Szymanski, Department of Political Science, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019.

Ms. Ashford: 405 325-6429, klashford@ou.edu

Prof. Szymanski: 405 325-6436, ams@ou.edu

Political Science Department
Application to Enroll in Psc 3910, Government Internship

This form must be completed and submitted to a supervising faculty member from the Political Science Department, with a copy to the Undergraduate Internship Coordinator prior to enrollment in this class.

Name: _____ ID#: _____

Current Address: _____ Telephone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____
Permanent Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Academic Major: _____

How many credit hours have you completed at OU? _____ Transferred?: _____

List classes taken in Political Science, either at OU or transferred:

Proposed internship assignment:

Name of sponsor: _____
Title of sponsor: _____
Agency/organization: _____

Address: _____

_____ Telephone: _____

Semester of proposed internship: Fall _____ Spring _____ Summer _____ 20__

For how many credit hours do you wish to enroll? _____

Please attach to this application a copy of your academic transcript or the advisor's computer generated advisory record.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervising faculty member: _____ Date: _____

Updated August 2007

1 Copy to supervising faculty member 1 Copy to Undergraduate Internship Coordinator

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3910 GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP

To: Supervisors of University of Oklahoma interns:

The Political Science Department at the University of Oklahoma recognizes that an internship experience can make a valuable contribution to a student's educational development, and strongly recommends that students take advantage of such opportunities when they become available. Internships are often valuable simply for the experience they provide. However, under certain conditions it is possible for students to earn academic credit for an internship. The award of academic credit for an internship requires that students seek prior approval for the internship from the Department, complete the internship assignment satisfactorily, and compile a portfolio about their experiences. The portfolio will include a statement of agreement from the supervisor for whom they intern, plus personal statements about the student's experience, and including finally a paper reflecting some reading and research about the work performed during the internship. When all elements are completed, the internship enrollment can contribute up to three hours of academic credit towards degrees in political science, public administration, or other fields.

Supervisor's statement of agreement:

Nature and Duration of the Internship: Please describe briefly the type of responsibilities to be assigned, the anticipated work schedule, the beginning and ending dates, and the kind of supervision the student will have. (A minimum of 100 hours is required for two-credit enrollment, 150 hours for three-credit enrollment.)

Note: On completion of the internship, the supervising faculty member may request an evaluation of the student's performance.

Name of student intern:

Internship agency or office:

Address:

Supervising person:

Title:

Telephone:

Signature:

Questions? Please contact Ms. Kerry L. Ashford, Department of Political Science (405) 325-6429; or Prof. Ann-Marie Szymanski, Department of Political Science, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019. (405) 325-6436.

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3910, GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP

Internship Paper Statement

Academic Year 2007-2008

The Political Science Department requirements are that students enrolling in Psc 3910 for two credits should complete a writing assignment of about 10 pages, while students enrolling for three credits are expected to write about 15 pages. The specific expectations about this writing should be discussed with the faculty supervisor. In general, however, there are two components expected in the paper that completes an internship.

1. Discussion of the internship experience:

This should be about 4-5 pages, should be written in the first person, and should describe and analyze your experiences. Give an account that describes what kind of work you did, what kind of people (clerical, managerial/professional, political) or clients you worked with, how your department/agency/office was organized, what sort of policies or programs it implemented, whether you think it was successful in most or all of its operations, what critical observations you have made, and whether you learned anything new or important about how government worked.

2. Research (about 5-6 pages for two credits, about 10-11 pages for three credit enrollment):

This component requires that you do some reading and research that is related to your internship field, and write a paper putting what you did into a larger context so that you can tie it to what we know about the major issues and operations of government today. For example, a student interning in a congressional office in Washington might examine some of the literature about the operations of Congress and set out to explain how his or her own experiences confirm or do not confirm what has been written by scholars and commentators. Students interning in a political campaign might do their own analysis of issues and strategies in the campaign and fit them into the context of studies of American elections. Interns in almost any area of government may want to address the important policy issues that were at work in their area, be they finance and budgeting issues, social welfare policy, economic development, corrections, or other issues. These are only examples, and a number of other approaches would also be possible. Do not hesitate to ask your supervising faculty member for advice.

The goal of this paper is for the student to indicate that his or her internship experience is combined with an awareness of current thinking about what you have been doing. Write the paper as if you are giving a report on what is known about your area of activity and what the major literature is that is relevant to understanding that work. You will try to establish a big-picture framework for your work, putting it into context and explaining how it fits with similar or related things that we know about the operations of government today.

3. Possible strategies for developing your research paper:

a. Use the library!

b. Research a specific kind of policy that you worked on. Describe what is known about it, and how it has developed locally or nationally. Evaluate issues and controversies pertaining to it.

c. Research the laws governing the operations of your program, policy, or office. Explain what the laws are aiming at, when and how they originated, what changes have been made in the laws or are proposed for the future, and how the actual operations look when compared with what you take to be the intent of the law.

d. Research the history of your agency. When did it start and why? What interests and motives led to its creation? How has its role been modified over the years? What are its successes and failures. How is it like or unlike similar agencies in other states or other parts of the government?

e. Develop a political biography of a candidate or official for whom you have worked. Trace the development of his or her career. The starting point? The opponents? How positioned on the political spectrum and why? Major achievements and failures? Goals?

f. Use your books and notes from courses at OU to find leads to useful sources. Every American Government (Psc 1113) text has extensive references and bibliography. Books for more advanced courses will guide you to the main works on virtually any topic. Check the textbook stores to see what is currently being assigned on topics like the Congress, state and local politics, constitutional matters, administration and public policy, and so forth; buy these books or check them out of the library and follow up on their references.

g. Use the social science encyclopedias, the Handbook of Political Science, the newspaper and journal indexes, the CD ROM collection, the Government Documents Collections at Bizzell Library, and the Internet. (Not just one of these sources, however, but several of them.) Government Documents will frequently have materials published by major state and national agencies. The indexes to the National Journal and the Congressional Record can be a very useful lead to materials on current issues.

4. Your paper should be well-written and appropriately documented. Use the standard research documentation styles described in Turabian's manual (available at bookstores everywhere) or some other recognized guide to formatting research and scholarship.

5. Your paper will be the last piece in the folder documenting your internship experience.

6. The Department will retain a copy of the entire folder. You should also retain a copy.

Questions? Please contact Ms. Kerry Ashford, Academic Counsellor, Department of Political Science; or Prof. Ann-Marie Szymanski, Department of Political Science, the University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019.

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Prof. Ann-Marie Szymanski, 405 573-2069, ams@ou.edu