GOV 374N: POLITICAL INTERNSHIPS
Fall 2012
Department of Government
The University of Texas at Austin
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INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR: Dr. James Henson

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COURSE DESCRIPTION – Fall 2012
The Government Department internship program provides students an opportunity to combine work experience in government and politics with intellectual reflection on their experience. Making the most of the course requires interns to work as diligent part-time employees in their positions while reflecting thoughtfully and analytically on their experience in the organizations in which they work.

The academic objectives of the internship course are:

1. To provide students with first-hand experience working in government and politics;
2. To incorporate this experience into the contexts of their intellectual education at the university and of public expectations of politics and government;
3. To use interns' experiences to think about the dynamics of politics and government as features of contemporary society; and
4. To use interns' experience to think about the practice of politics as a profession.

Most of students' time and energy will be directed toward performing the duties of their internships in a manner that reflects positively on them and on The University of Texas at Austin. A solid performance as an intern provides a rich learning experience, the possibility of future intellectual and professional opportunities, and also reflects well on the program, paving the way for future students to have the same opportunities current interns enjoy.

However, interns should be clear about the nature of this course. Students are not receiving credit from the Government Department primarily for fulfilling their internships. Students receive grades and credit for completing the internships in conjunction with guided course work. Supervisor evaluations are taken into account in assigning grades, but the primary consideration in assigning grades is the quality of academic work completed for the course.

ON THE WEB
Documents and notices will be posted using the Blackboard site for the class.

READING MATERIAL

Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" (http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Politics_as_a_Vocation, or in print in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Translated and edited), From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, pp. 77-128, New York: Oxford University Press.)

Karen Olsson, *Waterloo*. New York: Picador, 2006. (Available in paperback and is discounted at Amazon.com. If you order ahead from one of their associated vendors, you can get a real deal on a used copy. There are also usually copies in used bookstores around Austin.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 4 mandatory group meetings
- 3 papers
- Work hours: 9-12 hours per week, beginning first day of semester, concluding the last regular day of the semester. The minimum total hours worked should 150 hours. How you track this is up to you and your supervisor/employer, but it should be verifiable if necessary.
- Two evaluations by internship supervisor
- One video taped exit interview (about 15-30 minutes)
- Texas Politics Speaker Series attendance (see below, plus times & dates TBA)`
- Respond to readings on email list as directed

NOTE: all requirements must be fulfilled to receive credit for the course.

GRADE CALCULATION

Writing assignment #1	20%
Writing assignment #2	20%
Writing assignment #3	25%
Mid term supervisor evaluation	10%
Final supervisor evaluation	15%
Exit interview	10%

Grade scale:
A 94-100
A- 90-93
B+ 87-89
B 84-86
B- 80-83
C+ 77-79
C 74-76
C- 70-73
D+ 67-69
D 64-66
D- 60-63
F 59 and below

Students <u>must complete all of the assignments</u> in order to receive a passing grade for the course. Sign up sheets from events and meetings will be considered in borderline cases.

Fall 2012 IMPORTANT DATES

Aug 29	First day of semester	Your internship should be set up and you should start working this week.
Sept 6	Organizational class meeting	**5 PM**, Mezes 2.302
Sept 27	Class meeting, discuss Weber / first writing assignment	**5 PM,** Mezes 2.302 Students should have completed Weber reading
Oct 5	First writing assignment due	Printed copy should be turned into Dr. Henson or to the receptionist in Mezes 2.302 by 4:30 pm.
Oct 15	Mid-term supervisor evaluation due	May be mailed, emailed, or faxed by supervisor to Dr. Henson.
Oct 25	Speaker Series Event: Sasha Issenberg, author of "The Victory Lab"	3:30 - 4:30, Gebauer 3.312
Nov 1	Class meeting: discuss second writing assignment	**5 PM,** Mezes 2.302 Students should have *Waterloo* by Olsson
Nov 8	Speaker Series Event: Election De-Brief & Legislative Event	**Times TBD. Location: Capitol Extension Auditorium**
Nov 16	Second Writing assignment due	Paper: printed copy should be turned into Dr. Henson or to the receptionist in Mezes 2.302 by 4:30 pm Evaluation:
Nov 21	Deadline for scheduling exit interviews	Follow instructions in email
Dec 3, 5 (tentative)	Videotape exit interviews	Arrive 15 minutes early for your sign up time - Mezes 2.206.
Dec 6	Class meeting – Discuss third assignment	**5 PM,** Mezes 2.302
Dec 12	Third writing assignment due	Printed copy should be turned into Dr. Henson or to the receptionist in Mezes 2.302 by 4:30 pm
Dec 12	Final Supervisor evaluation due	May be mailed, emailed, or faxed by supervisor to Dr. Henson

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 1 (Due: October 5): Situating the Practice of Politics
Length: 1500 words Value: 20% of final grade
Description: Identify and assess the central elements of "politics as a vocation" in Weber's essay. Weber wrote this in 1919 -- what are the implications of Weber's interpretation for contemporary democratic politics? Pay particular attention to the implications for contemporary politics in the general area in which you will be an intern (i.e. the legislature, executive office, campaign professional, etc.).

This assignment is designed to get you to dissect and comprehend Weber's essay, and to extend it into the contemporary context in which you find yourself. But do not dwell on your specific context of your internship -- the main burden is to convey that you have spent time getting a grasp of the essay, and that you can extend the central arguments and implications of the essay into the present.

Material:
Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" (http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Politics_as_a_Vocation, or in print in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Translated and edited), From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, pp. 77-128, New York: Oxford University Press.)

Assignment 2 (Due: November 16): Reflecting on Popular Representations of Politics

Length: 1250 words Value: 20% of final grade

Description: Read Karen Olsson's *Waterloo* and write an essay about the characterization of the professional practice of politics in the novel. How does the novel present ethical choices faced by political professionals in the various roles presented in the book? Organize your essay around an argument for your interpretation of the book's overall portrayal of politics in Texas.

Assignment 3 (Due: December 12): Assessment of Weber and Your Internship
Length: 1500 words Value: 25% of final grade

Description:
Assess the lessons of your internship in light of Weber's understanding of politics as a vocation. Choose three arguments or observations relevant to your experience, and assess (with examples) the degree to which Weber's description and analysis seems apt for the contemporary practice of politics as you experienced it. **NOTE: this paper should NOT be a rewrite of your first paper.**

SUPERVISOR EVALUATIONS
Supervisors must evaluate interns twice, at mid-semester and at the semester's end. Assessment forms are available at the course website. Your supervisors should either email or mail assessments to the coordinator at jhenson@mail.la.utexas.edu. **These evaluations are due by October 15 and December 12.**

Interns should provide supervisors with plenty of lead time, and make sure forms are available to them.

VIDEO TAPED EXIT INTERVIEW
Students are required to sit for a recorded video interview during the last week of regular classes. Students will be asked a short set of questions about their experiences in their internships, what they learned, and their reflections on the overall experience. Students will be asked to sign a waiver allowing the use of the videos for instruction of future interns and for use in other instructional settings. Students may choose not to allow the use of their interview, but the interview is still a required assignment. You will receive an email with instructions for scheduling your interview around the 12th week of the semester.

CLASS EMAIL LIST
gov-interns@utlists.utexas.edu

ABOUT THE EMAIL LIST
Students are already subscribed to the class email list. You have probably already received mail unless you were added late or did not provide a current email address when you applied to the program.

An important thing to remember from the outset: if you need to email Dr. Henson, send email directly to his individual address, not to the list.

NOTICE: students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/