

PSCI 4938-800: Internship in Government Fall 2018

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COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS

The Political Science internship course provides students the opportunity to integrate theoretical concepts related to government, politics and public policy with practical experience in relevant organizations. Internships are designed for active participation in professional settings allowing students to explore the work of political, governmental, or non-governmental organizations, and the career possibilities that are available. The course also requires an independent research component that builds on internship experiences to broaden and deepen knowledge.

Through this class you will:

- Carry out a hands-on learning experience relevant to political science with a minimum of 144 hours of work completed during the semester to earn 3 academic credits
- Learn and analyze the principles, goals and practices of your organization
- Complete an analytical research project that explores what your internship experience taught you about politics
- Develop professional insights, skills, strategies and connections
- Practice documenting and communicating the skills and experiences gained through your placement

WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

An internship is different from an employment situation or donating your time as a volunteer. An internship is an educational experience. In the selection of a placement, the negotiation of tasks, and the manner in which you approach the completion of tasks, "learning" should be your primary objective and that of the organization in which you are placed. This is in contrast to both an employment situation you have contracted to perform defined tasks in return for remuneration and a volunteer position in which your primary objective is to further the goals of the organization or individual to whom you are donating your services.

While the primary intent of your internship is to further your learning, interns nonetheless contribute to the activities of the host institution. As a result, students are expected to maintain their commitments to their host organization and to complete their duties promptly and efficiently. At the same time, while you are on your placement, you should be reflective and analytical. Be active rather than passive. Ask questions politely and at appropriate times. When you meet or hear of people of interest, follow up and make appointments to talk in greater depth later. Take full advantage of the opportunities your internship presents. Most importantly, always ask yourself the theoretical significance of what you are experiencing. In other words, try to make connections between what you have learned in classes and what you are experiencing first-hand.

Students are also reminded that while on their placement they are representing the University of Colorado and the Department of Political Science. You are expected to dress and act appropriately.

You may not use your position for personal political advantage. Of course, if you are working in a political office, you would be expected to advance the office-holder's agenda.

Finally, while you are in your internship, enjoy yourself. Work and learning should be positive experiences; take full advantage of the opportunities your internship presents.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Weekly Internship Reports – due to Canvas each Monday by 5 pm.** The weekly updates provide ongoing review and discussion of what you're doing and observing, challenges you're facing, new skills being developed, and other insights on your work or the organization with which you are interning. These weekly updates are your opportunity to document what you have learned. They are also my main avenue for finding out what you are accomplishing, so please be as detailed as possible. Weekly updates should be approx. 1 page (250 words) in length.
2. **Individual Meetings.** There will be at least two individual meetings with the instructor during your internship. The initial meeting will take place at the beginning of the semester to make sure everything is in order, to talk about expectations, interests and goals, and to get acquainted. The second meeting will take place at a mutually agreeable time towards the end of the semester and before the final paper is due. Other meetings can be scheduled as needed.
3. **Group Meetings.** Two meetings of the whole group of PSCI interns will be scheduled during the semester (with a poll sent out to find a time that works for all). The first meeting will provide opportunity to introduce ourselves and our placements, cover expectations and guidelines, ask questions, share insights, and make sure everyone is ready to take full advantage of the internship experience. The second meeting will take place later in the semester and will allow us to share updates and to talk through the research paper requirements.
4. **Research Assignment – see “PSCI Internship in Government Research Assignment” document for details**
 - a. **Initial Paper (due 5 pm, Friday, Sept. 28).** A 2-3 page paper presenting an exploratory proposal (or prospectus) for your semester-long research project.
 - b. **Final Paper (due before midnight, Monday, Dec. 10).** A 12-15 page analytical paper that presents a research question, findings and discussion, including a comparison of how your experiences in your internship and other information gathered matches the expectations outlined in your initial paper.
5. **Thank You Letters (due Friday, Dec. 14)**

Each student is expected to write thank-you letters to individuals who played significant roles assisting the intern during the placement. Copies of these letters (either photocopies of hand-written letters or the text of letters given to the individuals with whom you worked this semester) are to be submitted to Canvas.

COURSE GRADING

The internship placement should prove to be an enjoyable and beneficial learning experience. At the same time, it is crucial to note the academic evaluation in this course is separate from any benefits gained from the participatory experience itself. Grading will be solely the responsibility of the instructor. The grade will be determined by academic performance.

Grading components:

- Weekly internship reports – 30%
- Initial paper – 15%
- Final paper – 45 %
- Fulfillment of other obligations (meetings, other required documents) – 10%

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- **Accommodation for Disabilities:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website.
- **Honor Code:** All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code (honor@colorado.edu); 303-492-5550). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).
- **Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation:** The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering a positive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, exploitation, harassment, dating or domestic violence, and stalking), discrimination, and harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or cureport@colorado.edu. Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](#), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#).
- **Religious Holidays:** Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please let me know as soon as possible of any schedule conflicts – before missing class or assignments. See [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.