

**Preparing for the Washington Seminar  
2009 Winter Semester  
Political Science 297 (section 2) Syllabus  
Fall 2008**

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Hours: By appointment (M 3 to 5 and Th,F 2:00-4:00 preferred)  
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## **I. Course Objectives**

The objective of this Washington Seminar Preparatory PLSC 297 Course is to help launch you into a successful experience in Washington, D.C. This course is designed to guide you in reflecting about your preparation needs and to plan goals for the internship. It will also suggest ways for you to become more familiar with the organization in which you will work and the culture and environment of Washington, D.C.

## **II. Grading**

This course is letter graded. The final grade will be based on the following elements:

- Class attendance—20%;
- Cover statements—15%;
- Quizzes—25%;
- Past participant interview report—15%; and
- Internship paper—25%.

If you are enrolling in this course for two credits, see item X below for the additional requirements.

Grading in each category and for the course will be based on the following scale of student points earned:

100 - 96 = A,	85.99 - 81 = B,	70.99 - 66 = C,	55.99 - 51 = D,
95.99 - 91 = A-,	80.99 - 76 = B-,	65.99 - 61 = C-,	50.99 - 46 = D-,
90.99 - 86 = B+,	75.99 - 71 = C+,	60.99 - 56 = D+,	45.99 - 0 = E.

Because the class does not finish until after grades are due, you will initially receive a “T” (work in progress) grade for the course. This is a neutral grade that will not affect your grade point average. After the last preparatory class session in Washington, DC the letter grade for your work will be posted to your transcript based on the assignments submitted to that point.

Work turned in late will not earn the full points available for the assignment. *Late papers will be penalized 10% for each week after the deadline they are submitted.* **No course work will be accepted after the last class session (Washington, D.C. orientation).**

**Submitting Assignments.** Whenever possible you should submit your assignments using email (see the instructor’s address above). A Microsoft Word attachment to your email message is preferred, but “cut and paste” into the main message body is also acceptable. You will receive a reply via email confirming that the assignment was successfully transmitted or that it was graded. If you don’t receive a reply by the following day, then be sure to follow-up with a phone call or another email message. *Unless you receive the acknowledgment don’t assume the assignment has been received.*

Written papers for this course should be submitted using the “Chicago” style found in *A Manual for Writers* by Kate L. Turabian, the most recent edition. Reference citations, spelling, punctuation, abbreviations, the use of numbers in text, the placement of tables and figures, etc. are all found in this manual. The Turabian format is among the most widely used in colleges and universities throughout the country, and the one used by the Political Science Department (and other departments) at BYU. The manual may be purchased at the BYU Bookstore, and some information about this style can also be found on the Web.

The FHSS Writing Lab, located in Room 1051 JFSB is a wonderful support that can greatly improve papers and assignments during the semester, as well as prepare students for writing in the workplace environment. The Writing Lab helps students with grammar problems, focusing on issues, and citing sources in Turabian, APA, and MLA formats. Please take advantage of the FHSS Writing Laboratory.

### III. Class Attendance (20% of grade)

Four of the class sessions will be on the BYU campus and the final class will be held in Washington, D.C. the day before the internships begin. It is important that you attend all class sessions. This time is used to present information and to handle necessary administrative matters. It also provides a chance for you to become acquainted with your faculty advisor and the other students who will be with you in Washington. With the permission of the instructor it is possible to be excused from class if you have an unavoidable conflict (i.e. work or another of your classes meets at the same time). Absences for class sessions on the Provo campus can be made up by listening to the digitized recording of the class on Blackboard ***no later than one week after the class missed***. In order to get credit, you then must send the instructor an email message reporting that you have listened to the lecture. Your attendance grade earned will be reduced 10% per week you are late reporting having listened to the lecture, so please report promptly. Attendance credit will be granted based on whether or not your name is on the roll that is circulated in class or according to the date you report (via email) that you listened to the lecture. ***The final class session in Washington, D.C. counts for half of the attendance grade and cannot be made-up. If you are absent or tardy, your grade will be affected accordingly.***

To access the lectures on Blackboard go to the Recorded Lectures link on the main page for this class. You must have Windows Media Player on your computer in order to play the WMA file. Some files may be as large as 30mb and may take a while to download. If you are using a dial-up Internet connection, you may want to access the file in one of the on-campus computer labs.

### IV. Cover Statements (15% of grade) due as specified by the Washington Seminar Office.

As part of the internship application process you are expected to write a separate cover statement for each organization/office to which you are applying. It is very important that the statements are well-written and submitted in a timely manner. These will be graded according to the following scale:

- On time, no corrections = 100;
- On time, minor corrections = 95;
- Late *or* 5+ corrections = 85-90;
- Late *and* 5+ corrections=76-84;
- Late *or* 10+ corrections, more than one draft required = 68-75;
- Late *and* 10+ corrections, more than one draft required = 61-67;
- Late *or* 15+ corrections, more than two drafts required = 57-60,
- More than two drafts required; late *and* 15+ corrections = 46-56;
- No corrections but late = -5 points for each day late.

Students who have arranged their own internships will receive full credit for this assignment and need not submit any cover statements.

## V. Readings due as indicated on the course schedule below.

The readings for this course will help prepare you for your Washington Seminar experience. Be sure to complete them according to the course schedule below. It is essential that you read the *Washington Seminar Handbook* carefully as it contains important information about program policies and requirements, as well as advice on succeeding in your internship. ***You should purchase all books early in the semester as frequently the Bookstore runs short or removes them from the shelf in preparation for the next semester.***

### Required Readings for PLSC 297

- Abell, Alicia. *Business Grammar, Style and Usage: The Desk Reference for Articulate and Polished Business Writing, Speaking & Correspondence*. Thomson/Aspatore, 2003.
- Bravo, Dario & Whiteley, Carol. *The Internship Advantage: Get Real World Job Experience to Launch Your Career*. Prentice Hall Press, 2005. This text is available at HBLL course reserve in hard copy and electronic form through Blackboard; an electronic access charge will be assessed to students for this out of print text to cover payment to the publisher.
- *Washington Seminar Handbook*. May be purchased at Joseph F. Smith Building Copy Center room B115 JFSB, open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (phone ext. 2-4265). It is also available online through Blackboard.
- Before going to Washington DC you may also want to purchase any required books for your PLSC 391 course there with the faculty advisor. Contact the faculty advisor for that PLSC 391 syllabus.

### Recommended Readings

Although not required, the following texts (available in the bookstore) will provide you with additional useful information:

- ADC's Street Map of Washington, D.C. and Vicinity*. ADC of Alexandria, Inc.,  
(Best available street map of Washington, D.C.)
- Bowen, Catherine Drinker. *Miracle at Philadelphia*, Little, Brown & Co., 1986
- Shaara, Michael. *The Killer Angels*. Ballantine Books, 1974
- Smith, Hedrick. *The Power Game: How Washington Works*. Ballantine Books, 1988.
- Insight Guides Washington, D.C.* Langenscheid Publishers Inc. 2003

## VI. Quizzes (25% of grade)

Three quizzes based on the assigned readings must be taken in Blackboard *during the days they are available in the course schedule below*. All quizzes are open book exams but the quizzes are *not* to be discussed with other students. Quiz 1 is worth thirty percent, Quiz 2 is worth forty percent, and Quiz 3 is worth thirty percent of the total quiz grade.

## VII. Past Participant Interview Paper (15% of grade) due November 20 via email submission to instructor.

One of the best ways to understand what the internship will be like is to interview a student who has participated on the Washington Seminar. In this assignment you are to meet with or call someone who has been on the Washington Seminar program and ask her or him the following questions, as well as any questions of your own. Preferably interview someone who has interned during the same time of year as you will intern and in one of the offices to which you are applying. Check with the Washington Seminar staff for possible names. Write a report detailing the answers to each the questions. Be certain to include the person's name, where he or she interned and which semester and year he or she was on the program. The report must

be typed. Substantial weight will be given to how well the paper is written—spelling, grammar or style errors will be penalized. *Use a format in which you state the question followed by the former student's answer.*

- What skills and knowledge were needed for your internship?
- What kind of writing did you do in your internship?
- What did you like best in the internship? What did you like the least?
- How can one best prepare for the internship?
- What would you have done differently?
- What were the most significant work assignments you were given in the internship?
- What was the most significant thing you learned in the internship?
- Your own individual questions of the past participant.

As a conclusion to the paper respond to these two additional questions:

- How was this interview helpful to you in your preparation?
- What do you need to focus on to be better prepared for your internship?

**VIII. Internship Paper** (25% of grade) is due two weeks after accepting an internship offer but not later than December 29 to receive full credit via email submission to instructor.

Once you know in which internship you will be working, write a paper that addresses the following points:

1. Examine the office or organization for which you will be working, including:
  - a. a description of its mission and goals;
  - b. its structure; and
  - c. any major current issues, activities or projects with which it is now dealing.If you are going to a congressional office, you should also:
  - d. tell something about the background and political interests of the senator or representative for whom you will be working;
  - e. give a brief summary of his or her recent key votes; and
  - f. any current legislation he or she is sponsoring or co-sponsoring (see *Politics in America*, *The Almanac of American Politics*, *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, *The National Journal* and the member's web site).
2. Describe what you believe your responsibilities will be in the internship.
3. Interview your work supervisor or the intern coordinator in the office and report his or her response to each of the following questions. *Use a format in which you state the question followed by the answer from the individual interviewed.*
  - a. What is the office address and what is the best way to get there?
  - b. What is the standard dress in the office?
  - c. Who will I report to in the internship?
  - d. Who will my co-workers be (i.e. names and positions of those you will work with on a regular basis)?
  - e. What should I do to prepare for the internship?
  - f. What kind of computer software is used in the office?
  - g. What training will be available to me the first week?
  - h. What will my daily routine be like?
  - i. What major projects will the office focus on during my internship?
  - j. Are there materials relevant to organization or internship that I can access on-line or that could be sent to me?
  - k. What can I expect to learn in this internship?
  - l. What are the expectations you have for interns in your office?
4. Outline goals you have for yourself in each of the following areas:
  - a. knowledge you hope to gain about institutions, processes, or concepts related to previous study;

- b. skills you would like to improve or acquire;
  - c. understanding of career possibilities or direction you hope to gain; and
  - d. other personal goals you have for the experience.
5. Include a bibliography of sources used or use footnotes citing sources (including interviews, materials from the Washington Seminar, or the Internet).

There is no length requirement. However, the paper must demonstrate that you have carefully examined the office/organization where you will be working and the internship experience there. It is not expected that this paper will be longer than five pages. It must be typed. Substantial weight will be given to how well the paper is written (spelling, grammar or style errors will affect the grade), and the extent to which you address all of the above questions. This paper is due two weeks after you accept an internship offer but not later than the above date to receive full credit. Submit it via email directly to the instructor.

Sufficient information on most of the internships is not too difficult to find. You may already have answers to some of the questions if you were conscientious in the interviews that were part of your internship selection process. To complete the assignment begin by thoroughly reviewing the organization's web site. This should help give you a sense of its mission, goals, and the current issues on which it is focusing. Next review the Washington Seminar database and sponsor files, taking particular note of the advice past interns have given about how to be successful in the internship. You are then ready to interview your work supervisor or the internship coordinator in the office using the above questions as a guide. If you will be interning in the Executive Branch or in Congress, the *Congressional Yellow Book* and the *Federal Yellow Book* (both in the Washington Seminar office) can be helpful in learning about the organizational structure and staff of the office where you will be working. An Internet search using two or three search engines can provide interesting insights into issues that may be relevant to the organization. Finally, a quick literature search using the HBLL on-line catalog may reveal recently published articles or books that you may want to review for additional background on the organization.

## IX. Course Schedule

<b>October 7</b>	<b>Class One—Placement Orientation</b> (Students who have secured their own internships need not attend) Readings to be completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Washington Seminar Handbook</i> chapter 2; <i>Bravo and Whiteley</i>, chapters 1, 2, 4, 5 and 8</li> </ul>
October 8-10	Washington Seminar credit registration (in Washington Seminar office) for courses PLSC 297, 391, and 399R.
October 8-11	Placement interviews with Washington Seminar Director (schedule appointment with Washington Seminar Assistant)
October 13	Internship listings on Placement Form due in Washington Seminar office.
October 17	Cover statements and final application materials due in Washington Seminar office.
October 22-27	Internship application packets mailed to DC (you are responsible to notify the Washington Seminar office of any organizations that require mailing prior to this date)
<b>October 28</b>	<b>Class Two—Preparing for the Washington Seminar</b>

	Readings to be completed:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Washington Seminar Handbook</i> chapters 1, 3, 4, and the Appendix</li> <li>• Administrative business will include roommate sign-up</li> </ul>
<b>November 3</b>	Internship grant applications due in Washington Seminar Office.
<b>November 11</b>	<b>Class Three—Logistics and Housing in Washington, D.C.</b>
	Readings to be completed:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Washington Seminar Handbook</i> chapters 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. Administrative business will include preliminary roommate assignment distribution, leases distributed and signed, Barlow Center Internet Agreement, and reception RSVP.</li> </ul>
<b>November 18 5538 WSC</b>	<b>Class Four—Alumni Presentation and Program Reception for Students and Spouses</b>
	Readings to be completed:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Washington Seminar Handbook</i> chapter 7.</li> <li>• Abell text, all chapters.</li> </ul>
November 20	<b>Past Participant Interview Paper</b> due
November 18 thru 25 at 11:30 p.m.	<b>Quiz 1</b> available on Blackboard. Covers the following readings: Abell text, all chapters.
November 19 thru 25	<b>The Congressional Establishment video in HBLL LRC—Optional</b> 30 minute video for students applying for an internship in or related to Congress should watch in the Learning Resource Center of HBLL.
December 1	Barlow Center rent charged to student accounts. Non-political science credit forms due in Washington Seminar office.
December 1 thru 8	<b>Quiz 2</b> available in Blackboard. Covers the following readings: <i>Washington Seminar Handbook</i> , all chapters.
December 5 thru 11	<b>Quiz 3</b> available in Blackboard. Covers the following readings: Bravo and Whiteley, chapters 7, 9 and 10.
December 15	Check AIM to confirm your registration for Washington Seminar credits
December 29	Last day the <b>Internship Paper</b> will be accepted for full credit. This assignment should be submitted two weeks after internship offer is accepted. <b>No course work will be accepted after the last class session (Washington, D.C. orientation).</b>
January 5	Readings to be reviewed prior to class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Washington Seminar Handbook</i>, chapter 5.</li> <li>• Bravo and Whiteley, chapters 7, 9 and 10</li> </ul>
<b>January 5</b>	<b>Creating the Successful Internship and Washington, D.C. Orientation</b> <i>Please be in your seat by 8:45 a.m. in the Milton A. Barlow Center Great Room.</i> Remember that this is the only session of the preparatory class that cannot be made-up later. Tardiness will be penalized and failing to attend will count against 50% of

your attendance grade. This will be an all-day class (do not schedule any commitments until after 5:00 p.m.) beginning at the Barlow Center in Washington, D.C. (2520 L St, NW). The Great Room is located just inside the building's main entrance. Because of a very tight schedule it is important that we start on time, so do not be late. If you are not living at the Center, read carefully the travel instructions below. Be sure to wear business attire with good walking shoes and bring \$30 for subway fare and lunch.

January 6

First day of internships

## **X. American Government Primer (PLSC 297 2 credit option)**

This primer is intended for Washington Seminar students who require a review of American political institutions and processes. Many of the students who enroll in the Washington Seminar program are not political science majors and have not had Political Science 110, the Department's introductory American government course. This review is provided to help these students learn about the basic structures and functions of American government so their Washington experience will be more meaningful. Even if you have taken Political Science 110, this primer might serve as a helpful review as you prepare for Washington, D.C.

This is a self-guided, web-based primer that you access on the Blackboard web site for this section of PLSC 297. The concepts and ideas presented in this review will require some careful reading and study. You are encouraged to explore the external links and supplemental materials to help you become better acquainted not only with the concepts being taught here, but some of the resources you may need during your semester in Washington, D.C.

If you would like to receive credit for this course work, you should enroll in PLSC 297 for two credits rather than one. If you do, half of your grade in the prep course will be determined by your scores from the on-line, open book quizzes (taken at the end of each lesson) and the on-line final. Your grade for this half of PLSC 297 will be weighted:

- Lesson quizzes 44%;
- Final exam 56%.

The other half of your grade will come from the work you do in the other assignments as outlined in the PLSC 297 course syllabus.

Any student enrolled in PLSC 297 can complete this material. However, the quiz scores will only count if you are enrolled for two credits for the course.

## **XI. Other Information**

### Travel Instructions to the Milton A. Barlow Center (BYU Washington Seminar Residence)

If you are not living at the building, you are encouraged to take the Metro (subway) to the facility. Please note that ***no parking is provided for students at the building and you will need to find commercial parking in the area if you travel by car.*** Street parking in the area (if you can find it) has a two hour limit. You will also

be traveling during rush hour so plan accordingly and give yourself lots of travel time, especially if you are driving.

The building address is 2520 L Street NW, near the west end of Pennsylvania Avenue. The Foggy Bottom Metro station is closest to the building. Exit that station on to 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, turn left (north) and walk about a block to Washington Circle (a round-about). At Washington Circle keep to the left and continue to Pennsylvania Avenue. At Pennsylvania Avenue turn left and walk a little more than a block (crossing 25<sup>th</sup> Street) to where L Street merges into Pennsylvania Avenue. L Street at this point is only two blocks long. After walking another two blocks, on the left you will arrive at the facility, a four story red brick building across the street from a small triangular park.

If you get lost or have other problems, call the building managers at 202-448-3399.

### **Preventing Sexual Harassment**

By law, Brigham Young University is obligated to protect its students from gender discrimination, including unlawful sexual harassment, in all programs and activities sponsored by the university. As you embark on your internship, please be aware of what constitutes sexual harassment and what you should do if you encounter it during your internship opportunity.

#### *Definition*

Sexual harassment is defined as *unwelcome* sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made a term or condition of an individual's employment, or
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or
- The conduct interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

#### *Examples*

Behaviors that contribute to a hostile environment include, but are not limited to:

- Discussing sexual activities
- Telling off-color jokes
- Unnecessary touching
- Commenting on physical attributes
- Displaying sexually suggestive pictures
- Using crude language or demeaning or inappropriate terms
- Using indecent gestures
- Engaging in hostile physical conduct

#### *Appropriate Response*

Both employers and employees have a responsibility to prevent and stop workplace harassment. If you experience harassment while participating in a BYU-sponsored internship, report the behavior to your internship coordinator and your experience provider. They will take appropriate action to address and correct the behavior. You may also contact the university's Equal Opportunity Manager or 24-hour hotline at:

Equal Opportunity Manager

Brigham Young University

Telephone: (801) 422-5895

Email: [sue\\_demartini@byu.edu](mailto:sue_demartini@byu.edu)

24-hour hotline: 1 (888) 238-1062

**Students with Disabilities**

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability that may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the UAC. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You may contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.

R. Goss

9/12/08