

**Washington Seminar Internship
PLSC 399R
Winter Semester 2008
Eric Hyer**

Course Objectives and Requirements

The purpose of PLSC 399R is for students to bring together their internship experience and observations with a more traditional academic endeavor. In so doing you will put your day-to-day experiences at the office into a broader theoretical perspective as well as advance your academic training in preparation for future careers.

Course objectives are accomplished in two ways: first, your performance in the internship itself and, second, research and writing consisting of several components.

In your internship you are expected to perform all of your duties with professionalism and a proactive approach. You will evaluate your own performance at mid-semester and your direct supervisor will evaluate your performance at the end of the semester.

Written work requires you to answer the following questions: Where does my office fit into the broader picture of national policy-making? More specifically, you should consider the types of issues your office addresses and what type of activities it engages in with respect to these issues. For example, is your organization primarily involved in background research and general policy studies? Is it involved in the design and adoption of policy? Does it engage in lobbying policy-makers? Is it an implementing or enforcement agency? Once you have identified the agency's principal functions you can determine whether or not it is successful and why.

The written work consists of several components, calibrated in proportion to the number of 399R credit hours for which you are registered. Following is the break-down of assignments.

Requirements for Those Taking Three Credit Hours of 399R:

Personal Professional Development: You will systematically consider your own particular role in the agency. This should be 2-3 pages in length. The analysis will include at a minimum the following features:

- * Your basic job description.
- * Your place in the agency hierarchy.
- * The skills required to perform your job well.
- * A list of personal targets to improve your skill set.

Organization Analysis: You will systematically describe the nature of your organization. This should be 3-5 pages in length. The analysis will include at a minimum the following features:

- * The official purposes of the organization as described in its mission statement.
- * The historical origins of the agency.
- * Funding sources.
- * Personnel size and qualifications.
- * Organizational structure of the agency itself and where it fits into a broader organization (if at all).
- * A short list of achievements.
- * A short list of goals and targets for the future.

Critique of Agency: You will briefly comment on the performance of the agency in relation to its goals. This should be 2-3 pages in length. Take into account the resources and powers at the disposal of the agency, as well as the constraints and obstacles it faces.

Grade Breakdown for Three Credit Hours of 399R:

Supervisor Evaluation: 30%
 Personal Professional Development: 20%
 Organization Analysis: 30%
 Critique of the Agency: 20%

Requirements for Those Taking Six Credit Hours of 399R:

Those taking six credits of 399R will complete all of the requirements for three credits (see above), as well as an eight to ten page paper that does the following:

Write a paper on a national policy debate drawn from your work as an intern. Be careful to provide systematic evidence in the form of internal documents, interviews with participants, magazine and newspaper articles and so forth. Take full advantage of the resources you have on the job that would not otherwise be available to you in the library and online. Make sure to provide citations for all work that is not original—this includes interviews, speeches, internet documents and so forth.

*In the unlikely event that the agency you are working for has no role whatsoever in a national policy debate, other topics may be approved on consultation with the instructor.

Grade Breakdown for Six Credit Hours of 399R:

Supervisor Evaluation: 30%
 Personal Professional Development: 10%
 Organization Analysis: 20%
 Critique of the Agency: 10%
 8-10 Page Paper: 30%

Requirements for Those Taking Nine Credit Hours of 399R:

Those taking nine credits of 399R will complete all of the requirements for three credits (see above), as well as a 15-18 page paper that does the following:

For a description see above under six credit hours.

Grade Breakdown for Nine Credit Hours of 399R:

Supervisor Evaluation: 30%
Personal Professional Development: 10%
Organization Analysis: 15%
Critique of the Agency: 10%
15-18 Page Paper: 35%

Deadlines for All Assignments:

Items are due at the beginning of the day on the date indicated. All deadlines are firm and non-negotiable. Grades will be reduced at the rate of 10% each day an assignment is late. Please arrange your schedule to meet these deadlines.

Personal Professional Development: **January 25th**
Organization Analysis: **February 22nd**
Critique of Agency: **March 21st**
Paper: **April 18th**

Note: Everyone is welcome to submit materials before the posted deadlines. Those who miss the deadlines will receive a T grade until the work is completed. T grades do not affect GPAs and will be adjusted once the materials are turned in. *If you plan to graduate in April, you must have all work submitted by the deadline.*