COURSE SYLLABUS

POLITICAL SCIENCE 391
SEMINAR IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
WINTER 2011

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This course will focus on "civic participation and public affairs." The Washington Seminar affords each student the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in making and/or influencing policy which might potentially affect millions of people. In the spirit of the slogan, "America--love it and improve it," students will be expected to examine policies and institutions with the intent of seeing how the overall policy-making processes and institutions might be ameliorated. In the U.S. federal system, the national government is one of three major levels of government along with state and local governments. Within the global context, the United States is one nation among about 200, even though there is no doubt about its superpower status. Students of public policy attempt to identify "best practices," whether these practices are found at the national, state, or local levels, or in other countries. During the course of this semester, we intend to identify some best practices which might improve both the overall U.S. system of governance and the ability of government officials in Washington, D.C. to represent the citizens of the United States of America more effectively.

This semester coincides with the convening of the 112th Congress, with over 90 new members of the 435-seat House of Representatives and 10 new members of the 100-seat Senate coming to the nation’s capital. It should be an exciting time, and each student should view himself or herself as the modern counterpart of the main character depicted in the movie, "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." With this in mind, we should always remember what is cited in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 134: 1: "We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that He holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, both in making laws and administering them, for the good and safety of society." President Spencer W. Kimball, writing in Education for Eternity, elaborates on the high standards which should be expected of men and women engaged in government service: "Oh how our world needs statesmen [and stateswomen]! And we ask again with George Bernard Shaw, 'Why not?' We have the raw material; we have the facilities; we can excel in training. We have the spiritual climate. We must train statesmen [and stateswomen], not demagogues; men [and women] of integrity, not weaklings who for a mess of pottage will sell their birthright. We must develop these precious youth to know the art of statesmanship, to know people and conditions, to know situations and problems, but men [and women] who will be trained so thoroughly in the arts of their future work and in the basic honesties and integrities and spiritual concepts and there will be no compromise of principle." Welcome to Washington, D.C., Mr. and Ms. Smith!

We should always remember that Washington, D.C. is composed of much more than those who represent the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. There are thousands of lobbyists and lawyers, numerous private-sector contractors, thousands who serve the interests of other countries in the embassies scattered throughout the District of Columbia, numerous representatives of international and nongovernmental organizations, thousands of officials employed by the District of Columbia government, hundreds who work in offices operated by the 50 state and various U.S. territorial governments, thousands who work in the myriad
museums and art galleries, and many more working for a vast array of private-sector organizations.

All students should start off the semester by becoming acquainted with course expectations outlined on pages 1-2 and 28-31 in the Student Handbook. Attendance at the Friday classes and briefings is mandatory, and no one should make plans to do anything else on Fridays before late afternoon. In addition, in order to accommodate the schedules of some speakers, an occasional Wednesday or Thursday evening briefing might be added as a supplement to or as a substitution for the Friday briefings. The instructor will let the students know well in advance when such an evening briefing may be required.

REQUIRED READINGS

Readings will be chosen week by week in preparation for each topic and guest speaker. They will be distributed via email (with the exception of the assigned text).

Each student should read the Washington Post on a daily basis. Other good sources of what is transpiring in Washington include the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Time, and Newsweek. Pertinent blogs would include the Huffington Post (liberal), RealClearPolitics (moderate conservative), and the Drudge Report (conservative).

The required text for the course is Earl H. Fry, Lament for America: Decline of the Superpower, Plan for Renewal (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010). This text emphasizes that changes which will occur over the next few decades will be without precedent in human history; in other words, you will be experiencing the greatest roller-coaster ride in history, a ride which will at times be exhilarating and at times frustrating. The book also asserts that the United States is a superpower in “relative decline,” measured by a number of major indicators. This decline is attributable to three major trends: (1) the rise of competitor nations or groups of nations such as China and the European Union; (2) the potent combination of globalization, rapid technology change, and what the economist Joseph Schumpeter referred to as “creative destruction,” and (3) fifteen “fault lines” within the United States itself, ranging from dysfunctional decision-making on Capitol Hill to a deteriorating public education system. The future of the United States as a superpower will, in large part, be determined by the American people themselves, and the last section of the book offers solutions to each of the fault lines. As a conscientious and bright student, you are expected to be skeptical about the proposed fault lines and recommended policy solutions. Nevertheless, the book, weekly readings, and guest presentations will provide ample material for a lively discussion and analysis of issues of prime concern to the American people.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and quality participation are essential. Students will attend all briefings, arrive at least five minutes in advance for each briefing, dress appropriately, and be prepared to ask thoughtful questions in a very respectful manner. Never schedule anything for Fridays before late afternoon. All assigned readings related to the Friday presentations should be completed well in advance and should result in high-quality questions being posed to the briefers. Quizzes on the assigned readings may be held at any time.
First Paper: Representative Government in the United States: Current Strengths and Areas for Improvement

In his famous Gettysburg Address, President Abraham Lincoln voiced a public prayer: “…that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

Each January, the President of the United States treks up to Capitol Hill and gives his State of the Union address. Based on the assigned readings, your own independent research, and the use of recent survey data, provide your own assessment of the State of the Union in terms of how well the federal government is currently “representing” the people of the United States.

Be very specific in describing ways in which Washington is doing a good job in representing the people. Be equally specific in discussing ways that representation can be improved. The final section of the paper should be devoted to a few specific policy recommendations for improving representation within the Beltway.

The paper should be in the range of 1200 to 1500 words, or about 4 to 5 pages, double-spaced.

Second Paper: Civic Participation and My Career Choices

Brigham Young emphasized that “It is the duty of a Saint of God to gain all the influence he can on this earth, and to use every particle of that influence to do good.” How do you plan on doing good in your life?

One of the purposes of the briefings and your internship is to expose you to a variety of career options related to public service, and to help you appreciate that there are many ways in which you can be involved as a citizen for the betterment of your families, neighborhoods, cities, states, country, and the world.

Many of our briefers weigh career benefits of salary, job security, and social status against family and church responsibilities. Consider what matters most to you in a career (salary, job security, social status, family time, intellectual challenges, making a difference, etc.). How will your life and career include public service or civic participation (informed voting, community service, having a voice on vital issues, working for the government, running for public office, etc.)?

Draw on the assigned readings, the briefings, your internship experience, and your own research. Your paper should be analytical and “scholarly,” and avoid having the appearance of a journal entry or a stream of consciousness.

The paper should be in the range of 1200 to 1500 words, or 4 to 5 pages, double-spaced.

Final Term Paper: Effective Governance and Problem-Solving
In the Fry text, several “fault lines” linked to effective governance have been identified. The briefings, assigned readings such as in the *Washington Post*, and your own experiences in Washington will have exposed you to other areas of governance which may leave much to be desired.

Select one specific policy area and do the following: describe in detail what has occurred within this policy area; analyze the strengths and weaknesses of past and current policy enacted in this area; and, finally, provide specific policy recommendations on how policy can be improved in this area. Remember, in putting forward your recommendations, you must explain why your policy priorities are better than current policy or other potential policy alternatives.

Be very specific in your selection of a fault line or policy area. For example, you cannot solve the problems in K-12 public education in the United States in 8 to 12 pages, but perhaps you can attempt to solve one dimension of the public education dilemma. Be sure that you maintain a very narrow policy focus.

The paper should be 2500 to 3500 words, or about 8 to 12 pages, double-spaced.

**Enrichment Activity and Paper**

One Friday during the semester has been set aside for an enrichment activity. We will not schedule any meetings or briefings that day. Instead, you will pursue an enrichment activity such as visiting museums, attending a play or concert, or other related pursuits.

Write a report summarizing your enrichment activity and what you learned from the activity. It should be no more than 3 pages, double-spaced.

**Gettysburg and Harpers Ferry Excursion Paper**

Submit a report based on the field excursion to Gettysburg and Harpers Ferry. Please link the struggle to preserve the Union and expand human rights to our present era. What should we learn today from these historical events, and how were you impacted by your visit to these historical sites? Do some additional research on line in order to buttress the scholarly nature of your report.

Report should be 3 to 4 pages, double-spaced.

**Grading Criteria**

Follow the guidelines outlined in “Standards for Student Papers” found in the *Washington Seminar Handbook*, pages 42-49. The BYU Writing Center has also published a “writing guide” that provides other suggestions, and “Turabian for the Cyberage” is available under student forms and handouts at politicalscience.byu.edu. Quality writing is usually associated with how much time is taken to edit the paper or how many drafts are written. Samuel Johnson stated that “What is written without effort is in general read without pleasure.” Below are some specific grading criteria:
• Address the subject and fulfill the assignment as stated;
• Analyze and incorporate material from relevant briefings, class discussions, and field trips;
• Incorporate and synthesize assigned readings and relevant articles from the *Washington Post*;
• Include a clear thesis statement (primary argument) that guides the structure of paper.

The thesis statement is usually presented along with an outline of the paper in the introductory paragraph;

• Arguments are clear, well-stated, and analytical. Arguments using logic show how one thing implies another. Arguments using evidence produce specific examples, citations of other work, etc. The arguments all relate to and support contention of the thesis. The arguments are not overstated; exceptions or qualifications are acknowledged;
• Use an academic or professional (“white paper”) style of writing, not a journal entry, or letter home, or an angry blog entry: no exclamation points, no contractions, no worthless adverbs (e.g. completely, definitely, honestly, hopefully, incredibly, really, very, etc.);
• Contain adequate sourcing and citations. If you are not sure whether to cite something, cite it. If you state something that is common knowledge—Barack Obama won the 2008 presidential election—then you do not need a citation. If you have to look something up to write it in your paper—Barack Obama won 28 states and D.C.—then you should cite it (CNN 2008). If you learned something during the course of this class, then you should cite where you learned it from (e.g. reading, Constitution Center, George Washington actor at the Freedoms Foundation, etc.);
• Writing mechanics are good, including transitions;
• Be virtually free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors;
• Bibliography and citations follow an accepted style (e.g. Chicago, Turabian, APA);
• Papers are double-spaced, stapled, and numbered; have a title page with name, date, and title.

An “A” paper will conform to these guidelines. Papers that merely summarize or outline the briefings and readings will receive no more than a “C” grade. Another style note: It is not necessary to begin sentences with phrases such as “I think that,” “I feel that,” “I suspect that,” and “I [would] argue that”: Every sentence in a paper could begin with such a phrase. It is assumed that every sentence you write is your thought or argument. These phrases only need to be used in a paper if you mean to say, “I assert without accompanying logic or evidence that ....”

**All late papers will be penalized one-half grade per day.**

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Paper</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrichment Activity Paper</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excursion Paper</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Attendance, Participation, &amp; Quizzes</td>
<td>15</td>
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HONOR CODE AND RELATED ISSUES

Email Policy

All class members are required to maintain an active email account. It is your responsibility to ensure that the email address that is listed for you in the BYU directory is accurate. To update your email address, log in to Route Y and select “Update Personal Information.” Here you can specify a current email address if you are not using the one assigned to you by BYU, or you can have your BYU email forwarded to the account you plan to use. The instructor and the administrative assistant will communicate important and time-sensitive class announcements via email. Please check your email daily throughout the semester. Email is also a good way to reach the instructor with questions. In fact, if you have anything important to ask the instructor, you should email him. By doing so, both you and the instructor will have a written record.

Academic Honesty

From the Academic Honesty section of the BYU Honor Code: “The first injunction of the BYU Honor Code is the call to ‘be honest.’ Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life's work, but also to build character. ‘President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education’ (The Aims of a BYU Education, p. 6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim.”

“BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.”

If you write a paper for another course (past or present) that uses the same topic as a paper for this course, you need to approve it with the instructor, and then you must turn in a copy of the paper from your other course to the instructor.

You can read the Honor Code, including examples of various forms of academic misconduct at honorcode.byu.edu. If you have any questions about academic conduct, please consult these web pages and/or contact the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which 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 office. 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 should contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.

Discrimination
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Opportunities Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a serious problem. One way to protect yourselves from sexual harassment and from charges of sexual harassment is to be scrupulously appropriate with all individuals you come in contact with.

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  
24-hour hotline: 1 (888) 238-1062  
http://www.ethicspoint.com

## COURSE SCHEDULE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 7-8</td>
<td>Students move into Barlow Center (BC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 10</td>
<td>Orientation meeting with all participants 8:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., BC Great Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 11</td>
<td>First day of internships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 14</td>
<td>Meeting and briefings--Perfecting communication skills—Lou Hampton, Hampton Group--9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in BC Great Room</td>
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**Jan. 17 (Mon) Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
<td>Meeting and briefings (similar format for remainder of semester)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 28</td>
<td>Meeting and briefings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>Meeting and briefings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Meeting and briefings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Meeting and briefings</td>
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**Feb. 21 (Mon) Presidents’ Day Holiday**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>Meeting and briefings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 4</td>
<td>Meeting and briefings</td>
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**Mar. 5 (Sat) Service Project Capital Area Foodbank 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 11</td>
<td>Meetings and briefings</td>
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</table>
Mar. 12  Excursion to Gettysburg and Harpers Ferry, Saturday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Mar. 18  Enrichment activity (no briefings)

Mar. 25-26 Excursion to Valley Forge & Philadelphia (Friday & Saturday 8 a.m.-10 p.m.)

Apr. 1  Meeting and briefings

Apr. 7  Students distribute intern evaluation forms to supervisors and are responsible for making sure forms are returned to faculty advisor by April 14. Notify faculty advisor if you are graduating in April

Apr. 8  Meeting and briefings

Apr. 14 Last day of internships

Apr. 15 Final meeting at BC. All forms, intern evaluations, and work for PLSC 391 to be submitted. Students graduating in April must also submit course work for PLSC 399

Apr. 15-16 Apartment inspections by faculty advisor for all students living at Barlow Center

Apr. 16 All students must vacate the Barlow Center

Apr. 28 Faculty advisor submits 391 and 399 grades for those graduating in April

Apr. 29 Last day to submit course work for PLSC 399 to faculty advisor

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES FOR 391 AND 399

January 28  First 399 paper (Personal Professional Development)

February 4  First 391 paper (Representative Government)

February 11  399 research proposal

February 25  Second 391 paper (Civic Participation and Career Choices)

March 18  Excursion paper (Gettysburg and Harpers Ferry)

March 25  Second 399 paper (Organizational Analysis and Critique of Agency)

April 1  Enrichment Day paper
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<tr>
<td>April 8</td>
<td>Final 391 paper (Effective Governance and Problem-Solving)</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>All forms, intern evaluations, and work for 391 to be submitted. Students graduating in April must also submit all course work for 399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>All students must vacate Barlow Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>Last day to submit 399 research paper and portfolio to instructor</td>
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