

GVPT376/377 – Capitol Hill Internship Program Fall 2010

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Class: Monday 6:30-9:15 pm, 0101 Tydings Hall

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Office Hours: Mondays 4:00–6:00 pm
Tuesdays 11:00 am–Noon

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Course Description

This course will examine the contemporary performance of the legislative process in American government. Its focus will be on the powers, organization, and rules and procedures of the United States Congress, with emphasis on constitutional responsibilities and institutional procedures.

The Capitol Hill Internship Program provides an opportunity for students to integrate hands-on experience with a theoretical perspective of the U.S. Congress. As such, this course requires introspective reflection as students apply the theoretical overlays of political science scholarship on Congress to their quotidian experiences as Hill staffers. Several outcomes are expected from the totality of the internship experience and seminar: (1) an integration of theory and practice; (2) pre-professional training; (3) work experience; (4) networking; and (5) exposure to public service.

You must register for the following courses to earn a total of nine GVPT credits for this internship:

- GVPT 377 section 0101 for 3 credits, **REG** grading method
- GVPT 376 section 0101 for 6 credits, **Pass/Fail** grading method (elective credits only).

Fieldwork

You are required to complete 18 to 20 hours per week for your Hill internship; however, your work schedule details are to be negotiated with your supervisor. It is beneficial to request a job description from your office; if you are unsure regarding your expectations, duties, or you have concerns for any reason, please contact me.

To make the most of your experience it is important to be cognizant of what is going on around you. Pay attention to staff interactions, agendas, and activities in which you may not be directly involved. Remember that what you observe may be confidential; you must honor that confidentiality.

Finally, this is a selective program into which you were chosen based on your academic success and personal qualifications. Please maintain a high level of professionalism at all times and

remember that your supervisor will be evaluating your performance. This evaluation will bear on your final grade.

The Seminar

Required Texts

- Dodd, Lawrence, and Bruce Oppenheimer. 2008. *Congress Reconsidered*. 9th Edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press. ISBN 0872896161
- Herrnson, Paul S. 2007. *Congressional Elections*. 5th Edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press. ISBN #9780872893382
- Black, Amy. 2006. *From Inspiration to Legislation: How an Idea Becomes a Bill*. New York: Pearson-Longman. ISBN #9780131107540

Additional readings will be available through the Blackboard course page (www.elms.umd.edu). Students should visit the website during the first week of class to be sure that they have no problems obtaining the on-line reading materials.

Seminar Requirements

20%: Participation: Leading class discussions (10%); Presentations of papers (10%)

20%: Journals

60%: Papers (3)

Participation and Class Preparedness (20%)

Students will have completed the assigned reading for each class and come prepared with thoughtful comments and questions that engage with the material in class discussion. The observations and reflections that you make from the readings and from your experience on Capitol Hill should serve as the basis for the ideas you present in the seminars. At the beginning of the semester, each student will sign up to help facilitate discussion during two of the classes. All students are responsible for completing the reading and participating even when you are not leading class.

Leading Class Discussions (10%)

The week before we will decide which article(s) you will discuss the following class. On that day you will begin class by critiquing the reading based on your internship experiences and other readings we've discussed in class. This is an opportunity to act like a social scientist and use your experiences as a "case study" for analyzing the scholarship on Congress. You should not simply summarize the readings, but provide criticism and praise for the reading's arguments and bring in questions for your peers to get a better understanding of how the readings reflect their internship experiences as well. This should last at least 10 minutes.

Presentations (10%)

Students will be asked to provide the class with a 10-minute presentation of each of their papers (see below). After the presentation students should be prepared to field questions from the class.

Journals (20%)

Your first journal entry will be a 3–4 page, typed, and double-spaced description of your office assignment. Please discuss your job responsibilities, who you work for, what policies are important to your congressman, and a brief historical biography of your congressman (how s/he came to office, length of time in office, competitiveness of campaigns). Finally, include a basic organizational chart of your office. This entry is due in-class **September 13th**.

Every week you will need to provide a detailed account of your internship activities and observations as related to the course readings. You will collate these reports and turn-in all of them twice during the semester. The first half will be due on **October 18th**. The second half will be due in lieu of a final exam on **December 13th** (turned in by noon in hard copy to my office). Your **weekly** account must be a 2–3 page, typed, and double-spaced description of your work experiences and how they relate to the class readings and to other students' experiences.

The journal entries will discuss policies your office is focusing on, bills your member of Congress (or organization) is lobbying for/against and why, the media response to those policies, and how the readings relate to such issues. As an employee, you must be informed and well-versed in the topics your office is focusing their resources on; this exercise is to help you discern information and discuss its potential ramifications on your organizations' decisions.

Papers (60%)

Three papers will be due throughout the duration of the course. Each is worth 20% of the student's final course grade.

Paper 1: Congressional Campaigns

Discuss your member's congressional campaign. What type of candidate is she/he (freshman, long-term incumbent, etc.)? What have their elections looked like in the past (close, landslide, etc.)? How do these factors affect their legislative style? Discuss the concept of home style, your member's home style, how that home style helps your member accomplish their re-elective goals, and how it influences the operations of Congress in general. How does the campaign interfere with or promote congressional activity? How does the member deal with the division between campaign and legislative office? Do you feel it is effective? Why are these barriers necessary (or are they)?

Paper 2: Congressional Committees

Discuss your member's committee assignments, how they contribute to your member's ability to accomplish their goals, and how the committee system influences Congress' ability to conduct its business. What are the flaws and benefits of the committee system that you have witnessed?

Paper 3: Public Policy

Using the policy process as a framework, discuss a public policy with which you became familiar through your internship. Present the history behind this policy, the politics involved in the policy process regarding the policy, the reasons different people support and/or oppose the legislation (fairly present both sides), and its chances of failure/success. What are the major obstacles this policy has to being successfully passed *and*, if passed, implemented?

Papers will be lowered by 10 points for every day they are late.

All papers, including the weekly journals, should be well written, proofread, and typed. Please use Times New Roman 12 pt. typeface, double spaced with 1" margins. Papers require a bibliography and in-text citations using APSA format.

Communication and Courtesy

As email is the primary source of communication for this course, please use my email address listed on the syllabus for all communication. All communication from me will be sent to your university email account. I welcome any and all emails regarding the class; however, please understand that I will not be able to respond immediately to all of your emails. My policy is that I will respond to your emails within 24 hours (excluding weekends). Also, when replying, please include the original email discourse and please sign your full name.

Although technology is a great tool, phones, iPods, blackberries, etc. are NOT welcome during class time. Texting during class will not be tolerated.

Disability Accommodations

Students with disabilities who are registered with Disability Support Services (301-314-7682) are encouraged to meet with the instructor early in the semester to arrange appropriate academic accommodations.

Religious Observance

Absence on a religious holiday will be considered an excused absence provided you inform me of your planned absence within the first week of the semester. For any assignment due on a religious holiday, you must make arrangements to submit the assignment before your absence.

Academic Integrity

Please make sure to visit the Student Honor Council website that details the University's Code of Academic Integrity (www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html#honor_statement).

Grading:

You will be graded on the following scale:

- A: 90-100
- B: 80-89
- C: 70-79
- D: 60-69
- F: 60 or below

Course Reading and Assignment Schedule¹

August 30 Structure of a Congressional Office and Legislative Setting

- Discussion of syllabus and class requirements
- Government Protocol and Office Etiquette

September 6 *LABOR DAY, NO CLASS*

PART 1: THE ELECTORAL CONNECTION

September 13 *FIRST JOURNAL ENTRY AND ORGANIZATION CHART DUE*

Congressional Representation: Theory and Practice

- Fenno, Richard. 1977. "U.S. House Members and their Constituencies." *American Political Science Review* Vol. 71, No. 3 (Sept.): 883–917.
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00030554%28197709%2971%3A3%3C883%3AUHMITC%3E2.0.CO%3B2-1>
- Kingdon, John W. *Congressmen's Voting Decisions*, Chapter 2
- Eulau, Henz, and Paul D. Karps. 1977. "The Puzzle of Representation: Specifying Components of Responsiveness" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* Vol. 2, No. 3 (Aug.): 233–54. www.jstor.org/stable/439340

September 20 Congressional Elections: Candidates and Campaigns

- Herrnson, Chapters 1–3
- Dodd and Oppenheimer, Chapters 4–6

September 27 Congressional Elections: Strategies, Issues, and Representation

- Herrnson, Chapters 5, 7–8
- Jacobson, Gary C. 1996. "The 1994 House Elections in Perspective." *Political Science Quarterly* 111 (2): 203–23. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/2152319.pdf>
- Lee, Frances. *Sizing up the Senate*, Chapter 4

¹ I reserve the right to change this schedule at any time.

PART 2: CONGRESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS

October 4 PAPER 1 DUE

Congressional Structure and Development

- Davidson, Oleszek, and Lee, *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 2
- Dodd and Oppenheimer, Chapters 1–2
- Polsby, Nelson. 1968. “The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives.” *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 62, No. 1 (March): 144–68.
<http://links.jstor.org/stable/1953331?seq=25>

October 11 **Political Parties: Congress, Parties, and Leadership**

- Herrnson, Chapter 4
- Dodd and Oppenheimer, Chapters 7–8

October 18 JOURNAL ENTRIES PART 1 DUE

Congressional Committees

- Dodd and Oppenheimer, Chapter 10
- Hall, Richard L. 1987. “Participation and Purpose in Committee Decision Making.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 81, No. 1 (Mar.): 105–28.
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00030554%28198703%2981%3A1%3C105%3APAPICD%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9>
- Fenno, *Congressman in Committees*, Chapter 1

October 25 **Interest Groups**

- Herrnson, Chapter 6
- Davidson, Oleszek, and Lee, *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 13
- Hall, Richard L., and Alan V. Deardorff. 2006. “Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 100, No. 1 (Feb.): 69–84.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/27644332>

November 1 **Networking in Congress**

- Mathews, Chris. *Hardball: How Politics is Played Told by One Who Knows the Game*, Chapters 1–2
- Salisbury et al. 1987. “Who Works with Whom? Interest Group Alliances and Opposition.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 81, No. 4 (Dec.): 1217–34.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1962586>
- Black, Chapter 4–5

November 8 Special Issues in the Senate

- Dodd and Oppenheimer, Chapter 10
- Lee, *Sizing Up the Senate*, Chapter 3
- Lee, Frances. 2004. "Bicameral Institutions and Geographic Politics: Allocating Federal Funds in the House and Senate." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* Vol. 29, No. 2 (2004): 185–213. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3598630>

PART 3: CONGRESS AND THE POLICYMAKING PROCESS

November 15 PAPER 2 DUE

Congress and the Policy Process

- Black, Chapters 1–3
- Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, Chapter 5
- Dodd and Oppenheimer, Chapter 15

November 22 Influences on Public Policy in Congress

- Herrnson, Chapter 10
- Black, Chapters, 6–9
- Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, Chapter 6

November 29 Other Actors: The President and the Courts

- Davidson, Oleszek, and Lee, *Congress and Its Members*, Chapters 10, 12
- Dodd and Oppenheimer, Chapters 11, 16

December 6 PAPER 3 DUE

- In-class paper presentations
- Dodd and Oppenheimer, Chapter 18

December 13 JOURNAL ENTRIES PART II DUE at NOON