

The Frankfort General Assembly Internship Program Syllabus

POLS 510

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Frankfort Legislative Internship Program offers students the opportunity to experience the political office environment in the state of Kentucky. Government interns work an average of 16 hours per week during the legislative session in the office of a state house member or senator. Intern responsibilities may vary, depending on the intern's professional experience and interests as well as the needs of the office. This internship program fosters positive relations between the university and the state legislatures, and students obtain skills, experiences and contacts that will enhance their employment prospects and options after graduation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the internship program include: providing students the opportunity to gain first-hand experience working in government and politics, generating insight into the realities of the political process and how it relates to traditional theoretical perspectives of political science, and educating students about the possibilities of public service and politics as a career choice.

SUGGESTED READING

General Reading:

Reeher, Grant and Mack Mariani. 2002. *The Insider's Guide to Political Internships: What to do Once You're in the Door*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Kentucky Political History:

Harrison, Lowell H. and James C. Klotter *A New History of Kentucky*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Regular attendance to the office of your assigned legislator on Tuesdays and Thursdays and to all scheduled on and off campus meetings to be discussed at orientation. The student coordinator will be checking your attendance each morning.
- Maintain a journal. The journal is a record of your internship experience. Include details such as what sort of projects you worked on, meetings or events that you attended, what type of research you did, etc. The journal must be typed – no exceptions. Submit your journal entries for the each week by Sunday of the week covered.
- Track the progress of two bills throughout your tenure in Frankfort. One will be a bill of your choice and the other will be assigned. I will notify you of the bill I

select at the Frankfort orientation. You can track the bills using the Legislative Record available in paper format and online:

<http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/09RS/prefiled.htm>).

You will need to attend committee hearings for each bill whenever possible and inform yourself of the nature of the bill using any resource available. The written assignment should include several sections under the following headers: 1) Basic Bill Description, 2) Committee Assignment and Action, and 3) Legislative Action. For the first section, include a basic description of the bill and its sponsors. For the second, list the committee/sub-committee assignment and provide a description of what transpires at the hearings. And finally, provide a description of the result of the votes by chamber (if it makes it to the floor). Provide the preceding for both bills creating a separate set of headers for each. THIS ASSIGNMENT IS DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF THE SEMESTER APRIL 22. PLEASE EMAIL IT TO ME.

COURSE EVALUATION

| | <u>Percentage of Grade</u> |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Journal | 30% |
| Bill Tracking | 30% |
| Office Evaluation | 30% |
| Attendance | 10% |

Course grades will be based on the following scale:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 90-100 % | A |
| 80-89 % | B |
| 70-79 % | C |
| 60-69 % | D |
| Below 60% | F |

WORKING AT THE INTERNSHIP

Always show up on time for your work and act professionally. Do not ask to leave early except in cases of emergency. If you do not know how to do something asked of you, get help from another employee. Sometimes you may get stuck doing something boring, but try to make the best of it. The more interest you show in the office and what it does, the more likely you will be to receive more interesting work. Remember: you are representing the University when you are in an internship. If you fail to do a good job, you may cost the University a contact that would have otherwise provided opportunities for students in the future. On the flip side, doing a good job enhances the reputation of the University and can provide you with a good reference and enhanced job opportunities in the future. Be aware that ethical problems can arise in the workplace. Be sure to report any incidents of unethical behavior immediately to your instructor, who will take appropriate measures.