

Thanks for your interest in PSC 317, Local Political Internship. Please thoroughly review the information that appears below—a shortened version of the syllabus and a list of FAQ. Please pay particular attention to the requirements regarding attendance, and the fact that you may not get your top choice of internship. These two issues have tripped up students in the past. If you are still interested and can meet these expectations, let me know and I will send you a unique permission number for the course.

Thanks, Grant Reeher

## **Frequently Asked Questions Sheet for Prospective PSC 317 (Local Political Internship) Students**

- 1) *How do I get into the course?* You can simply register. You no longer need a permission number.
- 2) *Does the course count toward the major?* Yes. It counts as an upper division political science elective.
- 3) *Do I need to arrange my own internship beforehand?* No. You are not expected to arrange an internship now. You will do this at the beginning of the course, with the aid of the instructor. The course has ongoing relationships with many political and law-related offices in the area, including Congress, the state legislature, law enforcement, political consulting groups, and lobbying groups.
- 4) *What are the class meeting and reading requirements for the course?* You must attend class—which is generally held once a week, on Monday, at the normal class meeting time of 11:40-12:35. Reading requirements are light and are mostly generated through the internship experience.
- 5) *Can I go outside of the list of placements in the syllabus in pursuit of a different internship?* Yes. You may arrange before next semester an internship on your own with an office not on the course list. However, if you wish to do this, you must consult the instructor prior to leaving for the winter break or the summer, depending on the semester.
- 6) *Can I see the placement list now and begin to find the internship?* No, most offices have asked that they not be contacted before the beginning of the semester. However: If you are interested in working at the State Attorney General's office, you should make prior contact. See the instructor about this.
- 7) *I really want one particular internship placement that I know is on the list—can I approach that office now?* Do not approach the offices listed in the syllabus about an internship prior to our first class meeting. Except for the State Attorney General, they have specifically asked me not to send students to them before the semester starts.
- 8) *I only want one particular placement. Should I take the course?* If that is the case, this is probably not your course. You need to be willing to be flexible, as no particular placement can be guaranteed. But there are many excellent placements on the list.
- 9) *Do I need to have a car to take this course?* No. Many of the internships are within walking distance, or easily reachable via public transportation.
- 10) Any additional questions about the course can probably be answered by reading a current copy of the 317 syllabus, which you received with this FAQ sheet. You can also consult the instructor.

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DISREGARD SPECIFIC DATES ON WHAT FOLLOWS—FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY.

## PSC 317 | Political Science Local Internship

01/12/18

<b>Meets:</b>	Monday, Wednesday, Friday   11:40am – 12:35pm
<b>Location:</b>	018 Eggers Hall   Maxwell School
<b>Instructor:</b>	Grant Reeher
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesday 10-12, and by appointment
<b>Office Location:</b>	313 Eggers Hall   Maxwell School
<b>Contact:</b>	443-5046   <a href="mailto:gdreeher@maxwell.syr.edu">gdreeher@maxwell.syr.edu</a>

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### Course Intent and Structure

This is an internship-based course that aims to provide you with some real-world political experience, and an opportunity to reflect on that experience in a more academic fashion.

The bulk of your time will be spent working in your internship placement. You will be in contact with your classmates and me about your experiences. You will also write about your experiences.

Our class meetings will take place mostly on Mondays (but note that we may need to schedule a meeting or two on Wednesday/Friday - at the beginning of the semester, and depending on the schedules of the guest speakers). We will meet several times to take care of administrative issues and to discuss ways to get the most out of your internship. We will then hear from various political actors in the local area about their own careers and experiences, and at other times, we will discuss your experiences and issues related to your professional development.

### Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, you should have a better understanding of:

- Real-world politics, law, or non-profit activity, through direct experiences in a facet of an office or organization's work.
- The connections (or disconnections) between some of your course-based learning and your experiential learning.
- The ways in which political, legal, or non-profit organizations heroically meet and tragically fall short of their normative goals.
- Professional workplace skills, habits, and expectations that will help you transition from college to professional life.

### Class Attendance Policy

You **must** attend all meetings and be prepared to ask questions of our guests. Before each class, I will place at the front of the classroom a sign-in sheet for students to sign-in. ***I will collect the sheet before class begins.***

*It is your obligation to keep track of class meeting times.* Missing classes will result in a lower course grade.

*It is equally important that you arrive to class on time,* as we will have many visits from outside speakers. ***Arriving late for class will be counted as an absence.***

Absences not approved in advance (approved, not simply notified), or verified as legitimate by documentation from the university health services, will be treated as unexcused.

**Importance of email:** Because of the number of class meetings with guest speakers, whose schedules are subject to change, the weekly activities and topics listed in the calendar are also subject to change. I will use email via Blackboard to notify you of these changes. I may also use email to notify you of other changes or important matters relating to the course.

### **Early Notification of Problems in the Internship**

*If you are having a problem with your internship, you should speak to me as soon as possible.* In the past, students who have not had pleasant and useful experiences at the beginning have almost always been able to improve their situation by seeing me early in the semester.

### **Course Readings**

There are three recommended books, plus some additional readings you will assign to yourself (details on the latter will follow in the class meetings). I may also assign some short readings about our guest speakers. The three books are available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, etc.

**Recommended especially for interns in legislative and government internships:** The Insider's Guide to Political Internships: What to Do Once You're in the Door, edited by G. Reeher and M. Mariani. A guide to political internships, which should prove useful to you in this internship, as well as others you might pursue in the future. Contains chapters on various kinds of internships and overviews of their office environments, and general chapters on writing and research in the political environment. Also includes conversations with former interns, some from this very course.

**Recommended especially for interns in state and local political offices:**

First Person Political: Legislative Life and the Meaning of Public Service, by G. Reeher. A more personal look at the political lives and experiences of elected officials. Based on long interviews, surveys, and personal observation.

**Recommended especially for interns in Congressional and U. S. Senate offices:**

The Congressional Experience, by D. Price. A political scientist who became a member of Congress chronicles his own career and experience. A widely known and highly regarded first-person account. Somewhat dated in terms of campaign technology but still insightful.

You might also find interesting a series of short first-person profiles of occupations related to those in this course at a "A Day in the Life." You can find these at [www.vault.com](http://www.vault.com). Included are legislative correspondents, litigation counsels, policy analysts, prosecutors, and lobbyists. The site also has job-seeking advice.

### **Requirements and Grades**

The internship is for 3 hours of graded, academic credit in the form of an upper-division PSC elective course. To fulfill the requirements of the course, you must:

- ✓ Work 8-9 hours a week, or about 110 hours during the semester. You should make sure that the individual who will be your supervisor is clear, so that individual can verify the number of hours you work. Make sure the supervisor knows the number of hours you are expected to work.
- ✓ Attend scheduled class meetings, and complete assigned readings.
- ✓ Write a two-page summary at mid-semester which summarizes your experience up to that point; sets forward a question for yourself, which you will be investigating during the placement and answering in the final paper; and reports on the status of your planned interview with your principal or supervisor. See the assignment sheet below and on Blackboard. **Due Monday, March 19.**

- ✓ In the second half of the semester, interview either your supervisor or your principal (i.e., the elected official in your office) about their political careers, the question you identified for exploration in your mid-term paper, and about the single most important thing they've read or seen (it might be a movie for instance) that has helped inform their political careers. Then read or view whatever that piece is and include a discussion of it in your final paper.
- ✓ Write a longer paper (approximately 7-10 pages) at the end of the semester relating what you learned from the experience, and also what you learned about the question that you posed for yourself in your two-page mid-term essay. Also describe and summarize your interview with your supervisor, and the reading, viewing, or experience, that came out of it, and provide your assessment of your internship placement. Detailed assignment to follow. **Due Tuesday, May 1.**

### **An Important Note on Academic Integrity**

All the university rules regarding academic integrity apply in this course (see below). **They also extend to being honest with me and your work supervisor about your work and attendance.** Any intentional misrepresentation will result in a failing grade and removal from the internship. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic integrity, please see me.

“Syracuse University’s academic integrity policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy defines our expectations for academic honesty and holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit. Students should understand that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university-wide academic integrity expectations. The university policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same written work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. The presumptive penalty for a first instance of academic dishonesty by an undergraduate student is course failure, accompanied by a transcript notation indicating that the failure resulted from a violation of academic integrity policy. The presumptive penalty for a first instance of academic dishonesty by a graduate student is suspension or expulsion. SU students are required to read an online summary of the university’s academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>.”

### **Disability Statement**

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Service (ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

### **Religious Observances**

According to the Syracuse University Policy on Religious Observances, all students have a right to observe their faith traditions. If you require accommodations that are not already accounted for in the academic calendar, please let me know.

### **Pursuing the Internship Placements**

The list in this syllabus identifies the internship opportunities. There may be some additional possibilities I will supply to you during the first week or so of the course. Review the list and select the ones that interest you. Contact the people indicated, tell them that you are associated with the internship program sponsored by the Department of Political Science at Syracuse University (you may also want to mention my name), and that you are interested in an intern position for the semester. Ask to schedule an interview. After conducting interviews

with offices, decide which one interests you the most, and then inform me and all the other offices involved of your decision. You should plan to start as soon as you can work it out with your supervisor. Note that some offices require a slightly different procedure—submitting a resume, a plan for your work, etc.—in the selection process. See the individual descriptions.

**You must have your internship arranged by Wednesday, February 7 (hopefully earlier). Send me an email by this date indicating where you will be working.**

**Course and Class Meeting Calendar** – All listed dates are **class meetings** unless noted in description

- 1/17 (Wed): Distribution of internship opportunities and course overview.
- DEADLINE:** Students interested in an internship in the DA’s office **MUST** be in attendance and submit an essay the following day. Essay instruction sheet will be handed-out in class.
- 1/19 (Fri): Continue with course introduction; student questions; general discussion of internships and political learning.
- SUGGESTED READING: The Insider’s Guide, Ch. 1, 2, 15, and your choice of one of Ch. 3-8. Students interning in legislative offices should subsequently read Ch. 3, 4, 7, and 9-14.
- 1/22 (Mon): No Class – pursue internship placements.
- 1/29 (Mon): Review of progress in obtaining interviews and placements; sharing of placement information.
- 2/5 (Mon): Professional development seminar: Building a resume.
- 2/7 (Wed): No class, but an **EMAIL DEADLINE** – students must have arranged placements; send me an email stating your placement.
- 2/12 (Mon): Conversation with political figure, TBA.
- 2/19 (Mon): Review of early experiences in the internships, including concerns.
- 2/26 (Mon): No class.
- 3/5 (Mon): Professional development seminar: How to be interviewed.
- 3/12 (Mon): No Class—Spring Break.
- 3/19 (Mon): Review of activities in internships; discussion of any problems. Distribution of mid-semester evaluation forms to give to supervisor.
- DUE:** Students must submit a two-page paper containing: 1) a summary of activities and an assessment of their experience thus far; 2) a question for examination during the internship; 3) a report on the status of their planned interview with their principal or supervisor. See attached assignment sheet.
- 3/26 (Mon): Conversation with political figure, TBA.
- 4/2 (Mon): Conversation with political figure, TBA.
- 4/9 (Mon): Professional development seminar: How to network and make contacts; the “power of weak ties”.
- ASSIGNMENT:** *Students should have completed their supervisor interview by this date. Send me an email stating what suggested reading or viewing, based on the interview conversation, you will be doing.*

- 4/16 (Mon): Conversation with political figure, TBA.
- 4/23 (Mon): Final class meeting. Distribution of final requirements for internship and final evaluation forms for supervisors.
- 5/1 (Tues): No Class - **Final paper due** – drop off hard copy to Kelley Coleman, 306K Eggers Hall, Maxwell School by 4:00 PM ([kgcolema@syr.edu](mailto:kgcolema@syr.edu) or 443-9707 – contact for questions).

### **Mid-Term Paper Assignment**

**Due: March 19, 2018 (Monday) in class**

**In two pages, provide three things:**

- 1) The main body of your essay should simply summarize your experiences to date, and evaluate how the internship is progressing.
- 2) In addition, develop a question about politics or something substantively related to the office in which you work, to which you will pay attention during the remaining time of your internship. Between now and when you write up your final report in December, you should be thinking about this question, and making observations that bear on it.

For this mid-term report, state your question in a paragraph or two, explain why you have chosen it, and describe how you will go about figuring out answers or insights regarding it.

Perhaps there is something about politics that perplexes you, which has come up in your classes, and upon which your internship might be able to shed some light. Perhaps there is something about the office you are working in that suggests a question about politics that invites further examination. There are many other possible versions of this process of question formation. ***DO NOT SIMPLY ASK, “DO I WANT TO BE A LAWYER/POLITICIAN/ETC.?” YOUR QUESTION MUST GO BEYOND A FOCUS ON YOUR OWN LIFE OR A NARROW FOCUS ON YOUR OFFICE.***

At the same time, do not try to answer something too big, such as, “Does politics work for the average citizen?” Aim for something substantial and important, but something you can gain some insight on based on your work experience and through conversations with the people who work in your office.

For example: If you’re working in a legislative office, you might ask how the individual, retail-level problems that constituents ask your office for assistance with relate to the legislator’s broader policy priorities, and the legislation that he or she sponsors or actively works to pass. Such a question taps into the broader question of the relationship between constituency work and legislative work, and leads to even bigger questions about the nature of political representation. But your version of it is something you can grapple with in the internship experience.

Chapter 2 of *The Insider’s Guide* explains well what I am after in this question assignment, and how you might think about and investigate it. It should help you to frame a good question.

In your final essay, due at the end of the semester, you will reflect on what you have learned about this question that you have posed to yourself.

- 3) Also, briefly report on the status of your arranged interview with your supervisor or the principal in the office. We will have discussed this interview and its purpose in class well before March 19.

## Application for an Internship with the DA's Office

(to be emailed to me by 4 p.m. Thursday Jan. 18, 2018—note that I will *not* accept late applications)

In two paragraphs, explain why you want to intern at the DA's office, and what topic of interest about the law you'd want to develop during your time there.

Include at the end of the essay the day *and time* windows that you would be available to work at the office.

**NOTE WELL:** In order to be eligible for this internship, you must be available to work at least one morning *other than a Friday*. This day cannot be Monday, as the class meets then. *There are no exceptions to this.*

You must also be available Friday Feb. 9 at 11:30 am for an orientation, and more generally on Fridays at 11:30 am for a seminar series within the DA's office.

If you are selected for an internship and decide to accept, please contact Barry Weiss ASAP at the email I will provide you, in order to arrange your orientation. If you are deciding between the DA's office and another office, you can speak with me, and I may direct you to speak with Mr. Weiss as well.

Interns should start work no later than the week of Feb. 5.