

Field Experience in Political Science

PS 4312: Spring 2025

Professor: Jessica Velasco
Office Hours: M (2-5 p.m.), Thur (1-3 p.m.), and by appointment
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Required Texts: There are no required texts for this course.

Course description: Students who enroll in this course will complete 120 hours (3 hours of credit) or 240 hours (6 hours of credit) in an internship in a government office, legal office, non-profit organization, or related area.

Course Learning Outcomes:

The internship program in political science is designed to give the student an opportunity to learn more about government while working in a supervised setting.

Program Learning Outcomes (Political Science):

The graduating student will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work and oral communication.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication.

Marketable skills for Political Science:

- Students can effectively communicate ideas and information verbally, visually, and in writing
- Students can distinguish between credible/relevant information and information lacking credibility/relevance
- Students can identify critical and common institutions of political decision-making and policymaking across different nation-state settings
- Students can engage with social and political problems and use critical thinking to develop logical solutions

GRADING, EXPECTATIONS, & ASSIGNMENTS:

The following are requirements for the intern:

The student must work in the office a minimum of ten hours per week:

The intern must turn in paper at the end of the internship. The evaluation must include the following sections:

I. A setting analysis. The setting analysis will include a description of the work environment and agency/institution (if applicable). It should include demographics of the community including a statement on the economic environment of the community (average incomes, business statistics), a statement on the social environment of the community (major groups in the community such as religious, ethnic / racial, civic, educational), and a statement of the political culture of the community.

II. An organizational analysis. The organizational analysis should include a statement on the governing structure of the agency and a statement of the administrative structure of the agency. Your office should be clearly identified within the organization. In addition to your statement on the formal organizational structure, you should note your observations about the informal structure of the organization. If working in the office of a political leader, an analysis of the leader's leadership style, typical schedule, and major tasks/duties should be included. Please also include a description of areas the leader was especially strong.

III. Overall assessment of what was learned: Please provide an in-depth analysis of what was learned as it relates to government, working in government, being in particular positions in government, and the power dynamics of the particular environment the internship was conducted in.

IV. Suggestions for future students who want to do similar internships or the same one: Please provide tips for future students that will help them maximize the experience and/or get an internship. Include a description of anything you wish you would have done differently.

The intern will meet with the faculty advisor and other interns during the semester, the final session to be during final exam week, to discuss their experiences.

The grade for the internship will be determined by the supervising faculty member in consultation with the supervising agency official.

COURSE POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Doing and/or taking credit for someone else's work, presenting the ideas and work of others as your own, and/or not citing your sources when you utilize the ideas of others are all violations of academic integrity. It is your responsibility to read and understand the university's policy on academic dishonesty in the SRSU Student Handbook, as all violations will be taken seriously and handled through the university judicial process. **In addition, please note that I will be using plagiarism detection software for all written assignments.**

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: It is Sul Ross State University policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodations because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact the ADA coordinator for Program Accessibility located in FH 112 or call 837-8691.