

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

**PUBLIC
SERVICE
INTERNSHIP**

POLS 499

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Introduction:

The undergraduate Public Service Internship is primarily designed to provide students with an opportunity to observe and analyze public or non-profit organizations will in the course of performing a traditional political science internship. It also provides the capstone course by which all political science students complete their experience in their major field of study. Students are expected to: 1) Observe (from the vantage point of close proximity to top level personnel) the administrative and political processes of the organization; 2) perform assigned tasks in the agency; and 3) analyze and report on the administrative and or political activities observed during the intern experience.

The agency is not expected to pay the student nor is the supervisor expected to "make" work for the intern. The internship experience should be more than doing low-level tasks in an agency followed by a final report at the end of the semester. Rather, the intern should be regarded as a "manager-trainee" or a "public administration analyst." The internship experience should help students develop their abilities to observe, analyze, and communicate.

Outline of the program:

The Public Service Internship is offered every semester for 3 hours credit. When students register for the internship, they will be asked to designate a preference of agencies which best suit their career goals. The Internship Director will confer with agency administrators to arrange the placement of the student intern. During the first week of the semester the interns and intern director will meet in a Tuesday Thursday class format. These two 1.5 hour class meetings will provide an orientation for the interns. The orientation curriculum will review the internship goals, expected behavior of interns, and internship academic requirements. Agency administrators may be invited to participate in class discussion on the skills, knowledge, abilities, and qualities needed for success in the public sector. Simulations or case studies may be used to prepare students for the intern experience.

During the remainder of the semester the intern will be working in close contact with the agency supervisor. The intern will be expected to carry out assigned tasks, observe administrative practices, examine agency files and publications, attend meetings and hearings, etc. The intern is expected to dress in a manner that conforms to the expectations of the agency administrator.

The intern will work twelve hours per week on a schedule agreed to by the intern and agency supervisor.

Before the internship begins, students will prepare and submit a resume to the instructor, which will aid them in reflecting upon their academic accomplishments and better prepare them for applying for graduate

studies and employment. If needed, as determined by the instructor, the resume will be revised by semester end based on the student's experience to date and the internship experience.

On the last Tuesday and Thursday of the semester, the interns will meet back in seminar on the campus. These two sessions will be used to present final reports.

Academic Requirements:

(1) Headquarters/Field Office Simulation

During the semester each student will participate in a headquarters/field office simulation which is the key communications link between the intern director and the intern. The director's mail box becomes the in-box and out-boxes in this simulation. The director is the "headquarters administrator," and the student is the "field office administrator." Each Friday, students must pick up his/ her memo from the director. The director's memo is in an envelope in the out-box. On the same day, the student's memo which is a response to the director's memo a week ago is deposited in the in-box. When a student's memo is inadequate, unclear, or has many errors, the director returns the memo to the student with the errors marked and other constructive criticism. The student is expected to make appropriate corrections within a week.

Although the assignments written in memo form will vary from year to year as the content of the public administration course changes, here are examples of the kinds of assignments that the director can make through the headquarter/field simulation:

- Week 4 Memo requests information about the agency, such as name of the immediate agency supervisor, telephone number, office number, address, etc. The intern is also asked to draw an organization chart of the agency with an indication of location of the intern's agency supervisor on the organization chart.
- Week 5 Memo requests a copy of the law or ordinance which established the agency and identification of the goals and purposes of the agency.
- Week 6 Memo requests information on the agency's services and/or regulatory activities.
- Week 7 Memo requests a copy of the agency's current budget with a memo from the intern who identifies key concerns of agency administrators as they prepare next year's fiscal budget and strategies for increasing allocations.
- Week 8 Memo requests a short analysis of the agency's budget process in light of Aaron Wildavsky, "Budgeting as a Political Process," Public Administration: Concepts and Cases, Richard J. Stillman II, Editor, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988.
- Week 9 Memo requests a short analysis of the influence of specialization on the agency's public

administrators and clientele groups. The memo should be based on Hugh Heclo's "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment" and Frederick Mosher's "The Professions State," Public Administration: Concepts and Cases Richard J. Stillman II, Editor, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988.

Week 10 Memo requests a brief analysis of agency personnel practices based on Abraham H. Maslow's "Theory of Human Motivation," Classes of Organizational Behavior, Walter E. Natemeyer, Editor, Oak Park, Illinois: Moore Publishing Company, Inc., 1978.

Week 11 Memo requests a brief analysis of the intern's supervisor's management style in light in Douglas McGregor's "The Human Side of Enterprise," Public Administration: Concepts and Cases, Richard J. Stillman II, Editor, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988.

Week 12 Memo requests a brief analysis on the intern's power structure in light of Norton Long's "Power and Administration," Public Administration: Concepts and Cases Richard J. Stillman II, Editor, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988.

Week 13 Memo requests a brief critique of the upper-level administrators' leadership effectiveness. The examination should be based on Leonard R. Sayles's Leadership: What Effective Managers Really Do... and How They Do It.

Week 14 Memo requests a brief examination of the agency's communication based on "The Communication Process," by Herbert Simon, Donald Smithburg, and Victor Thompson, Public Administration: Concepts and Cases, Richard J. Stillman II, Editor, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988.

Week 15 Memo requests the intern's letter of application for a position within the intern's agency. Attached to the intern's letter should be a copy of the student's resume which can be submitted at a later time when he/she enters the / job market or enters graduate school.

The headquarters/field simulation serves many purposes: 1) Short memos from the interns help assess their ability to think in terms of management responsibilities and outcomes; 2) After the first few weeks of getting acquainted with the work routine and structure of the agency, students have the opportunity to apply specific theories and analyze what they see and hear with immediate feedback from the director; 3) Undergraduate students should develop an ability to understand written directions; 4) They must learn to write effectively and clearly when they respond with brief memos. Otherwise, their memos are returned for corrections; 5) Rather than wait until the end of the semester when they turn in their final report, students receive immediate feedback when their written communication has grammatical, typographical, and spelling errors, and 6) the weekly memo system measures the student's work pattern and ability to meet systematic deadlines.

(2) Final Report

On the last Tuesday and Thursday of the semester the interns will meet in seminar on the campus. Each intern will present a 10 to 15 minute oral report which summarizes a longer typed intern report.

In this intern report, students will present for the reader three components. First is an analysis of administrative and or political activities observed during the internship. Second, students will reflect and write at length (at least 500 words) on the subject of their faith and vocation as impacted by their internship experience. Third, the intern report has a traditional research component. Students will have earlier in the semester have their proposed topic related to their internship approved by the instructor, and the intern

report will include at least 2,000 words (approximately 7 pages)(and worth a minimum of 10% of the assessment for the course) on this topic. This provides an opportunity for a summative assessment of the student's information literacy skills, including the proper citation of a minimum of 5 appropriate sources that support their research. Options to satisfy this portion of the intern report include, but are not limited to, a traditional research paper or an evaluative/reflective essay.

(3) Submit a performance evaluation completed by the sponsoring supervisor.

Course Grade:

The academic grade for each student will be based upon (1) the agency administrator's evaluation of the intern's participation and (2) the director's evaluation of the intern's weekly memoranda, oral report, final written report (including within such the research paper assignment), and the resume assignment.

Of Note:

- Internship credit **MAY NOT** be granted retroactively for work already completed. You must be registered for the internship course while working as an intern to receive internship credit.
- Only three hours of internship credit can be earned each semester and no more than six hours can be applied to the political science degree plan.

THE INTERN SPONSOR'S ROLE

1. Ensuring that the student intern gains knowledge that is equal to or greater than the knowledge gained in a traditional classroom setting.
2. Orienting the intern to the agency's structure and operations.
3. Orienting the intern to the agency's policies and procedures regarding appropriate dress, office hours, and applicable leave policies. Introducing the intern to the appropriate professional and clerical staff.
4. Providing a formal training program as required for the intern to complete assignments.
5. Providing the intern with adequate resources necessary to accomplish job objectives.
6. Orienting the intern to the agency's policies and procedures.
7. Affording the intern the opportunity to identify with the supervisor as a professional staff person by jointly participating in office interviews, meetings, conferences, projects, and other personnel and management functions.
8. Assigning and supervising the completion of tasks and responsibilities that are consistent with the intern's role in the agency. .
9. Consulting the faculty coordinator in the event that the supervisor becomes aware of personal, communication or other problems that are disrupting the intern's learning and performance.
10. Providing regularly scheduled supervisory conferences with the interns.
11. Participating in joint and individual conferences as needed with the intern and faculty coordinator regarding the student intern's performance.
12. The intern sponsor provides an evaluation of the student at the conclusion of the internship.

THE UNIVERSITY'S ROLE

1. Identify potential sponsors and define projects or job opportunities.
2. Screen internship candidates.
3. Conduct individual pre-placement orientations and introduce the intern to the nature and purpose of the internship.
4. Introduce and orient the intern supervisor to the purpose and objectives of the internship.
5. Consult with the supervisor and intern on a regular basis regarding the intern's performance.
6. Coordinate activities between university and employer.
7. Assume responsibility for the removal of an intern from the internship setting whenever necessary.
8. Assist employers in evaluating work of interns.

THE STUDENT'S ROLE

1. Adhering to agency's work hours, policies, procedures, and rules governing professional staff behavior.
2. Adhering to agency policies governing the observation of confidentiality and the handling of confidential information.
3. Assuming personal and professional responsibilities for his/her actions and activities.
4. Maintaining professional relationships with agency employees, clients, and so forth.
5. Utilizing a courteous, enthusiastic, open-minded, critical approach to policies and procedures within the profession.
6. Relating and applying knowledge acquired in the academic setting to the agency setting.
7. Developing self-awareness with regard to attitudes, values, and behavior patterns that influence work.
8. Utilizing conferences and other opportunities of learning afforded within the agency.
9. Being consistent and punctual in the submission of all work assignments to the supervisor and faculty coordinator.
10. Providing the faculty coordinator with periodic progress reports.
11. Keeping a weekly journal comprising a chronological list of all work experience gained in the internship.
12. Writing a paper demonstrating the knowledge gained in the internship.

Internship Contact Information

Internship Director:

David Dillman

Department of Political Science
Administration Building Room 220
ACU Box 29143
Abilene, TX 79699
(325) 674-2207

Abilene Christian University

Public Service Internship

On-Site Supervisor's Evaluation

EVALUATOR'S NAME _____

INTERN NAME. _____ DATE _____

Ratings:

Directions:

1. Unsatisfactory
2. Satisfactory
3. Very Good
4. Excellent
5. Superior
- N/A Not Applicable or
Unable to Assess

Please circle the rating which best describes the performance or characteristics of the student. Additional academic requirements, site visits, and other contacts will be assessed by the Internship Director in determining an assigned grade.
Thank you.

JOB PERFORMANCE SKILLS (circle)

1	2	3	4	5	N/A	QUALITY OF WORK: Assignments are complete, accurate, and orderly
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	TECHNICAL ABILITY: Possesses the required entry-level abilities to complete assignments.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	JUDGEMENT IN DECISION MAKING: Exhibits discretion and balance in making decisions.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Demonstrates appropriate written and oral communication skills and professional vocabulary.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	TEAM MEMBER: Works well with and for others.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	TIME MANAGEMENT: Is able to schedule time efficiently and uses time effectively in accomplishing goals.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	DEPENDABILITY: Reliable, timely, and productive in meeting assignments.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	CREATIVITY: Imaginative and resourceful in problem solving.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	INITIATIVE: Seeks new responsibilities, tasks, or skills' does not hesitate to ask questions.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	SELF-CONFIDENCE: Poised and sincere in representing their strengths and limitations.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	PROFESSIONAL INTEREST: Seeks information from professionals, reads journals/articles, or participates in activities enhancing career development.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP: Attentive, cooperative, and responsive to supervision.

1	2	3	4	5	N/A	ACCEPTANCE OF CRITICISM: Receives and uses suggestions to bring about positive changes in work habits.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	PUNCTUALITY: Responsible for time demands.
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	PERSONAL APPEARANCE: Is consistent with the image of the organization.

OPEN COMMENTS: (Optional) In the following space, please indicate any additional comments or suggestions you have for the student.

NOTES TO THE COLLEGE: (Optional) Do you have any informational needs or comments for the faculty coordinator regarding the student or internship program?

RECOMMENDED NUMBER GRADE:

100 (A+), 95 (A), 90 (A-), 89 (B+), 85 (B), 80 (B-), 79 (C+), 75 (C), 70 (C-), 69 (D+), 65 (D), 60 (D-), F

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR_____DATE_____

Please complete this evaluation form and discuss it with your intern. The intern is required to include this evaluation form in their end of course report.