

Brigham Young University
Political Science 391: Advanced Seminar on Current Issues
Fall 2009

Instructor: Jay Goodliffe
Email: goodliffe@byu.edu
Phone (in this order): 202 448 3347 (office)

Office hours: by appointment

Course Objectives

This course is required of all participants in the Washington Seminar. It is designed to help you understand how Washington D.C. works. There are two components to your internship—your personal experience in your internship and information from experts, both in person and in print, about major national and international concerns. This class addresses the latter. The overarching goal of the course is to learn how public policy is shaped. You will have the unique opportunity to listen to first-hand accounts from government and non-government officials who participate in the policy-making process, formally and informally. After this experience, you will understand the political process better and (hopefully) be motivated to actively participate in your community, state, and even at the national level in the political process of policy making.

The class will be conducted primarily on Fridays during your stay in Washington: Reserve all day Friday for class. Each Friday we will have three sessions (as a general rule)—class with the instructor and two briefings with political practitioners—either at the Barlow Center or on location at the office or agency of the person offering the briefing. Some weeks we will have a briefing on a weekday evening to suit the schedule of the briefer.

The general themes highlighted will be:

- Who shapes public opinion/policy and how?
- How do activists wield influence?
- What makes advocacy successful/influential?
- How do policy makers respond to activists and lobbyists?
- How much does data matter?
- What are major issues which our country faces, both at home and abroad?

In order to make the most of these opportunities, you will prepare carefully for each briefing and think critically about the experience after the fact.

Readings

Required readings will be chosen week by week in preparation for each topic and guest speaker. They will be distributed via email or made accessible via the course website on Blackboard under the “Course Materials” section.

Current Events/Washington Post To help you achieve our course objectives you will regularly follow the news through the *Washington Post*. Students are therefore *required to read a major national newspaper each weekday*. Many of you will have copies of the *Washington Post* available to you at your workplace. You may also read it on the Internet. However, keep in mind that some articles in the print edition may not be available in the online edition. Other suggested newspapers with excellent coverage of American politics include: *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Course Requirements

Assignments are due on Friday morning at the beginning of the meetings unless otherwise indicated. All deadlines are firm and non-negotiable. Grades will be reduced 10% for each day an assignment is late. Arrange your schedule to meet these deadlines. If you have an emergency, email me the assignment (as an attachment), and slide a hard copy under my office door.

Class Attendance and Participation

Attendance and *quality* participation are essential to the success of this class. Roll will be taken each week and students will be penalized for absences and lack of preparation and quality participation. Only absences due to illness or work required by your internship supervisor are excused. Work related absences will be rare and must be cleared with me in advance. The following are not excused absences: job interviews, family events (including visits from parents, but they can join us for the briefings), excursions or out-of-town trips, and alternative briefing opportunities. *You should not schedule anything before mid-afternoon on Fridays, and before doing so, check to make sure we don't have a late briefing scheduled.*

Pre-briefing Papers – ARP's

I will assign short analyses of readings to help us think about the general topics which the briefings will address for each briefing. Sometimes these readings will be general and sometimes specific. For each assignment (ARP – Analytic Reading Paper), write up the following material after writing your name, the date, and the name of the article, and author, at the top of the page. Please follow and reproduce the numbered format below.

1. Write a short (no more than half page, and preferably much less) summary of the major thrust of the article. Do not describe, tell.
- 2a and b. List two major concepts, arguments or points which the author makes in the article.
3. In one to three sentences evaluate if there is another side. Are there counter-examples that might challenge the argument?
4. Write down one question you could pose on this subject in the briefing.
5. For each briefing you are required to Google the name of the individuals we will be meeting and note one interesting fact about the person. A single sentence will suffice for each.

These papers should be single-spaced and are limited to only one page in length. Be concise in your writing. Send the ARP by email by Friday at 8 a.m. (goodliffe@byu.edu). It would be a good idea to bring a hard copy along to the briefing as well.

Criteria for grading:

- Completeness. Incomplete papers will be graded down accordingly or failed.
- Follow the numbered format to facilitate reading and evaluation
- To-the-point summary of major points
- Thoughtful critical reading and analysis
- Writing mechanics.

Analytical Essays

You will write three short (1200-1500 words or about 4-5 pages double-spaced) papers over the course of the semester. Each paper will be worth 10% of the final grade (30% all together).

First paper: The Founders and Contemporary Government

Considering the history you have been exposed to during our trip to Philadelphia (and that provided by the speakers), compare and contrast the federal government's size and powers with what the Founders imagined when drafting the Constitution. Use material from the Constitution Center, the Independence Hall tour, and the presentations to form your image of the Founders' state of mind in 1789. Then compare their original intent to current practice as you know it. You should focus on a few elements in your treatment (examples to choose from: separation of powers, representation, suffrage, civil rights, federalism, checks and balances, etc.). Outside research is not necessary to complete this assignment, but better papers will show evidence of research.

Second paper: Influencing Government

Reflecting upon the briefings to date, answer the question: Why are some more effective at influencing government than others? You should look particularly at the efforts of non-governmental workers (lobbyists, activists, journalists, etc.) that we have heard from and accounts provided by government officials. Begin by assessing their relative effectiveness at getting the government (bureaucracy, legislature, courts) to do something (or to stop doing something). Once you have made this determination, identify three or four factors that increase the odds of being influential in Washington. You should illustrate your analysis with examples and references to political literature.

Third paper: Political Participation and My Career Choices

One of the purposes of the briefings (and your internship) is to expose you to a wide array of careers in politics in the hope that this will influence your own personal career selection. Being active in politics requires being devoted to changing policy and this impacts family time, salary, job security and social status. Consider what matters most to you in a career (Salary? Social status? Job security? Family time? Intellectual challenge? Making a difference?). In the final analysis, decide whether you would enjoy a life in some area of politics.

Grading Criteria:

- Address the subject and fulfill assignment as stated.
- Analyze and incorporate material from relevant briefings;
- Incorporate and synthesize assigned readings and relevant articles from the *Washington Post*;
- Be well written, following the guidelines outlined in “Standards for Student Papers” from the *Washington Seminar Handbook*;
- Include a clear thesis statement which guides structure of paper and a conclusion supported by actual evidence drawn from the briefings, readings and class discussion;
- Each paragraph is self-contained with a specific topic;
- Arguments are clear, well-stated, and analytical. They utilize appropriate means of proof: examples, recourse to authority;
- Argument is not overstated; exceptions or qualifications are acknowledged;
- Component arguments all relate to and support contention of the thesis;
- Writing mechanics are good;
- Bibliography and citations follow accepted style;
- Papers are double-spaced, stapled, and numbered; have a title page with name, date, title, and number of words.

An “A” paper will conform to these guidelines. Papers which merely summarize or outline the briefings and readings will receive no more than a “C” grade.

Final Paper

Identify a problem confronting your local community, state, or the nation and present how you would seek to solve it based upon what you have learned from the briefings, class discussions and readings. The topic for this paper is purposely broad. I welcome creative ideas. Here are some hints to help you write an effective paper. Choose an issue you are passionate about. Assess your available resources (knowledge, skills, finances, etc.) as well as what level (local, state, or national) you want to influence and what branch or branches of government are most involved with your issue. Be specific when you discuss the problem or policy area you would like to influence. Improving national education policy is impossibly vague while working to improve hiring and retention standards for school teachers in your local district is much more specific. While I recognize that some of you will likely be elected to the U.S. Senate or begin a foundation with billions of dollars in assets someday, be at least somewhat realistic with your plans. I need to be persuaded that you have the skills and resources to have a chance at following through with your plan.

An “A” paper will conform to all of the guidelines indicated above but should integrate two or more course topics.

Enrichment Activity

One Friday during the semester no briefings will be held so that you can pursue an enrichment activity in the Washington, D.C. area. This activity should focus on history or the arts. A variety of activities are possible, such as visiting a historical site or museum, touring one of the many art museums, or attending a play or concert (no movies). This is an opportunity for you to visit a site

that may only be open during business hours when you are either at work or in class. Write a report (limit: two pages, double-spaced) briefly summarizing the experience and detailing what you learned from the activity.

Service Learning Experience

One Saturday during the program will be dedicated to a group service project in the District of Columbia. In a short paper (limit: two pages, double-spaced), relate your service to your own life and to what you are learning about government and service. This is graded pass/fail. Papers that fail will not follow basic expectations for a writing assignment and will contain nothing interesting or thoughtful.

Grading

Your grade will be computed using a standard scale as follows:

Class Attendance and Participation	10%
ARPs	20
3 Intermediate Papers	30
Final Paper	30
Enrichment Activity	5
Service Learning Project	5
Total	100%

Concluding Comments

One of the goals of the Washington Seminar experience is to socialize students in a professional environment. Each day you will be interacting with individuals who have made Washington their homes and who have invested their futures in their careers and reputations. In government and politics, one's status is closely tied to one's professionalism.

As an intern, your own conduct will reflect well or poorly on your office, your supervisor and BYU. The stakes are high—much higher than when you are simply taking a class in Provo. Your conduct should be different. If it is not, your grade in this course will reflect your lack of professionalism.

Code of Conduct for Briefings:

Always arrive early (at least five minutes or more if required) **for a briefing.** Arriving late is discourteous to our speaker and therefore cannot be tolerated as it reflects poorly on BYU generally. If you are even one minute late you can expect to be denied entry—especially if we are visiting someone at an office that requires a security check. Late entries make the entire group look bad and are very unprofessional.

Always dress and act appropriately. Men should wear a jacket and tie and women appropriate professional attire. Slouching, dozing off, being inattentive and/or surfing the web during briefings is unacceptable, will make you look foolish, and reflects on BYU as a whole. Many of

our speakers will be dynamic and exciting. Unfortunately, some will not. Please continue to be attentive anyway.

Always know something about the speaker and the topic. The Google requirement mentioned above is a bare minimum. The assigned readings are to help you develop some basic knowledge of the issue to be addressed. Pay particularly close attention to articles in *The Washington Post* during the week that relate to the briefing topic. Try checking the speaker's website as well.

Ask respectful and reasonable questions. It is very likely you will disagree with the views of some speakers. This is by design. Remember it is possible to disagree without being disagreeable. You are certainly welcome and encouraged to challenge the assertions, facts or assumptions of any speaker. However, be certain to do so in a *polite and respectful manner*.

Please abide by all of these guidelines. I will not hesitate to reduce participation scores for inappropriate behavior, and I have no qualms about reducing the score more than the 10 percent assigned for repeated offenses. You can go in the hole on this score.

Important note:

I assume that we will all have different ideological approaches and that we will disagree on various issues. However, I assume that we will disagree with respect and be willing to back up our opinions with data. I also assume that differing opinions on politics will not affect our respect for each other and ability to get along. This program gives us the joyful opportunity to debate and ponder knotty issues – sometimes even dilemmas, and learn from each other. I look forward to learning from you.

Other Course Policies

Email Policy

All class members are *required* to maintain an active email account. It is your responsibility to ensure that the email address that is listed for you in the BYU directory is accurate. To update your email address, log in to Route Y and select “Update Personal Information.” Here you can specify a current email address if you are not using the one assigned to you by BYU, or you can have your BYU email forwarded to the account you plan to use. The instructor and assistant will communicate important and time-sensitive class announcements via email. Some announcements that are not time-sensitive may be posted to Blackboard. Email is also a very good way to reach me with questions. I strongly encourage you to check your email daily throughout the semester.

Academic Honesty

From the Academic Honesty section of the BYU Honor Code: “The first injunction of the BYU Honor Code is the call to ‘be honest.’ Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life's work, but also to build character. ‘President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education’

(The Aims of a BYU Education, p. 6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim.”

“BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct”

If you write a paper for another course (past or present) that uses the same topic as a paper for this course, you need to approve it with me *first*, and then you must turn in to me a copy of the paper from your other course.

You can read the Honor code, including examples of various forms of academic misconduct at: <http://honorcode.byu.edu>. If you have any questions about academic conduct, I encourage you to consult these web pages and/or come speak with me.

Students with Disabilities

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.

Discrimination

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Opportunities Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a serious problem. One way to protect yourselves from sexual harassment and from charges of sexual harassment is to be scrupulously appropriate with all individuals you come in contact with.

By law, Brigham Young University is obligated to protect its students from gender discrimination, including unlawful sexual harassment, in all programs and activities sponsored by the university. As you embark on your internship, please be aware of what constitutes sexual harassment and what you should do if you encounter it during your internship opportunity.

Definition

Sexual harassment is defined as *unwelcome* sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made a term or condition of an individual's employment, or
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or
- The conduct interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Examples

Behaviors that contribute to a hostile environment include, but are not limited to:

- Discussing sexual activities
- Telling off-color jokes
- Unnecessary touching
- Commenting on physical attributes
- Displaying sexually suggestive pictures
- Using crude language or demeaning or inappropriate terms
- Using indecent gestures
- Engaging in hostile physical conduct

Appropriate Response

Both employers and employees have a responsibility to prevent and stop workplace harassment. If you experience harassment while participating in a BYU-sponsored internship, report the behavior to your internship coordinator and your experience provider. They will take appropriate action to address and correct the behavior. You may also contact the university's Equal Opportunity Manager or 24-hour hotline at:

Equal Opportunity Manager

Brigham Young University

Telephone: (801) 422-5895

Email: sue_demartini@byu.edu

24-hour hotline: 1 (888) 238-1062

<http://www.ethicspoint.com>

Briefings & Readings Schedule

Over the course of the semester, we will be privileged to hear from a wide range of Washington experts drawn from a variety of occupations. As speakers agree to come, I will provide background readings most suited to helping you prepare to participate in a discussion with the speaker. In some cases these will come from Barry Rubin, *A Citizen's Guide to Politics in*

America. We also will read several chapters from Grant Reeher & Mack Mariani, *The Insider's Guide to Political Internships* in the first few weeks of the semester.

Remember that we will have briefings every Friday. I will generally let you know the speakers and times a week before. If you need to know what is scheduled for a particular day, talk with me and I will let you know the tentative schedule.

Flexibility will be critical. All briefing schedules can change at any time. Things come up, and speakers may have to cancel and reschedule. I will keep you informed of changes and request that you be understanding. People with significant voices are in great demand, and we need to be able to respond to changes. I will email you the schedule each week. If there are changes, I will send out more emails. You can also consult Jennifer Daniel, our AA.

The schedule below is largely to let you know how due dates on papers for 391 and 399R fall over the semester.

Fall 2009 Assignment Due Dates:

- September 11-12: Philadelphia Excursion, Depart Barlow Center at 8:00 a.m. Friday
- September 18: First 399R paper due (Personal Professional Development.)
- September 25: First 391 paper due (Founders and Contemporary Government)
- September 26: Gettysburg-Harpers Ferry Excursion. Depart Barlow Center at 7:30 a.m. Saturday
- October 2: 399R research proposal due
- October 10: Service Learning Experience
- October 16: Service Learning Experience paper due
- October 23: Second 391 paper due (Influencing Government)
- November 6: Enrichment Activity report due (or hand in earlier in semester)
- November 13: Third 391 paper due (Political Participation and Career)
- November 20: Second 399R paper due (Organizational Analysis and Critique of Agency)
- November 27: No Class (Thanksgiving break)
- December 3: Supervisors receive evaluation requests. Notify instructor if you plan to graduate in December.

- December 4: 391 Final paper due
- December 11: Final 391 meeting for all students. All forms and intern evaluations to be submitted. Students graduating in December must also submit all remaining course work for 399R (portfolio and research paper) and notify faculty advisor they are graduating. Barlow Center apartment inspections by Faculty Advisor.
- December 12: All students must vacate the Barlow Center (students remaining beyond this date will forfeit housing deposit).
- December 21: Faculty advisor submits 391 grades for all students and 399R grades for those graduating in December.
- January 4: Last day to portfolio and research paper (399R) to faculty advisor.