UCRS 4800.001 – College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Internship Spring 2024

Instructor Information

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Course Description, Structure, and Objectives

This internship credit course is available to students taking part in the North Texas in DC (NTDC) intern program. All course components are online through the course's designated Canvas page.

There are five main components of this course:

1. Weekly journal entries due throughout the semester
2. Book report about a current event, political issue, or historical event of your choosing
3. Bill/case/issue analysis about an issue currently or recently on the agenda of your representative
4. Photographic paper describing and evaluating your experiences in DC
5. Post-internship evaluation

Grading Scale

Assignment	Points	Grade Percentage
Weekly journal entries due throughout the semester	5 x 15 = 75	2.5% x 15 = 37.5%
Book Report	35	17.5%
Analysis Paper	35	17.5%
Photographic Paper	30	15%
Post-Internship Evaluation	25	12.5%

The objectives of this course are:

- Building valuable work experience through a civil service internship
- Reflecting on career goals and post-graduation plans
- Developing critical thinking and communication skills in preparation for full time employment

Required/Recommended Materials

There are no required books for this course, but one assignment will require you to procure a copy of a book of your choice. If you do not own or want to purchase the selection, I recommend looking into a local library.

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at Learn Anywhere (https://online.unt.edu/learn).

How to Succeed in this Course

Liz is available for office hours via phone call or Zoom by request. Share what success means to you. We're always here to help—we're just in another time zone and know it can be challenging to step away from the office. We'll accommodate your scheduling needs to meet with you.

If you have any questions about the assignments, reach out to Erik to discuss it.

Special Accommodations

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodation at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Academic Integrity

Every assignment, including the journal entries, papers, survey, and evaluation should be your own work. Academic dishonesty (cheating and/or plagiarism) will not be tolerated. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the policies and procedures set forth by the University of North Texas. You will find the complete provisions of the code in the student handbook: https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003.

Assessing Your Work

A = 180-200 B = 160-179 C = 140-169 D = 120-139 F = 0-119

Grades are not curved, and no extra credit is provided.

Late Work

You may receive one extension of up to three days for any non-journal graded assignment with no questions asked. However, longer extensions, any extension pertaining to the final paper or end of semester evaluation, or more than one extension request in the semester will need to be approved. If you need an extension, arrange it with Erik ahead of time. Do not assume an extension will be applied to your grade if you do not communicate with Erik—points will be taken off late work as outlined in the syllabus if an extension isn't approved.

Details regarding points can be found in each assignment description.

Course Requirements/Schedule

Pre-Internship Survey/End of Semester Evaluation

These brief assessments collect information about your goals and learned skills throughout the internship. They are used as one component of evaluating your experience with the internship and the NTDC program as a whole.

The Pre-Internship Survey is ungraded but must be submitted by 9/4 at the latest per your scholarship agreement. The End of Semester Evaluation is worth 25 points will have 5 points removed for each day it is late. It is also a requirement of your scholarship and graded on a completion basis, so think of it as free points!

Journals

Journals are worth 5 points each. Journals late by one day will receive 1 point off. Journals late by two days will receive a total of 2 points off. Journals later than two days will receive a 0.

These journals are due every Sunday of your internship, beginning 9/4, and will open in Canvas each week.

These informal journals provide insight to your experience and allow regular reflection on what you've learned. They are not shared outside of NTDC staff. You can use any format of your choosing, and they do not need to be structured like an essay. One of the most common approaches is to list each day of the week and briefly discuss what you worked on and/or did around town or for another class. However, some interns prefer to write in paragraphs about broader experiences or outline the major experiences of the week, regardless of timing. Remember that it should cover experience both IN and OUT of the office, and they are graded on a completion basis—so no judgement from the NTDC staff! These entries are free of rules and judgements.

Requirements:

- Roughly 1-2 pages in length. If you're consistently submitting journals of an inappropriate length, we'll let you know.

Reminder: If a violation of federal or state law or the Student Code of Conduct is mentioned, the content will be turned in to appropriate authorities who will then handle the situation with you directly, or according to proper protocol.

Topics to consider:

- How are you adjusting to DC?
- How do you like your work environment?
- Have you been faced with any challenges, and how are you dealing with them?
- Have you met any new people and been exposed to new ideas or ways of thinking?
- Have your views changed at all on any political/governmental topic?
- Has this experience solidified any career goal for you?
- What have become your favorite places to go and things to do?
- Who have you been able to really connect with?
- Have you discovered anything new about yourself?
- Do you have any non-pressing questions for NTDC staff? (You can always contact us—but if you have a question that doesn't need an immediate answer, ask in your journal and we'll answer when grading!)

Book Report

The book report is worth a total of 35 points, 5 of which are for an initial proposal. Final reports late by one day will lose 3 points. Reports late by two days will receive a total of 6 points off. Reports later than two days will receive a 0.

For this assignment, read a book of your choosing. The topic can be a current event, international or political issue, or historical event that interests you. Consider a topic related to the District or US history or a prominent topic being discussed in this legislative session. The report should be 5-8 pages and cover the following:

- Synopsis of the book.
- Your analysis of the book.
- Do you agree with the author of the book?
- How is this book relevant in the world/society today (list current events, topics, debates, etc.)?
- Paper will be graded for appropriate grammar, syntax, flow, and clarity.

An informal proposal must be submitted for your book to be approved for use. This should be no more than 1-2 paragraphs and include an explanation of why you chose this book and its details—title, author, and publication date. Deadlines for each component can be found in the Assignment Calendar below.

The final report must include a Works Cited page for the book according to the appropriate citation style for your area of study (or one of your preferences). The submission should be double-spaced Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial, or Century Gothic, size 12, with 1-inch margins.

Analysis Paper

This paper is worth 35 points. Assignments late by one day will lose 3 points. Reports late by two days will receive a total of 6 points off. Papers later than two days will receive a 0.

For this assignment, choose an issue that your representative is currently or has recently worked on. This might be from a piece of legislation they've sponsored or supported, a Supreme Court or District Court case addressing a major issue they have well-defined feelings about or a vested interest in, a prominent feature of a recent or upcoming campaign, etc. This does not have to be the biggest part of their platform or something you've ever had to address personally—just something you find interesting. This assignment is less formal than a research paper but should include at least two sources to reference for data, historical context, etc. This analysis should be 3-5 pages and cover the following:

- Overview of the issue, including brief historical context, as necessary.
- Summary of your representative's position regarding the issue, including past and current involvement, as necessary. For example, has your representative drafted or supported a bill related to this issue? Do they have a history of voting a certain way? Is their point of view strong or somewhat moderate? Has it evolved over time?
- Summary of the point of view of someone with opposing beliefs about this issue. This can be in the abstract or if there is one or a few specific people who are well known to be in opposition on this issue, you can explicitly focus on what and why they disagree.
- An analysis of the strength of their argument and actions. Do you agree but think they go about garnering support in the wrong or an ineffective way? Do you disagree with some or all their position? What do you think will happen over the coming weeks, months, and years regarding this issue? What, if anything, would you do differently if you were a representative or a Senior Staff member with this issue on your agenda?

The deadline can be found in the Assignment Calendar below. The final report must include a Works Cited page for no fewer than two sources according to the appropriate citation style for your area of study. The submission should be double-spaced Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial, or Century Gothic, size 12, with 1-inch margins.

Photographic Paper

This paper is worth 30 points. Assignments late by one day will lose 3 points. Reports late by two days will receive a total of 6 points off. Papers later than two days will receive a 0.

The District is known for countless landmark destinations, including the Capitol Building, the White House, the Smithsonian complex, etc. While you are living in DC, we want you to take time to engage in the community you are interning in. Take pictures and write a 3–5-page paper (including pictures) about your observations of some of your favorite destinations, while incorporating pictures of these sites.

- Discuss the historical significance of these places.
- Discuss why you are interested in them.
- Discuss what their purposes are.
- Discuss what draws people to these places.
- Paper will be graded for appropriate grammar, syntax, flow, clarity, and visual aesthetic.

The deadline can be found in the Assignment Calendar below. The paper should be double-spaced Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial, or Century Gothic, size 12, with 1-inch margins.

Assignment Calendar

Date	***Assignment Due***	***Notes***
1/21	*Pre-Internship Survey*	*Complete before first day or within first few days*
1/21	*Journal #1*	*Not sure where to start? Find samples on Canvas*
1/28	*Book Report Proposal*	
1/28	*Journal #2*	
2/4	*Journal #3*	
2/11	*Journal #4*	
2/18	*Journal #5*	
2/25	*Book Report*	
2/25	*Journal #6*	
3/03	*Journal #7*	
3/10	*Journal #8*	
3/24	*Journal #9*	
3/31	*Analysis Paper*	
3/31	*Journal #10*	
4/07	*Journal #11*	
4/14	*Journal #12*	
4/21	*Journal #13*	
4/28	*Photographic Paper*	*Start collecting photos early in the semester for ease*
4/28	*Journal # 14*	
5/05	*Journal # 15*	
5/10	*End of Semester Evaluation*	

All deadlines are 11:59pm ET on the due date listed and must be submitted through Canvas. If you are not able to connect to Canvas at the deadline, email Erik for your submission at that time.

Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact any deadlines.

Please note that this calendar is subject to change.

Attendance and Participation

There is no formal attendance policy, as this course does not have regular meeting times. However, if you are ill and unable to complete your work, please reach out so accommodations can be made.