

GUIDELINES POLS 3190 INTERNSHIP

Political Science Internships for Three (3) Semester Credit Hours

This course is designed for students seeking credit through an Internship placement. The Internship must be directly related to government; the student must be under direct academic supervision; and the student must complete written assignments to be evaluated by the supervising instructor. Students must have approval of academic instructor to enroll.

1. Student Qualifications: Students must be classified as a junior or senior (60 semester credit hours completed) or have permission from the Political Science Department Chair to enroll; have completed at least 12 semester credit hours in POLS/GOVT courses with a 3.0 GPA in those courses; and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. The internships are available to qualified students in all academic disciplines.

2. On-site Experience: Students will put their academic knowledge into practice for 12 hours weekly for 14 weeks (168 hours) under the direct supervision of an on-site supervisor with whom the academic instructor is in close contact throughout the internship. Students and their academic instructor will communicate regularly during the semester electronically and/or face-to-face. The internship may be paid or unpaid.

3. Student Assignments: Students will adhere to the “Statement of Student, University and Agency Responsibilities,” to be signed by the student, academic instructor and agency supervisor; submit a Weekly Log of hours, signed by both the student and on-site supervisor, and a Weekly Report, signed by the student. The Weekly Log will include a general description of tasks and responsibilities performed and the number of hours worked. The Weekly Report will address responsibilities and tasks accomplished and how those relate to their past and current POLS/GOVT courses.

At the end of the semester, the student will submit a Final Report that includes a reflective essay. For example: “In 500–1,000 words, relate your internship experience to the knowledge, both theoretical and empirical, that you have gained in your political science courses. Be as specific as possible, including citing sources as appropriate.”

4. Internship Grades: Course grades will be based on the Final Report and On-site Supervisor Evaluation (60%), Weekly Reports/Logs (30%), and quality of resume and cover letter (10%). Internship hours worked, as verified by the on-site supervisor in the Weekly Log, will be acknowledged by the academic instructor via email and posted on Blackboard weekly so that information on cumulative hours is available to students throughout the semester.

5. **Documents for Internship Participation:** Prior to or in the first week of the internship, the following documents must be signed and on file with the academic instructor: 1) "Statement of Student, University and Agency Responsibilities," to be signed by the student, academic instructor and agency supervisor; 2) Notarized "Student Waiver and Release of Liability," signed by the student in the presence of a Notary Public; and 3) a current resume and cover letter to the on-site supervisor approved by the academic instructor.

6. **On-site Supervisor Participation:** The on-site supervisor will adhere to the "Agency Responsibilities" in the "Statement of Student, University and Agency Responsibilities," sign the student's Weekly Logs verifying the number of hours worked; evaluate the student at the end of the semester on a form provided by the academic instructor; and conduct an exit interview with the student based on that evaluation.

7. **Academic Instructor's Responsibilities:** The academic instructor will recruit qualified prospective interns and establish appropriate internship sites; adhere to the "University Responsibilities" in the "Statement of Student University and Agency Responsibilities;" interact weekly with students in electronic or and/or face-to-face communication regarding their required weekly reports/logs, final report, the relationship of on-site experiences to coursework, and other questions and challenges the internship may present; maintain close contact with their on-site supervisors; personally visit each Rio Grande Valley internship site at least once during the semester; and collaborate with the Political Science Department Chair and UTRGV Office of Governmental and Community Relations in selecting and supervising students for Legislative Internships in Austin during the regular biennial legislative sessions.

8. **Recognition of Interns and Community Engagement:** The academic instructor will provide information and photos about current and past interns for the Political Science Department webpage. The purpose is to recognize interns for their accomplishments and their engagement in the community through their internships and to acknowledge agencies and on-site supervisors for their contribution to the academic and career success of UTRGV students.