

# Political Science 195CE Civic Engagement Internship Course

Summer 2018

## UCLA Center for Community Learning

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### **COURSE WEBSITE**

<https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/18F-POLSCI195CE-1?section=9>

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

PS 195CE is a 4-unit course that can be taken pass/no-pass or for a letter grade. Completion of the course fulfills one upper division elective course requirement for the Political Science major, but students do not need to be political science majors to enroll, nor does your internship need to be directly related to political science. The goal of this course is to get you to think about the relevance of political science outside of the classroom. As part of this process, this course will help you understand how politics is connected to your internship and more importantly, how it affects your industry and the work that you do. *Students are required to work a minimum of 80 hours total (about 8-10 hours per week) at their internship site over the course of the academic quarter.*

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Define and apply the following core concepts: civic engagement, social responsibility, and governance
- Apply academic knowledge and critical thinking skills to address situations and challenges that arise in 21<sup>st</sup> century work environments
- Write a research paper integrating real world experience through the framework of political science
- Explore how off-campus, experiential learning contributes to an undergraduate's intellectual, personal, and professional development and informs future career choices

### **IMPORTANT**

Read the first 3 pages of the syllabus *closely* so that you are familiar with all the class requirements. You are responsible for all the material on the syllabus and for fulfilling all the class requirements. No pleading ignorance!

### **ENROLLMENT**

You need to secure an internship before you can enroll. In order to enroll, you must set up an appointment at the Center for Community Learning with a coordinator, who will explain the enrollment procedures. Since it is a *Contract Course*, you will be required to create a contract on MyUCLA and obtain the signature of your internship supervisor. We cannot enroll you without that signature, which we must submit to the Political

Science department. If there are any problems with your contract or with enrolling you in the course, one of the coordinators will contact you by e-mail. The deadline to enroll is Friday of Week 2. The class often fills up before then, and students are enrolled as we receive the contracts, so the earlier you submit a contract, the better your chances of getting enrolled.

### GRADING AND REQUIREMENTS

- **40%** — Eight weekly writing assignments (2-3 pages double-spaced, unless length is otherwise specified)
- **20%** — Four bi-weekly meetings with your coordinator (*in addition to* the intake meeting)
- **40%** — Final research paper (8-10 pages double spaced)
- Signed Timesheet reflecting at least 80 hours at internship site
- Liability Form

If you are taking the class P/NP, you must adequately fulfill *every* of the requirements to pass. In addition, you must earn a C or better (anything above 73%) to pass. Neglecting to submit the Timesheet or complete 80 hours at your internship are grounds for failure.

In order to monitor the educational experience of undergraduate interns, the Center for Community Learning communicates with internship site supervisors for mandatory check-ins at least twice each quarter and provides sites with an online evaluation of their partnership with UCLA. **As a matter of policy, sites must be notified at any point in the quarter if students are in danger of not passing the course or if they withdraw.** As needed, we may also communicate with various campus stakeholders, such as the Dashew Center for International Students & Scholars, the Career Center, and Student Care Managers.

### WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly assignments are required to be 2-3 pages double-spaced unless otherwise specified. Assignments are due weekly on Sundays at 11:59pm, beginning the Sunday following Week 1. If you enroll in the class during Week 2, then the assignments for Weeks 1 and 2 are due on the Week 2 due date. They are to be uploaded to the class website, or failing that, emailed to your TA. Each writing assignment is worth 10 points:

- 4 points for structure (organization, spelling, grammar, etc.) and
- 6 points for substance.

Essays turned in late will be marked down 2 points each day. If you fail to turn in an assignment on time, it is due at the latest by the Sunday of the following week, or you will receive no credit for having completed the assignment. If an assignment is turned in a week late more than once, it will likely result in an automatic grade reduction to C-/NP.

### INTERVIEW

The assignment for week 3 requires you to interview someone at the internship site itself and therefore requires you to *begin the assignment at least a week before it is due*, and preferably even sooner.

### BI-WEEKLY MEETINGS

Schedule and attend biweekly discussion sessions with your coordinator at the Center for Community Learning at least four times, in *addition to* the intake. Come to each 25-minute meeting *prepared to lead our one-on-one discussion* about your internship, your weekly response papers, and your progress on your research paper. This course is an upper-division independent study and your participation score for each meeting is based not only on whether you are engaged and up-to-date on the readings and assignments, but also on how prepared you are to dig deeply and think critically about your internship experience and course assignments. Meetings

that focus on superficial analysis or that consist largely of me asking you questions instead of you leading the conversation will not receive full credit. I recommend students come to our meetings with a meeting agenda or series of questions.

### **\*SCHEDULING MEETINGS**

Appointments can be scheduled in person at CCL (Murphy A265); by calling CCL at 310-825-7865; or by emailing the front desk at [cclmeetings@college.ucla.edu](mailto:cclmeetings@college.ucla.edu). Since I am not at CCL every day I am unable to schedule appointments personally, and I cannot meet you outside my office hours. Plan accordingly. You are responsible for making your own appointments and for scheduling your 4 meetings evenly throughout the quarter (biweekly – i.e. every other week). Each meeting is worth 5 points. Showing up late and/or unprepared for a meeting will result in the loss of at least one point. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will be asked to reschedule and the meeting will be worth only half credit. You may schedule only one meeting per week and MUST complete your second meeting by the end of Week 4 or the meeting will be 3 considered late and will be worth only half credit. Repeated cancellation, especially same-day cancellations, are unacceptable may also result in a penalty. Any request to schedule meetings in consecutive weeks must be approved by the coordinator IN ADVANCE and may not be granted. Attending regularly scheduled meetings throughout the entire quarter is required in order to pass a 195CE course and failure to meet this expectation will likely result in an automatic grade reduction to C-/NP. You may be advised to drop at any point in the quarter if you are no longer in a position to pass the course and your site will be notified.

### **FINAL PAPER**

*Please see the Week 4 assignment for the final paper prompt.* Your final research paper is due by Friday of Week 10 by 11:59pm, to be uploaded to the website. For each 24-hour cycle it is late beyond this deadline your paper will lose 1/3 of a letter grade. We will not accept papers that are more than 7 days late. If you do not complete your paper within 7 days of its original due date you will receive a “0” for the paper and therefore you will fail the course since it is worth 40% of your final grade.

### **SIGNED TIMESHEET**

Submit a timesheet with your final paper, signed by your supervisor and documenting the hours that you have worked this quarter. To pass the course, interns must work at least 8 weeks during the 10-week quarter and work a minimum total of 80 hours (approximately 8-10 hours/week). Failure to complete the minimum requirements will likely result in an automatic grade reduction to C-/NP. If for any reason you find that you must miss more than the equivalent of one week’s regular shift at your internship or if you must end your internship early, you MUST inform your coordinator IMMEDIATELY. Your coordinator will consult with your internship supervisor and Center administrators about appropriate steps and may advise you to drop the course if it is determined that you are not in a position to pass.

### **LIABILITY FORM**

The Liability Form is available at the Center for Community Learning and required by UCLA for off-campus work.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

If you're quoting someone (whether verbal or written), use quotation marks and cite them. When referring to a conversation that you were a part of, it is sufficient to quote them like you see in a newspaper article; published sources require formal citations.

- 1) If you are paraphrasing what someone said—you are not using their words but are using their ideas—you still need to cite them, although you don't need to use quotation marks.

- 2) All papers turned in must be original work. Besides the above rules about citation, this means that you can't turn in a paper to this class that you turned in for another class. Different classes require different papers. No exceptions.

All policies in the UCLA Catalog regarding academic dishonesty apply to 195CE internship courses, including policies regarding plagiarism. When warranted, infractions will be reported to the Dean of Students and may result in disciplinary action and/or expulsion from the university. UCLA's complete policy regarding academic dishonesty can be found at the following website: <http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/>

### **COURSE ACCOMODATIONS AND CAMPUS RESOURCES**

UCLA provides a wide range of resources to support students facing challenges, whether inside or outside the classroom. Consult the Student Care Managers program website for information about these resources, including information about confidential one-on-one consultations:

<http://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/Who-can-Help>. If you need to request an academic accommodation based on a documented disability related to your work in this course, please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible. OSD can be reached at A255 Murphy Hall, 310-825-1501, or 310-206-6083 (telephone device for the deaf). You can learn more about their services by exploring their website at <http://www.osd.ucla.edu>. Students should also notify their internship coordinator about any issues as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged with OSD well in advance of assignment due dates.

## **WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS**

All weekly assignments should be 2-3 page general 'essay' style response and property cited.

### **WEEK 1: Understanding the Organization (2-3 pages)**

This assignment will have you better understand your organization. You will answer the questions based on internet research and, if you can, with your supervisor's assistance. Be sure to adhere to all of the organization's confidentiality requirements when answering these questions.

If a business, use the company's website, or look up some information about the company on Lexis-Nexis Business.<sup>1</sup> If a non-profit, government office, or if the company is too small to show up on these sites, use the organization's website. Use the following questions as a general prompt for your 2-3 page written response:

- Read the excerpts from *The Logic of American Politics* (focusing on pgs. 26-30). Learn the definitions of the following terms: command authority, veto power, and agenda setting. Describe the decision-making process and explain how major decisions are made at your organization. Ask yourself: who sets the agenda for all the major decisions? Who has command authority and who exercises veto power in these instances? As part of this question, think about whether there are institutions (like an executive council) within the organization that influences decision-making. If so, how are decisions made within these types of institutions?

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<sup>1</sup> Note: To use Lexis-Nexis, go to the UCLA Library website. Under "Search and Find," go to "Frequently Used Databases." There will be a link for Lexis-Nexis Business. You can also Google "Lexis-Nexis Business." If you are off campus, you'll need to configure your computer to use the proxy server.

- What is the company or organization's purpose or mission? What products or services does it provide? Find out the full range of products and services the organization provides, particularly those that you may not be exposed to in your specific office or division.
- How large is the organization, in terms of number of employees? How large was their revenue last year? If a non-profit or government office, how large is their budget? Where does their funding come from?
- If the organization you work for is large, how does your office fit in within their larger structure and purpose? Which other divisions of the organization do you rely on to get your specific task done? If the organization you work for is small, which other organizations, businesses or government agencies does it rely on to accomplish its tasks?
- What is the population that your organization serves? How does it identify and communicate with the population it serves? How does it learn the demands of this population and adjust the product or service to meet those demands?

**The assignment for week 3 requires you to start early and get the assistance of your supervisor or other superior at the organization. We recommend you begin preparing for this assignment immediately, or at least planning a timetable for how you will complete it.**

### **WEEK 2: Current Events Assignment (2-3 pages)**

First, read the provided excerpts from *The Successful Internship*. Second, find two or three recent newspaper and/or magazines articles that deal with a serious economic or political issue confronting either your internship site (if it's a big company) or more broadly, your field or industry. All your articles should be about a single issue so that you have enough information to properly answer this week's questions.

After reading through the articles, use the following questions to guide your response:

- Describe what are the major challenges that your office or industry currently faces and just how widespread is this problem? Provide concrete evidence to support your argument.
- Has your firm or industry done anything in response to these types of issues? If so, how (be specific)? Perhaps your firm has filed individual lawsuits or maybe it has collectively organized with other firms to lobby the local, state, or federal government. If there is some sort of a lobby group that articulates and represents the interests of your industry, then describe this organization and its lobbying efforts. Has it thus far succeeded or failed in confronting the challenges described above? If the lobby group has proposed a law or initiative, then describe the law and explain how it would help your industry?
- This question is just an opportunity for you to reflect on your role in society as a professional in your industry. The excerpts from *The Successful Internship* emphasize the importance of recognizing that professionals have certain moral and ethical obligations to society. What obligations do professionals in your industry have in regard to dealing with the issue you've identified, obligations both to the business or industry itself and to the wider society?

**Also, make sure you've begun the week 3 assignment by the beginning of the week. It will require you to interview a supervisor or superior at the internship, so you will have to conduct that interview before the end of the coming week.**

### **WEEK 3: Interview (2-3 pages)**

This assignment will have you interviewing a superior in your office about professionalism and your academic interests. First, the assignment includes a so-called “informational interview,” in which you discuss with a more experienced person about their own journey in order to learn for yourself how you might navigate school and future employment. Secondly, the assignment also includes an opportunity to ask your supervisor about some broader intellectual questions that engage your office or sector that you might explore in more depth for your research paper.

I recommend you try to interview the highest ranked individual that you can get access to, such as an owner, executive, or department head. If you cannot get access, your immediate supervisor will also work. You should see this as an opportunity to sit down and structure a conversation in a way that you might not otherwise be able to, likely with someone new and higher in the organization. It also serves as a great way for senior members of the organization to meet you.

For this assignment, you will want to write up a series of interview questions to be prepared before meeting. However by no means must you stick exclusively to the questions. I find it best to use these as a broad structure, but to allow the conversation to naturally flow. Here are some preliminary questions. Include a few of your own, especially that touch on research themes you’re interested in exploring as part of your final research paper.

- What was your own journey into this profession?
- What do you think are the main skills and attributes necessary for success in this line of work?
- How might you define your ethical or moral obligations in this sector to the people we serve (e.g. clients, constituents, customers) and to the wider community? Are these two groups sometimes in conflict? If so, how do you reconcile that personally?
- What is the most important thing I could get from this internship, and what can I do to get the most from my experience here?

Don’t be afraid to improvise during the interview or use these questions to start a conversation. For your own questions, you can have them piggyback on these questions or be completely different. The point of this assignment is for you to learn about the industry you are in, and to get to know your supervisor a little better. People like to talk about themselves, so you may want to ask your interviewee about their background and experience. Finally, I encourage you to *ask* if your supervisor is comfortable if you audio record the interview, especially the part regarding your interview question, as this could serve as a primary source material for your research paper.

#### **WEEK 4: Research Paper—Finding a Topic and Sources (2-3 pages)**

Many political debates are driven not by disagreements over values or morals, or by conflicts of interest, but by disagreements over basic facts due to a lack of expertise by contributors to the debate. The purpose of this paper is to ask a question about the facts that inform a political debate relevant to your internship field and to answer that question using research. The purpose of this research paper is not to make an argument for one side or another of a debate, but to try to accurately describe the facts relevant to the controversy. You may write about the controversy you identified in Week 2 or choose another debate. See the tips in Question 1 below or consult your coordinator if you have trouble identifying a debate to research.

For this week’s assignment, do the following:

- Identify a political debate or controversy relevant to your field or industry. To some extent it is up to you to decide what “field or industry” you are in, and the political debate does not have to be directly

relevant to your internship itself. For example, if you work in the entertainment industry, you can write on the controversial SOPA and PIPA bills to combat copyright infringement and internet piracy; if you work in finance, you can write on a particular effort to regulate the financial markets or a specific demand of the Occupy Wall Street protesters; if you work in a law or political office, you have the luxury of picking and choosing from any number of legal or political issues that your office may have dealt with recently. If you have difficulty finding a debate relevant to your industry, you can find political debates about employment itself, such as debates over the minimum wage, health and safety laws, anti-discrimination laws, labor unions, free trade agreements, immigration, etc.

- Search the internet for articles or editorials in magazines, newspapers or websites making arguments on the different sides of the debate or controversy. Try to identify **factual disagreements** or **specific researchable claims** being made by the authors that they use as evidence to support their arguments.
- Use those factual disagreements or researchable claims to develop a research question, a question that will help you investigate a claim or settle the disagreement. Examples of research questions from previous classes include: Is the Recording Industry of America accurate when it claims that piracy is costing the recording industry billions of dollars? Has AmeriCorps succeeded in its mission to develop long-lasting, financially independent institutions to solve specific social problems such as illiteracy or hunger? Do court-ordered treatment programs for drug offenders reduce drug use and costs as compared to imprisonment? Do energy drinks have negative health consequences for consumers? The more specific the question, the better.
- Write your research question. Describe the political debate and why answering your research question would be relevant to the debate. Write a brief plan for how you would answer this question. What kind of information would you look for, or what would be ideal? Where would you find that information?
- Go through the useful tutorial on the library website, located at <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/library/tutorial.php>. If possible, browse over some of the other guides that have been put together by the library staff.
- Begin preliminary research on your topic by finding two *academic* articles that will help you answer your research question. A good place to start is Google Scholar. A helpful feature of Google Scholar is the “cited by” link, which shows every article that cited the article in your search result. This allows you to explore similar articles on the topic. DO NOT just choose the first two articles that come up in your search regardless of their relevance to your topic; your T.A. will know.
- Once you find 2 appropriate articles, write a half-page on each explaining the article, how it is relevant to the question you are investigating.

### **WEEK 5: Laws and Regulations (2-3 pages)**

Laws and regulations govern the context around the operation of all jobs. The assignment this week will have you identify and research a law or regulation that affects the way you work.

- Identify some way in which a law or some regulation specifically affects the work you do at your internship. This should be easy, but if you are having difficulty coming up with one, you can think of a law that affects the work done in your office, or even in your organization. Describe how the law affects your work. What do you have to do to ensure that you are adhering to the law? What do you do that you would otherwise not do? Is it costly or difficult to ensure that you are adhering the law? What would be the consequences if you broke the law?
- Using the Internet, try to identify the specific law that affects your job. If you cannot identify the specific law, you can use Wikipedia to identify the body of law that it belongs to (e.g. confidentiality, transparency, campaign finance, divorce). Describe the law, or body of law, itself. Is it a federal, local or state law? What is the purpose of the law? Who enforces it? Who is it meant to protect in general?

Who does it specifically protect when you follow the law at your internship? Do you think the law achieves its goal or not?

### **WEEK 6: Organization's Links to Politics (2-3 pages)**

First, read Charles Lane's article in the *Washington Post* and then read the excerpts from Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action*. Answer the questions below.

- Why is it uncommon for groups of individuals who have a common interest to work together to achieve that common interest (e.g., if everyone benefits from government services, why don't people voluntarily pay taxes)?
- Why are businesses better able to organize to represent their interests than other groups?
- How do groups solve the problem of getting individuals to work together to achieve a common goal? Why, therefore, does Olson consider political power a "by-product" of other activities? What are Olson's examples of groups where political power is a by-product of their normal activities?
- Using Google, Wikipedia, your organization's website or other internet resources, identify an organization that lobbies the government to represent the interests of your industry (e.g. Motion Picture Association of America, American Banker's Association, U.S. Chamber of Commerce), professionals in your industry (e.g. Writer's Guild of America, American Medical Association, National Association of Realtors, California Teacher's Association, American Association for Justice), or workers in the industry (e.g. AFL-CIO, Service Employee's International Union). If you work for a large corporation or non-profit, the organization itself may lobby the government directly. If you work for a legislative office, you can choose an organization that your office has had contact with rather than one that represents your interests. Using the organization's website, Google News, Wikipedia or other internet resources, find an example of this organization lobbying the government on behalf of your industry or its workers (e.g. donating money to a political campaign, testifying before Congress, promoting its own agenda in a public relations campaign).
  - Describe the organization you identified. What is your internship site's relationship to that organization?
  - What is the organization trying to accomplish through its lobbying efforts in the example you identified? Has it succeeded or failed yet?

For a presentation of rival explanations on interest group formation, you may want to read:

Jeffrey M. Berry and Clyde Wilcox. 2009. *The Interest Group Society*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Pearson Longman. Read pp. 34-46 in Chapter 3.

### **WEEK 7: Research Paper—Introduction and Outline (2-3 pages)**

This week's assignment will be preparing for your final paper by writing an introduction and outline. Do the following:

- Write an introductory paragraph for your research paper. The introduction should explain your research question, how you research it, and what you've found. I realize that you have probably not completed your research at this point and that these statements may change before you turn in the final paper, but do your best. Make sure that you make an argument and that this argument is presented in a clear thesis statement at the end of the introductory paragraph.
- Write a formal outline of the paper, including as much detail as you can.
- Provide a bibliography of the works you have read or intend to read (provide full citations for each).

### **WEEK 8: Draft of Final Paper (at least 2-3 pages)**



Please submit a rough draft of your final paper. This draft should include citations (where necessary) and it should be at least 3 pages double-spaced. It must expand substantially beyond the Introduction and Outline from Week 7.

**WEEKS 10: Final Paper (8-10 pages)**

Research papers are due by **5pm on Friday of week 10**. Papers must be uploaded to the course website. Your timesheet, signed by your site supervisor, is due by the end of finals week. You may either turn a hard copy or upload a .pdf to the class website. A grade cannot be submitted for you until your signed timesheet has been received.