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PSC 525 Illinois Legislative Staff Intern Seminar

The Illinois Legislative Staff Internship Program

For over 35 years, the Illinois Legislative Staff Internship Program (ILSIP) has provided top quality graduate students with an intensive experience and education in the state legislative process. At the same time, ILSIP has provided the Illinois General Assembly's party caucuses and Legislative Research Unit with energetic and eager first-year staff members. This relationship has served well both the General Assembly and the hundreds of interns who have passed through the program.

Course Description

To supplement the hands-on training that you receive in your staff work as an ILSIP intern and to help prepare you for your experience, you will take POS 525, a two-credit course at UIS. This course consists of a two-day orientation session and 6 seminar sessions over the next four months. The course is designed to provide you with a broader context in which to view your internship experience within the legislative process, the state of Illinois, and state politics nationally.

The class will meet at 9:00 am at UIS in Room PAC 3F on the following days:

1. Friday, August 28
2. Friday, September 25
3. Friday, September 16
4. Friday, October 23 (Veto Session runs Oct 12-16 and Oct 26-30)
5. Friday, November 6
6. Friday, November 20.

Some session will typically last until 2:30 with two topics covered in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

1. To provide all students with a baseline of knowledge about the General Assembly, the legislative process, and state politics and policy.
2. To provide students with a broad context in which to understand their internship experiences.
3. To raise questions that students can use to guide their learning throughout the year and beyond.

Required Texts

You received the following books at the first day of orientation. You will be assigned specific sections of them to read in this syllabus, but you should read all three of them completely as soon as possible:

- Nolan, Gove, and Winkel. *Illinois Politics* (draft copy, to be published by the U of I Press in 2010.)
- Rosenthal. *Engines of Democracy*
- Mooney and Van Dyke-Brown. *Lobbying Illinois*.

The following are available online from the Legislative Research Units website:

- Legislative Research Unit. Preface to Lawmaking
- Legislative Research Unit. 1970 Illinois State Constitution annotated for Legislators
- Legislative Research Unit, Illinois Tax Handbook for Legislators.

You will also receive a variety of handouts to read from week to week.

You should read Illinois Issues each month You will receive a subscription.

You should look at the range of online Illinois newspapers on a regular basis. The best single place to access them is the media page in Rich Miller's Capital Fax website. His blog is also a useful source of links and information.

Course Requirements

There are three written assignments for this course:

- DUE Friday, Sept.25: An analysis of statewide voting patterns as they relate to the upcoming statewide primary and general election or to strategy for targeting legislative races in the 2010 general election.
- Friday Oct 23: A profile of a major interest group in terms of lobbying, electoral and campaign contribution strategies.
- DUE Friday Nov 20: An analysis of the issues and the prospects for major changes in a policy area such as education funding, state tax structure, gambling, abortion, gay marriage, health care financing, campaign finance, governmental ethics, or legislative redistricting.

Details on the writing assignments will be provided separately. Papers can be handed in at class sessions or sent as email attachments.

Attendance at class sessions is required to receive a passing grade for this course. Work-related absences will be accommodated. For interns who miss a session, make-up arrangements must be arranged with the instructor.

Grading

Your course grade will be based on attendance and the three written assignments, each weighted equally.

Tentative Course Content

(NOTE: The topics and order of the topic for each class session are subject to change. However, the dates, times, locations of the sessions and assignments will not change.)

August 28

Session 1: Illinois Political Culture and Politics

Session 2: Illinois State Constitution

Session 3: Elections in Illinois

September 11

Session 1: Legislatures as Political Institutions: Policy and Representation

Session 2: Legislative Leaders and Legislative Organization and Process

September 25

Session 1: The Governor and the Executive Branch

Session 2: Interest Groups, Lobbying and the Political Process

Session 3: The News Media and the Political Process

October 23

Session 1: Illinois Tax Structure and Revenue

Session 2: Illinois Budgeting

November 6

Session 1: Chicago and Local Governments and the Political Process

Session 2: Policy Area #1

Session 3: Policy Area #2

November 20

Session 1: Illinois Court System

Session 2: Policy Area #3

Session 3: Policy Area #4

Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. A documented disability can include: physical, psychological, chronic health, vision, hearing, learning, traumatic brain injury, Asperger's Syndrome and/or autism, cognitive, and A.D./H.D.D. Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of

any accommodations needed for the course. While O.D.S. does accept late applications, accommodations are not retroactive. All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (217-206-6666), HRB 80.

Academic Integrity Policy

All students are subject to the UIS policy on Academic Integrity, which states, in part: “Academic integrity is at the heart of the University's commitment to academic excellence. The UIS community strives to communicate and support clear standards of integrity, so that undergraduate and graduate students can internalize those standards and carry them forward in their personal and professional lives. Living a life with integrity prepares students to assume leadership roles in their communities as well as in their chosen profession. Alumni can be proud of their education and the larger society will benefit from the University's contribution to the development of ethical leaders. Violations of academic integrity demean the violator, degrade the learning process, deflate the meaning of grades, discredit the accomplishments of past and present students, and tarnish the reputation of the University for all its members.”

Academic sanctions range from a warning to expulsion from the university, depending on the severity of your violation and your history of violations. Whatever the sanction, instructors are required to file a report of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Provost.

You are responsible for understanding and complying with the UIS Academic Integrity Policy <http://www.uis.edu/campussenate/AcademicIntegrity.htm>

August 28 Seminar Outline

Session 1: Illinois Political Culture and Politics

Readings:

- *Illinois Politics* Chapter One – Illinois in Perspective (Blackboard posting)
- *Illinois Politics* Chapter Two – Power Parties, Groups and the Media (Blackboard posting)
- *Engines of Democracy* - Chapter One – Why legislatures are not appreciated
- *Almanac of IL Politics 2006* - Redfield: *Living up to low standards* (Blackboard Posting)
- Senate President John Cullerton – Op-Ed on Ethics Reform (Blackboard posting)
- Elazar – “Marketplace, Commonwealth, and the Three Political Cultures” (Blackboard posting)

Topics:

- Types of Political Culture: Individualistic, Moralistic and Traditionalistic
- Does Illinois Have a Political Culture? If so, so what?
- Regionalism in Illinois: Chicago, the Collar Counties and Downstate
- Is it the big cities vs. the suburbs vs. rural areas, regardless of region?
- Is regionalism real in Illinois? Does regionalism matter in Illinois Politics?
- Diversity and Complexity in Illinois: The politics of class, race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
- Do interests and issues trump location, region or culture?
- Partisan Conflict in Illinois: Party and Ideology
- Are Illinois political parties real parties?
- Is the party over in Illinois or has the party just begun?

Session 2: Illinois State Constitution

Readings:

- *Illinois Politics* Chapter Four - The Constitutional Framework (Blackboard posting)
- The 1970 Illinois State Constitution annotated for Legislators (online at Legislative Research Units Website)

Topics:

- American Constitutionalism: Madison vs. Plato
- What is the logic of structure of American National Government?
- How do state constitutions fit into that tradition?
- Judicial review at the State and National level: Who determines what the Constitution says?

- The History and the Politics of Constitution Making in Illinois
- The legacy of the 1870 Constitution: a revenue straight jacket & lots of local governments
- Governor Oglesby and the state income tax
- The Political Environment of 1970 and the shaping of the Executive Article
- Mayor Daley: protecting Chicago's interests through home rule, elected judges, classifying property and cumulative voting
- The Basics of the 1970 Constitution
- The impeachment of Governor Rod Blagojevich as a case study in American constitutionalism

Session 3: Elections in Illinois

Readings: *Illinois Politics* Chapter Three – Illinois Elections (Blackboard posting)

Topics:

- The Rules of the Game: The US Constitution, the Illinois Constitution and Illinois Elections
- Election law: Federal Elections in Illinois and Illinois Elections and the Election Code
- Are there legal barriers to running? What happened with the LaRouchees? What is the status of the Green party.
- Are there legal barriers to voting? Why did Illinois fight motor voter?
- Who decides what ballots count and who wins? Did Madigan steal a state legislative election from former Congressman Jerry Weller when he was a state legislator? What about *Bush v. Gore*?
- Redistricting: A Once every Decade Free for All
- Why do we have so many elections in Illinois?
- Why is Illinois considered the Wild, Wild West of campaign finance regulation?
- Running for Office in Illinois: The impact of region, party, money, incumbency and issues
- How “Blue” a state is Illinois?
- What does it take to win statewide? What are the lessons from recent Gubernatorial and US Senate elections?
- Do legislative leaders control legislative elections?
- Is the Chicago Machine dead?
- What do we know about local elections outside of Chicago and Cook County? Are there suburban and downstate county machines?
- Election Preview: the 2010 statewide and legislative elections in Illinois