

SYLLABUS

PSC 525

FALL, 2016

Instructor: Dr. Ronald D. Michaelson

Office: PAC 470

Phone: 206-7930; 494-2311 (cell)

rmich1@uis.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

All ILSIP interns are expected to take PSC 525, a two credit course designed to prepare them for their intern experience. The Course includes an orientation session and four full day seminars. The course provides an overview of Illinois government and politics and a review how the state has dealt with specific policy areas.

The first three seminars will be held on the UI-S campus (room to be announced), and the final seminar will be held at the State House. The seminar will meet from 9-12 and 1-4, but always subject to adjustments to accommodate guest speakers and any supplemental training scheduled by the ILSIP program coordinator.

The seminar will meet on these days:

Friday, August 26 – UHB-1005

Friday, September 9 – UHB-1005

Wednesday, September 21 – Capitol, Room 400

Thursday, October 6 – Capitol, Room 400

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1. To provide a basic knowledge of Illinois government and politics and an understanding how fundamental public policy issues have been or not been addressed.**
- 2. To provide concepts and a context to assist in placing the internship experience in its proper perspective.**

REQUIRED TEXTS/MATERIALS

Each intern received (at no cost!) the following books at orientation:

1. Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, *Illinois Politics: A Citizen's Guide*
2. Nowlan and Johnson, *Fixing Illinois: Politics and Policy in the Prairie State*
3. Mooney and Van-Dyke Brown, *Lobbying Illinois*
4. Pensoneau, *Arrington: Powerhouse from Illinois*
5. Rock, *Nobody Calls Just to Say Hello*
6. Gradel and Simpson, *Corrupt Illinois*

The following materials from the Legislative Research Unit are also supplied to each intern:

1. Preface to Lawmaking
2. 1970 Illinois Constitution Annotated for Legislators
3. Illinois Tax Handbook for Legislators

The following material has been placed on Blackboard:

“You Can’t Sell a Car on Sunday” – Chapter 5 from *Money Counts* by Kent Redfield

ATTENDANCE

Attendance (and hopefully active participation) in all seminars is MANDATORY. Work related absences, which are rare, will be accommodated. Interns who otherwise miss part or all of a seminar will be obligated to make up for their absence. This will be arranged with the instructor.

GRADES

Your course grade will be calculated as follows: 35% each for papers 1 and 3; 20% for paper 2; 10 % on attendance and participation.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

There are three written assignments for the seminar:

1. Ever since the General Assembly in 2011 completed the task of redistricting its legislative and congressional districts, there has been serious discussion and much controversy as to how this process should be changed, and even if it should be changed at all, as we anticipate the next round of redistricting following the 2020 census. Do the following: Review how well the process worked, or didn’t work, in the 2011 session, analyzing the role of the major players in the General Assembly as well as outside groups.

There is a group called Yes! For Independent Maps that has been working on a proposed constitutional amendment for voter ratification at the November, 2016 election. In fact, the State Board of Elections has already ruled their petition has enough qualified signatures to be placed on the ballot. However, legal action is pending, with the plaintiffs arguing the proposal does not meet various constitutional requirements. Do the following: a) who are the major players, b) what is the content of their proposal, c) do you think it will be placed on the ballot, and d) what is your opinion of the proposal.

SUGGESTED LENGTH – 8 PAGES; DUE DATE – SEPTEMBER 9

NOTE: As this syllabus is written, the matter is still pending in court. It is possible there will be a legal resolution before the due date of this paper. If this occurs, the instructor will indicate the manner in which the paper will need to be altered.

2. Handicap the presidential race for 2016, reviewing the candidacies of Clinton, Trump and any viable third party candidates. Who will be elected as our 45th President and by what margin? Be thoughtful, reasoned and objective in your analysis.

SUGGESTED LENGTH – 5 PAGES; DUE DATE – SEPTEMBER 21

3. In Nowlan and Johnson's book, in chapters 2 through 7 they address six major policy areas of significant concern: 1) taxing and spending, 2) education, 3) health care and human services, 4) infrastructure, 5) economic development, and 6) reengineering state government. Your assignment is to choose one of the six and do the following: a) outline/summarize the problem(s) as presented by the authors, b) critique their proposals for change, and c) do their proposals have a realistic chance of approval, given Illinois' political structure and climate.

SUGGESTED LENGTH – 8 PAGES; DUE DATE – OCTOBER 6.

COURSE SCHEDULE

AUGUST 26

UNIT #1: ILLINOIS: WHAT IT'S LIKE TO PLAY POLITICS HERE

- What is meant by political culture
- Illinois' own civil war: Chicago vs. downstate
- The new kid on the block: the collars
- Is regionalism real and does it matter?

Readings: Nowlan, Gove & Winkel, chapters 1-2

Nowlan and Johnson, introduction and chapter 1

Gradel & Simpson, the entire book

UNIT #2: ILLINOIS: THE RULES OF THE GAME

- History and politics of Constitution making in Illinois
- The legacy of the 1870 Constitution
- The basics of the 1970 Constitution
- Do we need a new one?

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 4

LRU – 1970 Constitution annotated for legislators

UNIT #3: ILLINOIS: WHO ARE THE PLAYERS

- The Office of the Governor (the notables and not so notables)
- The other Constitutional officers (who they are, what they do, how important they really are)

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 6

The web sites of the six constitutional officers

NOTE: Continue (or begin) your reading of *Fixing Illinois* and complete it by mid- September.

SEPTEMBER 9

UNIT #4: ILLINOIS: HOW ELECTIONS ARE CONDUCTED

- The State Board of Elections and its counterparts in other states (remember Kathryn Harris?)
- Do we have state elections and federal elections?
- What happened to cumulative voting
- Who draws the lines – the politics of redistricting
- Election reform – are the feds ready to take over?

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 3

www.elections.il.gov

UNIT # 5: ILLINOIS: THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- How it is structured
- Who are the players
- Where is the power
- How does it really work

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 5

Mooney, chapters 2 and 4

Pensoneau, the entire book

Rock, the entire book

LRU – Preface to Lawmaking

SEPTEMBER 21

UNIT #6: ILLINOIS: THE THIRD HOUSE

Readings: Mooney, all chapters not previously assigned

UNIT #7: ILLINOIS: MONEY IS THE MOTHER’S MILK OF POLITICS

Readings: “You Can’t Sell a Car on Sundays” – Redfield, on Blackboard

IL Campaign for Political Reform – www.ilcampaign.org

Center for Responsive Politics – www.opensecrets.org

Federal Election Commission – www.fec.gov

Campaign Finance Institute – www.cfinst.org

Ed Wojcicki, “Still the Wild West? A 10 Year Look at Campaign Finance Reform in Illinois”, SIU Press, Sept., 2006 –

www.edwoj.com/Articles/wojcicki-campaignfinance-siu-2006.pdf

www.Illinoisunshine.org

www.elections.il.gov

UNIT #8: ILLINOIS: WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM AND HOW IS IT SPENT

- **The Illinois State income tax – the great debate in 1969**
- **The GOMB – does it really run state government?**
- **Why budget crises are the rule rather than the exception**

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 10

LRU, Illinois Tax Handbook for Legislators

www.ilga.gov/Commission/cgfa

www.state.il.us/budget

www.ioc.state.il.us.com

OCTOBER 6

UNIT #9: EDUCATION – HOW MUCH LEARNING IS REALLY TAKING PLACE

- Role of the ISBE
- The haves and the have nots
- Will we ever change the way we fund schools?

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 9

www.isbe.state.il.us

www.isbe.state.il.us/EFAB

UNIT #10: ILLINOIS: THE JUDICIARY; REDISTRICTING

- How the court system is structured
- Should we elect our judges?
- The increasing role of money in judicial elections

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 7

UNIT #11: ILLINOIS: THE NEWS MEDIA AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

- How powerful is the fourth estate?
- The State House press corps: who are the movers and shakers?

Readings: No assignment

NOTE: In Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, read chapters 8 and 11 at your leisure as they are not specifically assigned to any unit.