

SYLLABUS FALL, 2020 PSC 525

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

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

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the course will meet virtually via Zoom. The seminar will meet from 12:30-4:30pm -- subject to adjustments to accommodate guest speakers or any supplemental training scheduled by the ILSIP program coordinator.

The seminar will meet on five days:

- Friday, October 16
- Friday, October 23
- Friday, November 6
- Friday, November 13
- Friday, November 20

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 will receive four 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. Lester, No, My Place: Reflections on sexual harassment in Illinois government and politics

The following materials from the Legislative Research Unit/COGFA will be discussed and are available @ http://www.ilga.gov/commission/lru/lru_home.html:

- How a Bill Becomes Law in Illinois
<http://www.ilga.gov/commission/lru/HowBillBecomesLaw2016.pdf>
- African American Legislators in Illinois, 1876-2019
<http://www.ilga.gov/commission/lru/AALegislators.pdf>

- Illinois Women in Congress and the General Assembly
<http://www.ilga.gov/commission/lru/FemaleLegislators.pdf>
- 1970 Illinois Constitution Annotated for Legislators
- Preface to Lawmaking
- Illinois Tax Handbook for Legislators

ATTENDANCE

Attendance (and active participation) for all seminars is required. Absences due to work or illness 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

The course grade will be calculated as follows: 30% for each of the three papers; 10% on attendance and participation. Extra credit writing options will be offered.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

There are three written assignments for the seminar [note that alternate options may be offered]:

1. In Nowlan and Johnson's book, chapters 2 through 7 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. Choose one of the six areas and : a) outline/summarize the problem(s) as presented by the authors, b) critique their proposals for change and c) indicate whether their proposals have a realistic chance of gaining approval, given the political structure and climate in Illinois. Where relevant changes have been enacted since the book's publication, describe what factors allowed for these changes.

SUGGESTED LENGTH – 6 PAGES – Due October 24

2. Predict the outcome of any competitive Illinois legislative race in 2020. Include a review of the candidates, and consider the impact of local and statewide policy issues and current events. Who will be elected, by what margin and why? Address how much the COVID pandemic impacted the race? Be thoughtful, reasoned and objective in your analysis.

SUGGESTED LENGTH – 4 PAGES – Due November 7

3. Examine the outcome of the 2020 elections, the Census and the upcoming redistricting process in Illinois. Make and support at least two conclusions about the outcomes and their implications for the State of Illinois and its people. Who might benefit? Who might suffer? How has the media covered, and how have elected officials responded to the moment we find ourselves in?

SUGGESTED LENGTH – 6 PAGES – Due November 21

COURSE SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 16

UNIT #1: ILLINOIS: (SOME OF) 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, chapters 1-2
Nowlan and Johnson, introduction and chapter 1
Lester, entire book

UNIT #2: THE NATURE OF ILLINOIS

- What is meant by political culture
- Confronting prejudice
- Illinois' own civil war: Chicago vs. downstate (+collar counties)
- Is regionalism real and does it matter?

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 4
LRU – 1970 Constitution annotated for Legislators

OCTOBER 23

UNIT #3: ILLINOIS: WHO ARE THE PLAYERS?

- * The Office of the Governor (the notables and not so notables)
- * The other Constitutional officers

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 6
The websites of the six constitutional officers

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

NOVEMBER 6

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 and Van-Dyke Brown, chapters 2 and 4
LRU – Preface to Lawmaking
African American Legislators in Illinois, 1876-2019
Illinois Women in Congress and the General Assembly

NOVEMBER 6 (continued)

UNIT #6: ILLINOIS: THE THIRD HOUSE

Read/Revisit: Mooney and Van-Dyke Brown, Lobbying Illinois
Lester, No, My Place

NOVEMBER 13

UNIT #7: 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 and the rule rather than the exception**

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 10

LRU, Illinois Tax Handbook for Legislators

UNIT #8: EDUCATION – HOW MUCH LEARNING IS REALLY TAKING PLACE

- **Role of the ISBE**
- **The haves and the have nots**
- **How have we changed the way we fund schools?**

Readings: Nowlan, Gove and Winkel, chapter 9

www.isbe.state.il.us

www.isbe.state.il.us/EFAB

NOVEMBER 20

UNIT #9: 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 #10: ILLINOIS: THE NEWS MEDIA AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

- **How powerful is the fourth estate?**
- **The State House press corps: why does it barely exist anymore?**

Readings: News of your choice + www.capitolfax.com