Field Internship Seminar  
(POLI 402.01)

**Course Description**
This course provides an opportunity to do an internship in Charleston, to interact with other political science students also doing internships and to ground that internship experience in a classroom setting. The course is designed to enhance your internship experience by providing a community within which to share experiences, a set of readings that will allow you to critically assess your internship experience, and a series of writing assignments that will allow you to process and analyze not just your internship, but also larger political issues that have emerged from your internship experience. What does work mean? What difference does it make if we don’t think consciously about our relationship with work? How do our life choices impact us?

Each of you is required to work a minimum of 140 hours during the semester (10-15 hours a week). Recognizing that this is a large time commitment the class sessions are built to allow you to reflect on that time and to share strategies with your fellow classmates for time and work management. Class attendance is required and class time will be most useful when you come ready to participate. You can shape this class to be what is most effective for you by participating actively.

**Course objectives**
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to 1) conduct qualitative research in an organizational setting; 2) demonstrate an understanding of the history, organizational mission, and political environment of the internship organization, 3) reflect on your own talents and interests in light of your internship experience, and 4) critically assess an aspect of the contemporary labor market.

**All readings are located on OAKS**

**Class Meetings**
This class meets once a week on Wednesdays from 5.30-6.45. Beginning on Wednesday August 21 and ending on Wednesday November 20th. Due to the fact that we will only be meeting once a week full attendance at every class meeting is required and critical. Missing any day of class and or not reporting to class on time will jeopardize your final grade.

During the course there may be some unforeseen circumstances which arise that alter the schedule below. In this case it will be YOUR responsibility to find out what those adjustments might be.
Summary of Final Grade Calculation

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Intellectual Engagement/Participation</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>EJournal Reflection</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization Ethnography Paper</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of Ethnography</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issue Paper</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internship Assessment/Hours</td>
<td>40 percent</td>
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Intellectual Engagement and Active Participation

During the once a week class meetings, I expect each student to at various times to be actively engaged discussing class readings, offering insights into their internship experience, providing solutions to problems encountered by their fellow classmates, and an overall collegial and sensitive member of the learning team for all activities. At the end of the course each person will be required to submit a self-evaluation of their performance and learning throughout the process. The self-evaluation will be used for assessing the individual’s final grade. Overall, intellectual engagement and active participation will be worth **10 percent** of the final grade.

Self-evaluation

Each student is required to provide a self-evaluation of your participation and learning in the course. I will consider your self-evaluation when calculating a final grade for your intellectual engagement and participation throughout the course (**keep in mind, however, that I may not arrive at the same conclusion!**). The self-evaluation will be in the form of a letter addressed to me. The letter does not have to be formal, but you need to include comments on your performance from the following areas: How did you do as: a discussant in class, offering insights into your internship experience, providing solutions encountered by your classmates, presenter, as an overall collegial and sensitive member of the learning team. Did you experience intellectual and professional growth which you feel might attribute to your experience with this course and the overall internship experience? Overall, considering all of these factors, what letter grade would you assign for yourself using the scale of (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, or F)? Please submit your evaluation letter no later than 8 am Monday December 3rd via the OAKS dropbox titled Self Evaluation.

EJournal Reflection

One of your central learning activities during this course will be keeping a personal journal. You should think of this writing as talking out loud or thinking out loud. And you should realize that some of your most interesting (to you, I mean) and productive journal entries may well begin with questions or notions that you haven’t really thought about much. You are not being asked to just note the hours you work and your work tasks and projects. I expect you to move beyond just listing. The journal will be a space for you to reflect on your internship - how is it meeting your expectations? If you were in charge how might you solve any issues that might arise? How are you doing balancing your school work and internship work? What kinds of questions does this work raise for you? What is happening locally, nationally, and or internationally that is impacting your organization? **Some weeks I will ask you to reflect on specific questions.** If you are used to writing essays and tests only, then you will need a paradigm shift. You will need to lower your standards in order to get the full benefits of your journal. Think about it: essays ask
you to be sure, they ask you to write clearly and authoritatively about a topic that you’ve come to some conclusions about (or even master). Part of the challenge of writing essays and tests lies in deciding for yourself what your conclusions are. No doubt you will come to conclusions during this course and you can certainly use your journals to reflect on them and examine them. But you can and should also use the journal to try out new ideas. To pick up on some aspects of the concerns and problems you encounter while doing your internship, and/or class discussion that you disagreed with or agreed with or that we didn’t get to fully air. The journal can and should be your place to continue the class discussions and conversations while out in the field. It can and should be your place to record your reactions to the readings you do. Your entries can agree or disagree with the readings. You can argue with it, or just talk about what might be confusing in your readings. If you end up temporarily lost or at a dead end, that’s reasonable and even useful. The point is that you’re using the journal to become fully involved in all the issues the course raises and your internship experience is giving you. Don’t forget to go back and re-read earlier entries; sometimes they’ll still look accurate, sometimes they’ll will look naive, and sometimes you’ll find that you now have answers to earlier questions. These insights can become new entries. Finally, use your journal to draw connections between this course/experience and the others you’ve had.

**Grading of EJournals**
The reflection journal counts for **15 percent** of your grade. It will be evaluated according to three criteria: commitment, ambition, and engagement. Your journals will NOT be graded according to correctness or paragraphing or sentence structure. However, I do ask that you use proper spelling, punctuation and grammar (*please no Text speak*). Your journal will need to include reflections on readings, interviews, internship task and activities etc. Note, you should keep your journal in one continuous Word document dating your entries. Your journal entries should be no less than two paragraphs in length. At the end of the semester you will submit the entire electronic journal.

**Organization Ethnography**
Each student is required to complete an ethnography of the organization you are working with this semester. To accomplish this goal you will be required to explore both explicit and tacit values, motivations and goals of the organization. In order to arrive at this information you will have to gather both formal documents, conduct interviews, and as a participant in the organization observer behavior. From your very first journal entry you will be building an understanding of the organization you work for. This assignment will culminate in a 6-8 page paper and presentation to the class. Further details and guidelines are available via OAKS.

**Issue Paper**
A 4-6 page paper on a specific issue or controversy that has arisen out of your internship experience and your profile of the organization you work for. A wide variety of topics are possible. All papers must include a clear and focused statement of the issue or controversy, the relevance of the issue or controversy to your workplace, an annotated bibliography with at least four academic sources, and an analysis of the controversy that incorporates the literature you
have read and assesses its implications for the organization you are working for. Further details and guidelines are available via OAKS.

**Internship Assessment/Hours**
Your internship assessment grade will be determined based on feedback from your internship supervisor, the formal evaluation completed by your supervisor, and the successful completion of 140 hours at your workplace.

**Course Outline**

**August 21st : Introduction**  
*Guest:* Erin Blevins

**August 28th**  
**The Idea of Work (Ejournal Due Wednesday September 28th Via OAKS by 8am)**

*Have Read:* “Servant leadership and procedural justice in the U.S. national park service: the antecedents of job satisfaction,” Jin Chung, Chan Jung, Gerard Kyle and James Petrick (OAKS)

*Journal questions:* What are your expectations of this internship (and this class)? What would you like to get out of it? What do you think that your organization can get from you? How do you understand job satisfaction? What does work mean for you? How did/does your family think about work? What jobs have you had and what have those jobs meant for your own thinking about work? Give a list of every job you have ever had (and think creatively about what job means about whether those jobs were “work.”) The above reading should also be a part of your journal reflection.

**September 4th**  
**No Class – in lieu of attendance at Annual Labor Day Celebration Monday September 2nd 4-6 pm Alumni Hall, School of Education**

**September 11th**  
**The Idea of Work Cont’d (Ejournal Due Wednesday September 11th Via OAKS by 8am)**

*Have Read:* “Opportunity Costs: the true price of internships,” Madeleine Schwartz (OAKS)

*Journal questions:* Are interns “invisible” at your internship site? How would you compare what is happening (thus far!) in your internship to the argument Schwartz has about internships? Also reflect on Annual Labor Day and what work means based on different labor experiences.
September 18th  The World Of Direct Experience
Have Read: “Studying Formal Organizations” “Participant Observation” “Interviewing
Informants” (all found on OAKS)
Assigned: Organization Ethnography (Check OAKS for handout) & Bring into class a copy of
your organization’s mission statement.
*As you read about studying formal organizations start thinking of the various methods you
might employ to achieve getting the information.

September 25th  The World Of Direct Experience cont/ (Ejournal Due Wednesday
September 25th Via OAKS by 8 am.
Guest: Dr. Annette Watson
Have Read: “Encounters and Collaborations.” (found on OAKS)

Journal Questions: Who holds leadership positions in your internship site? What kind of
educational and/or technical background do those positions need/require? What about the other
workers in the organization? What kinds of expertise/knowledge are most valued?

October 2nd  The World Of Direct Experience cont/d (Ejournal Due Wednesday
October 2nd Via OAKS by 8am
Have Read: Trickle Down feminism” Sarah Jaffe (OAKS)

Journal questions: how does gender “work” in your internship site? How
gendered is it? How do you know this? Does this tell you anything about
gender and work?

October 9th  Diversity in the Workplace
Guest: Dr. Kristi Brian (Office of institutional Diversity)
Have Read: TBA
Have Done: Taken the Strong Interest Inventory (this allows Meredith Gerber time to analyze
results)

October 16th  Your Interests and Expectations
Guest: Meredith Gerber
Have Done: Strong Interest Inventory

October 23th  Powerful Presentations
Have Done: Selected an issue/controversy area. You should have met with me by this due date
or you should turn in a written one page description of your topic and Prepared and sent to me a
resume.

October 30th  Organization Profile Presentations
(Organizational Profile Paper Due no later than Friday November 1st by 12 (noon)Via OAKS
dropbox.)
November 6th  Your Interests and Expectations: What Shall I do with my life? Cont/d

**Guest:** Linda Robinson (Career Center)

**Have Read:** Prepared a resume

**Have Done:** Internship Evaluation Forms Due *(These will not be shared with your internship supervisor)*

November 13th  Building a Meaningful life

**Guest:** Dr. Marguerite Archie-Hudson

**Have Done:** Issue paper due No later than Wednesday November 13th Via OAKS dropbox by 8am

November 20th  *(Ejournal Due Wednesday November 20th Via OAKS by 8 am--- your entire ejournal should be turned in at this time)*

**Have Done:** Thank You letter to your organization and/or supervisor and your Self Evaluation Letter to me – due via OAKS by Monday December 2nd 8am

Journal Questions: Reflect on your internship experience and its implications for your academic studies and for the kind of work you want to pursue. Also what was your general “take-away” from Dr. Archie-Hudson’s conversation?