

# GUIDELINES FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE INTERNSHIPS

**PLEG 4010:** The Paralegal Internship is a special course in which a student works for a private attorney, law office, court, judge, or other legal entity to observe the workings of the legal system in practice and gain paralegal or legal assistant work experience. **(3 credit hours only)**

**PS 4040:** The Pre Law Internship is a special course in which a student works for a private attorney, law office, court, judge or other legal entity to directly experience life in the legal profession. **(3 credit hours only)**

**PS 4270:** The Political Campaign, NGO/Non-Profit, and Interest Group Internship is a special course in which a student works for a political campaign at the national, state or local level in order to directly experience the elements of campaigning for public office. This internship is also used for work with non-profits and interest groups which attempt to directly affect public policy. **(3-12 credit hours)**

**PS 4290:** The Public Service Internship is a special course in which a student works for a governmental agency at the national, state or local level in order to directly experience the elements of the public administration process. Some internship experiences with private (non-government) organizations are acceptable if both the organization and the job that the intern is to carry out deals substantially with government agencies or government policies. **(3-12 credit hours)**

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION**

1. Minimum 2.5 grade point average, overall (*unless a case can be made for why the GPA is low*)
2. Completed application
3. Conference with Internship Director (Prof. Lisa Langenbach) in advance of registration
4. Acceptance by approved office, organization, or agency
5. For the PLEG 4010 Paralegal and PS 4040 Prelaw internships ONLY - completion of PS 2440 with a grade of C or better

## **ACADEMIC CREDIT**

The internships are graded. In most circumstances, no more than six credits may be earned from PS 4270 and PS 4290. Certain exceptions to this rule exist, such as those interns who work full time for an entire semester for the Tennessee State Legislature or for a governmental agency in Washington, D.C. Up to six credits may be applied to the Political Science major or Political Science minor. Any hours beyond those applicable toward the major or minor are counted as electives. Every three credits requires at least 120 contact hours at the agency or organization. Under no circumstances will more than three credits be awarded for participation in an internship that is the intern's regular job.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS** (You will receive a grade of INCOMPLETE if all five parts are not submitted on time)

1. Internship Goals and Responsibilities essay. 5% of course grade. Due the first week of your internship. Upload to the Dropbox. During the first week of the internship, students will draft a two to three page essay explaining the responsibilities they will have in their placement, and their goals and expectations for the internship. This essay should address academic goals—what the student hopes to learn about politics and government and law, and its relation to course work completed. The essay should also address professional goals—what the student hopes to learn in terms of behaviors and practices in a professional setting.
2. Weekly Journal of your experiences. 15% of course grade. Each week or more often you must add a minimum 150 word post to your Online Journal in the Discussion section of the D2L course. Students will maintain a weekly journal where they will discuss their work product, events, experiences, and impressions. The D2L date stamp assures that everyone posts at least once a week.
3. Final Internship Paper. 10% of course grade. This is an evaluation of your internship experiences. Reflect on your internship experience. Did you achieve the goals you originally set out? Were there unexpected benefits of the experience, or unexpected problems that needed to be worked out? What did you do in this internship--the job, the duties, the tasks, the events, and was it worthwhile? Discuss the good parts of the job--what you liked, what you learned, why it was a good experience. Discuss the bad parts of the job--what you didn't like doing, what you didn't feel was helpful, the annoying and petty things. Would you recommend this internship to others--why or why not? What did you get out of the whole experience? Was it worthwhile? Remember--the papers are for my eyes only and will never be seen by the internship supervisors. Give candid thoughts on what you did and learned. Papers must be typed, double spaced, and uploaded to the Dropbox on or before the due date. As a rule, it should be at least 5 pages.
4. Internship Poster. 10% of course grade. Using the template (and looking at the example) in Content, make a poster for display on the Internship Bulletin Board telling where you worked, what you did, and the things you learned from the experience. Sell your internship experience to others. Use the template provided, save as a Word doc and upload as an attachment to the Dropbox by the deadline.
5. Supervisor evaluation form. 60% of course grade. Your supervisor must either email me ([Lisa.Langenbach@mtsu.edu](mailto:Lisa.Langenbach@mtsu.edu)) the completed form from their work email or snail mail it to me so that it arrives BEFORE the deadline for the Final Internship paper. Or, you may hand deliver a sealed envelope from your supervisor. YOU are responsible for making sure the form gets to me in time.