

**Liberal Arts 495:
Liberal Arts/Political Science Internship Program
Spring 2023
Jason Warner, PhD
jsw5813@psu.edu
Office Hours: By Appt.**

Course Description:

LA 495 is a one-semester course for students doing Political Science-related internships. This course is designed to combine your experiences working in fields such as government, law, public policy, interest advocacy, and international relations with coursework that ties your internship back to the broader study of politics.

There is no scheduled meeting time for the course. Students will instead interact with each other and with the professor via posts to the Canvas course site and by submitting the required assignments.

Course Goals:

The two primary goals of this course are to:

- Help students explore career opportunities through internship opportunities
- Encourage students to relate knowledge and information from coursework in political science/international politics to the internship experience

Grading Scale:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	76-79
C	70-75
D	60-69

F 59 and below

Assignments:

You will be evaluated based on the following:

- **Four (4) discussion board topics (20%)**
- **Four (4) short paper assignments (70%).**
- **Time sheets (10%)**

All assignments are to be submitted via CANVAS by 11:59 p.m. on the dates indicated below. Students will be deducted one letter grade or its equivalent in points for every day or portion thereof that an assignment is late.

Discussion Posts: There are four online discussions. Each discussion requires at least three (3) posts. The first post is the initial response to a prompt/question from the instructor. The second and third responses are reaction/replies to two different classmates.

Each discussion is worth 20 points – 10 for your initial post and 10 for your responses to the posts of others.

Points Evaluation	Grading Criteria for Discussion Posts
9-10 Excellent	Statements and comments are relevant and original. The entry is well written and demonstrates thoughtful consideration of the topic. The statements/comments stimulate additional thinking and discussion about the topic.
7-8 Strong	The statements/comments demonstrate thoughtful consideration of the topic but otherwise lack one of the qualities above.
5-6 Satisfactory	The statements/comments are relevant but more tangential to the topic or add little original information. The writing may be less clear or the ideas may not be as carefully presented.
0-4 Unsatisfactory	The statements/comments add little value to the discussion. Off-topic, unclear, repetitive, unprofessional in tone, or too brief to be of help in furthering the discussion.

Although the nature of your responses to your classmates' posts will depend on the topic of the initial prompt, the most productive responses will offer constructive advice, or expressions of empathy, support or disagreement that move the dialogue forward. Posts should always be courteous, respectful, and professional.

- **Discussion 1:** Describe a significant event, exchange, meeting, assignment, or conversation that occurred during the first week of your internship. Be sure to make clear why you deemed it significant.
 - **First Post due: January 22, 11: 59 pm**
 - **Replies due: January 29, 11: 59 pm**
- **Discussion 2:** Explore the website for the College of the Liberal Arts' Career Enrichment Network. Describe something you found on the website pertaining to professional development or careers that you think may be useful to you in the current or a future semester. Be sure to explain how and why you expect it to be useful. The only item off limits (that you cannot describe) is the Strengths Finder; it is the basis for assignment number two, described below.
 - **First Post due: February 19, 11:59 pm**
 - **Replies due: February 26, 11:59 pm**
- **Discussion 3:** Describe the behavior or actions of a co-worker or supervisor whom you believe exemplifies the kind of ethical or professional standard hope to maintain in your career.
 - **First post due: March 19, 11:59 pm**
 - **Replies due: March 26, 11:59 pm**
- **Discussion 4:** Describe a problem you encountered during your internship and how you sought to solve it. Be sure to explain both why you chose the course of action you did and whether or not your effort was successful. Your post should also explain what your efforts taught you about problem solving going forward.
 - **First post due: April 16, 11:59 pm**
 - **Replies due: April 23, 11:59 pm**

Short Paper Assignments: You will complete four short papers.

- **First Paper:** Prepare a two-page, double-spaced paper that describes as best you can the type of internship you were hoping to have. Don't worry about whether your expectations were realistic or not. Rather, provide as much detail as you can about the type of place you were hoping to work, the kind of work you had imagined being engaged in, the experience you were hoping to gain, the goals you wanted to accomplish, and any other detail of your expectations regarding the internship experience. Please also explain whether and how your preferences for an internship were shaped by one or more courses you have taken; be specific about how the course(s) affected your preferences and expectations (e.g., learning about how insurgents raise money to finance their terrorist activities piqued an interest in whether and how FBI agents who work on drug crimes are involved in Homeland Security).
 - **Due: February 5, 11:59 pm**
- **Second Paper:** Complete the CliftonStrengths assessment (<https://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/undergraduate->

[students/experiences/professional-development](#)). Prepare a three- to four-page, double-spaced paper that describes as specifically as you can how you can apply your strengths to specific careers. In addition, explain how you might build strengths and talents that you believe are valuable but are not among your “top five.”

- **Due: March 5, 11:59 pm**
- **Note:** In order to complete the assessment you will need an access code that you request from the Career Enrichment Network in the College of the Liberal Arts. You must allow three business days to receive the code. The assessment will provide you with a Signature Theme Report that outlines your “top five” strengths and talents. Once you have completed your assessment and reviewed your report, you are encouraged to schedule an appointment with a Liberal Arts Career Coach via your [Nittany Lion Careers](#) account to help you understand your strengths in preparation for writing your paper.
- **Third Paper:** Interview someone associated with your internship whose job you think is interesting. Prepare a two- to three-page, double-spaced paper that summarizes what you learned through the interview. Be sure to ask your interviewee about his or her training (e.g., education, previous work experience); about how he or she got the job; and about the job’s best and worst aspects. (You should also ask additional questions of your own design.).
 - **Due April 2, 11:59 pm**
- **Fourth Paper:** Write a three- to four-page, double-spaced paper that describes what your internship experience has taught you about policymaking and politics in practice. Explain how this practical knowledge reinforces or runs counter to the understanding of politics and the policy process that you developed through your coursework in political science/international politics. Your explanation should include references to specific courses you have taken.
 - **Due April 8, 11:59 pm**

Time Sheets: On the Canvas course page under “files” you will find time sheets you are required to submit **via Canvas assignment/drop box**. Time sheets are due on the 1st of every month by 11:59 pm. If the 1st falls on a weekend, your time sheets should be submitted the following Monday by 11:59 pm. On this form you will record the number of hours you worked each day and **obtain your supervisor’s signature verifying your submission.**

NOTE: YOU CANNOT PASS THE COURSE UNLESS YOU MEET THE HOURLY REQUIREMENT: 45 hours for 1 credit; 135 hours for 3 credits.

Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty

Students with questions about academic integrity should visit <http://www.la.psu.edu/> and then click on "Academic Integrity."

Penn State defines academic integrity as “the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner” ([Senate Policy 49-20](#)). Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information

or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without permission from the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students facing allegations of academic misconduct should not drop the course; those who do will be added to the course again and will be expected to complete course work and meet course deadlines. If the allegations are dismissed, then the drop will be permitted. Students found responsible for academic misconduct often receive academic sanctions, which can be severe, and put themselves at risk for disciplinary sanctions assigned by the University's Office of Student Conduct (see [Senate Policy G-9](#)).

Disabilities

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please consult the Student Disability Resources Web site: <http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources>. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, the disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with me and your other instructors as early in the semester as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The University offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff that welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and are sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation. For more information, please contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) <http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/> or 814-863-0395.

More immediate and emergency assistance is available through Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400 and Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741.

Educational Equity and Reporting of Bias

Penn State takes great pride to foster a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity via the Report Bias webpage <http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/>

Department of Political Science Web Site

You will find a wealth of information on the Political Science Department web site including course schedules, faculty office hours, faculty home pages describing their areas of teaching and research activities, answers to questions about advising, internship opportunities, announcements, and much, much, more. Check back often: <http://polisci.la.psu.edu/>

Illness/Extended Absences

If you do end up missing work time/class assignments, due to a COVID-19 please contact me as soon as possible, or have an appropriate third party do this so that we can arrange make up work, etc., including some potential ways to still complete your internship and get credit for the course. Please note that you may be asked to provide medical verification of your illness/absence.

During your enrollment at Penn State, unforeseen challenges may arise. If you ever need to miss an extended amount of class in such a circumstance, please notify your professor so you can determine the best course of action to make up missed work. If your situation rises to a level of difficulty you cannot manage on your own with faculty support, reach out to the Student Care & Advocacy office by phone at [\(814-863-2020\)](tel:814-863-2020) or email them at StudentCare@psu.edu."