

## Undergraduate Internship

# SAMPLE SYLLABUS

- GOVT 480 - 3 credits
- GOVT 480 - 6 credits

## George Mason University – Schar School of Policy and Government

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Instructor:	Dr. Ann Ludwick
Class Meets:	No face-to-face meetings / Class meets on Blackboard
Office:	Robinson A201
Office Hours:	by appointment
Office Phone:	703-993-1415
Email:	aludwick@gmu.edu

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### Course Description:

An internship is a learning experience where a student is in a specific job setting that integrates experiential work with academic work. Completing an internship for credit is a means of incorporating qualified and supervised work into your major or minor program. Among other things, it helps develop your awareness of the internal dynamics of a public organization (government agency, nonprofit, professional organization, or private firm doing public sector work) and the values and attitudes of people toward their mission, their clientele, and their administrative structures.

A successful internship will contribute to three areas of your development: personal, professional, and civic. Personal development pertains to work skills such as oral and written communication, working in groups, and creative thinking. Professionally, you can explore careers and apply your academic learning to practical work situations. Finally, your experience can allow you to become more civically engaged and aware of life in public service.

All interns should consider contacting me should you have any questions regarding the academic and professional obligations of the internship.

### Learning Goals:

- Connect what you've learned in class with your workplace experience
- Develop job competencies for public service
- Complete assignments that encourage in-depth reflection about the internship
- Explore career options and gain work experience

### Blackboard:

All interns will be registered on Blackboard. Blackboard is considered the classroom through which all course information and assignments should be posted and submitted. For Blackboard technical assistance, go to: <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/Students/>

## Grading Requirements:

This credit-bearing course is graded Satisfactory or No Credit. An S grade reflects satisfactory work (C or better for undergraduate students); otherwise, the student receives no credit (NC). S and NC have no effect on the student's GPA. In order to receive a passing grade for the internship class, you must earn, at minimum, 70 points by completing the following assignments:

Required Assignments	Due Date	Points
Required hours on the job	End of the semester	Required
Five blog posts	First half of the semester - 5 points each	25
Resume	Towards the end of the semester	10
Interview paper <b>for six credit interns only</b>	End of the semester	Required
Final paper	End of the semester	25
Employer Evaluation	End of the semester (Dr. Ludwick sends to employers)	40

## Assignments:

### Minimum Required Hours on the Job

135 hours for three credits; 270 for six credits. Verified by employer at evaluation time.

### Blog Posts

Participate in five blog topics on Blackboard. In responding to all posts, please use discretion when needed. Bear this in mind regarding information about the security clearance process or anything of a proprietary nature having to do with your job or organization. Your posts should be one to two paragraphs in length. The blog will remain active throughout the semester. Use it to communicate with class colleagues, as a reference for where everyone is working, to share what problems/issues you may encounter, and as a networking tool.

A total of five topics will be posted every two weeks. The due dates are provided each semester – in order to receive points, your post is due by the below dates (all are Fridays) at 11:59pm:

- Blog 1
- Blog 2
- Blog 3
- Blog 4
- Blog 5

Late posts will not earn points. Each blog post is worth 5 points.

### Resume

Submit an up to date professional resume that includes your current internship. The resume is worth 10 points.

## Final Paper

In a 6-8 page, double-spaced essay, complete the following:

1. Describe the initial job search process. Discuss how your original job description and duties matched your actual internship experience. Did your responsibilities change over the course of the semester or were they appropriately defined and maintained from the start? Identify two specific skills you developed over the course of this internship.
2. Explain how your theoretical and academic knowledge related to your work experience. What concepts from your Government or other classes pertained to your job?
3. Discuss your overall learning experience in this internship. Do you feel that it was a worthwhile learning experience? What could you and/or your workplace supervisor have realistically done differently to improve your overall experience?
4. Finally, what is your attitude toward public service as a result of your internship? Has it changed - why or why or why not?

The final paper is worth 25 points. The grading rubric is as follows:

### I Process

- explain job search process
- discuss your job responsibilities and two skills that you developed
- explain any changes

### II Work Experience

- relate job experience with academics
- identify relevant classes

### III Overall Learning Experience

- reflect on experience
- difficulties / improve the experiences?

### IV Public Service

- impressions

### V Spelling / grammar / structure/ well organized

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5 points per section – very detailed, each subtopic was completely addressed

4 points per section – most subtopics were covered

3 points per section – weak information, did not quite answer the subtopic areas

**\*\*\*Interview Paper (required only for six credit interns)**

In a 6-page, double-spaced paper, interview two people in your organization/office (at least one must be senior level). Discuss their perspectives on how the organization/office works and how it fits into the larger policy or public service process. Internships vary from student to student, therefore, it is up to each intern to determine the questions necessary for the paper. The questions should not “talk down” to the interviewee; for example, don’t ask a congressional staffer how congress works. In essence, you should ask questions that connect theory (what you have learned in your program) to practice (what happens in the “real” world). Other potential avenues to investigate include what preparation (education/training) the respondent feels best prepared them for their position/career. Do not simply submit a transcript of your interviews. Weave a narrative essay from the questions and answers.

**Employer Evaluation**

The intern must obtain a satisfactory evaluation by the work site supervisor. This evaluation process is initiated at the end of the semester by the Instructor. Evaluations are submitted directly to me. Your supervisor will grade your performance. The letter grade they assign to you will be converted to a number grade for points as follows:

40 points	A
35 points	B
30 points	C
25 points	D

**Grading:**

This course is graded Satisfactory/No Credit. To receive a Satisfactory grade, your total points must add up to 70 or more.

***Disability statement***

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

***Honor Code statement***

- George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited.
- All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.
- See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/> for details about the Mason Honor Code.

***Enrollment statement***

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class.

Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes.

(Deadlines each semester are published in the Schedule of Classes available from the Registrar's Website [registrar.gmu.edu](http://registrar.gmu.edu).)

After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.