

A Note to Office Managers and Committee Clerks about Manoa Legislative Interns.

First, thank you for hosting our intern in your office. These placements are an important part of the student's education in public policy at the University of Hawaii. The program for Manoa Political Interns provides some of the finest scholarship awards Manoa has to offer. The students selected are among the most competent in the university. Their scholarships provide support for 12 to 15 credits, composed of their work in the office and the academic seminar participation and final paper. The Manoa Political Interns, perhaps unlike many volunteer interns, are to be regarded as 35 to 40 hour per week members of the office staff. If for some reason unrelated to health issues, emergency child care, or the like, the intern cannot fulfill this obligation, please contact me immediately so that we may address the matter.

The internship, as a matter of policy, and as a matter of the HRS provisions for the use of volunteers in State offices, is not conceived as a low wage clerical position. We expect interns to be given substantial analysis work, and to be held to a standard of performance that is consistent with their demonstrated scholarship to this point.

If for any reason the intern cannot do the work of the office, does it badly, breaks a confidence of the office, or violates a rule or governing legal standard of the Hawaii State Legislature, please inform me immediately

As you will see from the attached syllabus note, we set clear expectations for the students. At the same time, we must be protective of their interests in a solid education. Should an intern not be working out in your office for whatever reason, please contact me directly. We shall work out any issues, make another placement, or tender some alternative solution. Should an intern not perform well or meet the behavior standards of the office, the intern should not be given meaningless work and shoved behind a door. Of course while the interns are working in the Hawaii State Legislature, they are subject to all of the same ethics codes and sexual or other harassment rules as apply to all employees and office-holders. If any issues arise that you think may warrant my attention, please contact me directly – and promptly.

I can be reached by email at lnitz@hawaii.edu, and by my office telephone, 956-8665 or my cell phone 292-5341. I am available for any questions you may have. Email is usually the fastest communication.

Cordially,

Lawrence H. Nitz, Ph.D.

Professor and

Director Manoa Political Internship Program

Political Science 402 (6 credits) /

Political Science 399(3 -6 credits)/

Sociology 496 (3-6 credits)

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Preliminary Syllabus. Spring 2016

General Communications: In order to provide a private communication device for the Hawaii State Legislative Interns, I will use the mail tool feature of Lulima, under the Political Science 402 course number. Only Hawaii State Legislative interns are enrolled in this course. All interns must be enrolled in my section of 402 to receive course communications. We offer a Sociology 496 directed research course to provide a block of academic work and credit outside of Political Science. Please plan to take that for 3 credits. If you have a major or minor in any field other than Political Science, please work out a 3 -6 credit directed research course in your major. Every department has a 399 or equivalent number, but most are never listed in the course roster. You should ask an appropriate faculty member to offer you a unit of that course for the internship program. In principle your paper at the end of the year will be supervised by that instructor and graded in that course. If you have any questions about registration, credits, or appropriate directed research courses, please consult me.

Course Requirements: Interns are required to participate in the *weekly internship seminar*, provisionally scheduled for Friday afternoons in the Capitol; the day may change. I will circulate a note on the exact time and room in a few days. In the event that there is a conflict with a critical committee meeting schedule, we will move the course time to some other time of day or day of the week. **You are responsible for being present and participating in seminar.** In particular, it is not appropriate to have an office manager tell you 5 minutes before the seminar session that you have a committee hearing to staff. If there are regular hearings that may be a problem for our schedule, we will block around the time of these unavoidable hearings. Twenty-five percent of the 6 credit Pols 402 course depend on regular and coherent presentations and reactions in seminar. Presentation assignments will be allocated from time to time, a week or two in advance of the discussion date.

Presentation Assignments:

1. All of the literature in the course will be presented in the seminar by class members. In short, we shall review each chapter of the texts.

2. Each course member will be assigned one or more chapters each week, through the completion of a given text. The presentation shall be based on not more than 12 PowerPoint slides, reproduced in the 6-up handout format.
3. The format implies that you must abstract the chapter into no more than twelve salient themes, yet present enough of each theme that there is a basis for discussion.

After the mid-point of the session, when all bills have crossed to the opposite house, it will be time to begin documenting a potential *paper topic*. You may follow bills and issues of interest from the first day of the session, but it is really important to remember that of the 3500 or so bills introduced, not even 350 of them are passed by both houses. You need to keep an eye on an area of legislation, and be ready to move from one favorite bill to another as draft bills die in committee.

Paper Process

1. After crossover, please give me a list of three bills. Print the bills for me, and the committee reports from the final committee. Please provide a commentary on the likely implication of each of the bills.
2. We shall discuss the bills and their implications. At that point you will write a prospectus that explains what you will do in the paper, the sources available, the entities in the community taking sides on the bill.
3. After review and comment on the prospectus, please begin your paper. The paper should be in standard manuscript format in American Psychological Association or American Sociological Association documentation style, and supplied with full references. This should be a 20 to 30 page paper. Please note that legislative material is dense, often must be quoted extensively, and therefore affects the page count.

The paper will be graded under the POLS 399, Sociology 496 or the substitute course in another department that you have arranged.

Finally, a segment of your grade (the Political Science 402 portion) will be based on your performance in office and the final evaluation provided by your supervisors. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to take initiative and ask for work, to do work well and professionally, and to treat others in the office with respect, and probably a bit of humility. Please always run the spell checker and grammar checker on everything you write. Please convey factual information when asked to review an issue, not your top-of-the-head conclusions. It does not matter that you might be right; it does matter that the representative or senator cannot use your grand conclusions as a basis for decision or even discussion with others.

Be polite to everyone who enters or calls the office¹. Be protective of the member's time and privacy. Do not usher a random visitor in to see the member without permission from the Committee Clerk or the Office Manager. (There may be folks the member does not want to see for good legislative reasons, folks who have been threatening, or just plain nut-cases—do not make these judgments without careful guidance.)

Invitations and social events must be honored. Remember that Hawaii is a place that honors its many cultures and foods—never, never say to any adult “I don’t like that!” about a local food. Please share in the work of the office—many things have to be shared, from running errands to getting lunch, to filing bills and committee reports. Not even the members are released from the obligation to share the work!

Please remember that even in a nearly one-party state, legislation can be a zero sum game—either between the houses, or within a house between factions. Do not discuss your member’s positions or potential positions on bills other than those he or she has sponsored—any member needs his or her colleagues’ votes on every sponsored bill. There is no assurance that one can get another person’s votes without some recognition of the other person’s policy interests. Saying to anyone that your member is really hot on XXX environmental measure will completely give away the member’s bargaining position on that issue—and thus the ability to pull in a vote for his or her own bill.

Please do not gossip about members or staffers. You do not know the people working in the Capitol. Your seemingly innocent remark may come back to be reflected on the office in which you work. Please think about the consequences of an intern mentioning that “YYY is an idiot” when this opinion is heard by YYY or his spouse or staffer. What if YYY was the last required vote to create the Speaker’s or Senate President’s coalition? There is no place in Hell suitable for an intern who brings down the organization of a legislative body—Only 15 units of clear, bold “Fs.”

Reflective Journals are due by e-mail by 6PM Sunday of every week. Please DO NOT use Word or other attachments for the text of your journal. Always use UH Webmail if you are writing from a computer in another place or one that you do not own. Webmail leaves no track on the borrowed computer, as long as you close the browser, and it writes a copy to your UH email “sent” box. I regard the journals as private communications—that is why they are not posted to Laulima! We need to see how you are thinking as the session goes along. That means some thought on the implications of what you are doing, the likely impact of bills if put into law, the groups to benefit or suffer, the enforceability of various kinds of provisions, the issues that led to the bill in the first place, and so on.

A reflective journal is not a simple catalog of time spent. If you give me an hour-by hour catalog of how the day was spent, I must conclude that you did not think about anything you have done. If there is a problem with your assignments—you must write me a separate e-mail on this subject. Where different kind of work can be assigned, we will work that out. Where your boring work is a result of poorly done prior assignments, you had best come clean on that, so that we can repair your work reputation. If you give me a journal entry which catalogs menial clerical assignments day in and day out—I will not take that as a protest about work organization—only about your lack of thought. I cannot emphasize enough that a journal is not the vehicle for expressing concern about your work assignments—that must be a separate communication. From experience we have learned that submitting one trivial journal after another will not document a bad work atmosphere adequately, will not point out abuse to which you may be exposed, or protect you from bad stuff. (We had one intern who did not express legitimate

the session, during which you may travel, with the permission of your office. You may not travel or create an absence during the regular University of Hawaii Spring break period.

This course starts on the first business day after New Year's day, the 4th of January, 2016 While the Legislature starts formally about the third week of January, if you show up then, you will have missed all the critical training on the software systems, the mandatory classes for new employees, the ethics course and a host of critical exposures. Moreover, everyone else will have been moving furniture, resetting files, and preparing material and facilities for the session. You will not have participated, and with the best will in the world, you will not like being supervised by the high school student who has three weeks of seniority on you. This is a most important time in your internship—get in at the beginning and help with all the setup and intellectual heavy lifting. It does not matter whether the office has any typical “internny” work for you before the session starts. All offices should have more work than they know how to finish. Help get it done.

Dress and Presentation. The Hawaii State Legislature is much less formal than the United States Congress. Only members are required to wear suits, and then only on the floor of the House or Senate. There are some important considerations of your self-presentation, though, that are worth attention. The folks at Virginia Tech have done a good job of sketching the range of concerns that both interns and employers are likely to have. Please see:

<http://www.career.vt.edu/JobSearchGuide/BusinessCasualAttire.html>.

ⁱ These comments may be uncommon in syllabi. It is nevertheless important to put the remarks in writing, to be sure that there is no misunderstanding.

ⁱⁱ Because the books we are using are very specialized, we have a bit of a price advantage buying them in the national on-line new and used book market. Please order your books before the semester starts, so as not to have them lost in Christmas postal traffic.