

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY-PUEBLO

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 480
PRACTICUM IN POLITICS AND PUBLIC SERVICE**

STUDENT MANUAL

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I. INTRODUCTION

Political Science 480, Practicum in Politics and Public Service, provides a context in which undergraduate political science majors and minors can supplement classroom learning with a greater understanding of the discipline of political science and/or actual experience in the political arena. Political Science 480 can serve as a bridge between academia and the real world of research and politics.

Opportunities include research projects and/or placement in government, government agencies, and other public service organizations. Some placements result from request from interested parties, others are arranged by faculty members. In some cases, students identify their desired placement. All placements are negotiated by the Practicum Coordinator and a representative of the agency or office. If a working relationship is successfully negotiated, a Memorandum of Understanding is issued and then signed by the Practicum Coordinator or supervising faculty member, the student, and the agency representative.

II. POLITICAL SCIENCE PROGRAM GOALS

- A basic understanding of historical, philosophical and empirical foundations of political science;
- A general command of knowledge about the American political system, global studies, the history of political thought, and standard political science research approaches; &
- The ability to continue personal study and learning on an independent basis about specific subjects in the discipline.
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III. POLITICAL SCIENCE 480 OPTIONS

- ***Public or Government Organization Internships*** - These placements result from direct requests from such organizations or arrangement by faculty members with such organizations. In some cases students identify their desired placement. Desired placements cannot be guaranteed. Examples of placements are contained in Appendix A.
- ***Legislative Internship Program*** – The Legislative Internship Program involves the student being assigned to a state legislator for the annual legislative session which extends from January through March. The Program requires a student to spend two days a week in Denver. Acceptance into the program cannot be guaranteed.
- ***Research Internship*** – Such internships involve research on a specific political topic that a faculty member is currently working on and is carried out under the direct supervision of that faculty member. Acceptance for a research internship cannot be guaranteed.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF POLITICAL SCIENCE 480

- **Professional Development** - The intern experience serves to introduce the student to the professional world of politics and public service. It contributes to an understanding of the values and ethics of public services and political action. The research experience serves to introduce the student to research practice and methods.
- **Knowledge Enhancement** - The intern experience provides an opportunity to develop a working knowledge of public service agencies, their policies and procedures, funding sources, organizational structures, and the political environment in which they operate. For placements with political parties, the intern program provides an opportunity to learn the practical side of campaigning, fundraising, electoral politics, and constituent servicing. The research experience introduces the student to research practice and methods.
- **Critical Thinking** - The intern experience fosters the student's ability to analyze and integrate classroom knowledge in the context of real world politics and public service. It should provide the initial skills for conceptual problem solving that is essential to all careers.
- **Career Exploration** - The intern experience provides the student with an opportunity to seriously consider possible political and public service career options. Career intentions developed in the classroom can be tested in a real world setting.

V. ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

- **Enrollment** - Students can enroll for 3 or 6 credits. For majors, 6 credits of 480 can be counted towards program electives; for minors, 3 credits can be counted towards program electives. Additional credits can apply toward general university electives.
- **Prerequisites** - Practicum was developed for juniors and seniors, and they receive priority consideration for internship possibilities. However, sophomores and freshman can also enroll in PS 480. All students wishing to enroll in PS 480 must receive program permission.

VI. PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- **Public or Government Organizations** – Placement in a public organization is based on the availability of an appropriate site, the availability of direct supervision at the site, and the specific tasks assigned to the student. Such sites include, but are not necessarily limited to, federal, state and local government agencies, formal party organizations. Work must be carried out on-site unless the work is allowed to be done off-site by the immediate supervisor.
- **Legislative Internship Program** – Participation in the Legislative Internship Program is based on acceptance to the Program. Interested students must submit an application to the Political Science Program Coordinator no later than the first week of October of the fall semester. Acceptance into the program is based on strict criteria that are available in the

application packet and is not guaranteed. An application can be obtained on-line at the CSU-Pueblo website. Program information is contained in Appendix C of this document.

- **Research Internship** – Research internships are individual projects that are supervised by a faculty member. Such projects are limited and depend upon the current research activities of the program’s faculty. In order to obtain a research internship the student must get the approval of the faculty member he or she will be working with.

VII. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Credit - Students serve their internships under the direct supervision of a representative of the assign placement or an assigned faculty member for the following number of hours:

For 3 credit hours, a minimum of 9 hours of intern work per week is required for a total of 110 hours of field work and 8 hours meeting time with the faculty supervisor for the semester. Hours of meeting with the assigned faculty member are arranged between the faculty member and the student.

For 6 credit hours, a minimum of 18 hours of intern work per week is required for a total of 220 hours of field work and 10 hours meeting time with the faculty supervisor for the semester. Hours of meeting with the assigned faculty member are arranged between the faculty member and the student. Evaluation of student performance is based on completion of the required number of hours, submission of all required written assignments, and a mid-term and final evaluation by the immediate supervisor. Evaluation forms are contained in Appendix D of this manual and can be obtained on line at the University website, Political Science Program webpage.

Other requirements for each internship type:

Public or Government Internships

- **Hours** - Students are required to keep a written record of hours worked which will be submitted with a final report on the internship experience. The hours worked must be validated by the agency/field supervisor.
- **Journal** - Students will keep a personal journal of their intern activities and experiences. The journal should contain a summary of daily activities and it can be update on a daily or weekly basis.
- **Project Paper** – Drawing on their journals, students must prepare an 8-10 page paper (double-spaced) containing the following elements:
 - Summary of intern activities, 1 page maximum.
 - A narrative of what was learned during the internship, 6-8 pages.
 - An evaluation of the experience and how it might be improved, 1 page maximum.

Legislative Internship Program

- **Hours** – Students are required to keep a written record of hours worked which will be submitted with a final report on the internship experience. The hours worked must be validated by the assigned legislator or supervisor.
- **Journal** – Students will keep a personal journal of their intern activities and experiences. The journal should contain a summary of daily activities and your impression of the legislative process. You should have two entries for each week at the state legislature.
- **Papers** - Students are required to complete two papers. The first paper is due at the mid-point of the internship and should be a reflection on experience at the legislature and assigned readings. The second paper is due at the end of the semester and will include a narrative of what was learned during the internship. Specific requirements (such as page length, assigned readings) will be given in a handout at the beginning of the internship.
- Completion of all internship activity and evaluation forms by due dates (given by the faculty supervisor at the beginning of the internship).

Research Internship

- **Hours**-Students are required to keep a written record of hours worked which will be submitted with a final report on the internship experience.
- **Research Methods Paper**-A paper that describes the methods used during the internship is required. This could include, for example, a description of qualitative and quantitative methods utilized to complete the research project.
- **Research Portfolio**-The portfolio should contain all the research completed for the research project. This may include a final research paper, research in progress, and/or collected research materials.
- Completion of all activity and evaluation forms for the internship.

VIII. COURSE GRADING

Grading for PS 480 is “Satisfactory” or Unsatisfactory.” A satisfactory grade will be given if all of the requirements of the particular internship have been met. An unsatisfactory means that the student failed to meet the requirements of the placement, including documentation related to the placement and any and all written material for the course due at the end of the semester. Incompletes will only be given at the discretion of the supervising faculty members on a case-by-case basis.

APPENDIX A
PLACEMENT EXAMPLES

POLSC 480: PUBLIC OR GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION INTERNSHIPS

Criteria for Selection of Practicum Sites

- Relevance of the placement to political experience.
- Availability of supervision and motivation to serve as a field instructor.
- The opportunity for students to gain a meaningful and practical experience in some political or public service area.

Examples of Placement Sites

State and Local Government:

- Municipal and county agencies
- State administrative agencies
- Campaign offices of state, county and municipal elected officials

Federal Government:

- Local offices of House and Senate members
- Local offices of Federal agencies
- Federal offices located in Washington, DC (**note:** These positions require at least one semester out of school or placement during the summer)

Some past placements include the following:

Government, County

Human Resources
Planning and Development
District Attorney
Commissioners
Sheriff's Department
Juvenile Diversion Program, District Attorney's Office

Government, City

Administration
City Council

Pueblo West

Planning and Zoning

Agencies

Southern Central Reemployment
League of Women Voters

Federal

Congressman Salazar

Other

Colorado Democratic Coordinating Campaign
El Paso County Republicans

APPENDIX B
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
POLITICAL SCIENCE 480 AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

POLSC 480: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I. Public or Government Organization Internships

Responsibilities of the Agency

1. To consider a student for placement without respect to race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability (unless the student is not able to function in the agency setting), or political belief.
2. To identify a field supervisor and grant the supervisor the necessary time to fulfill his/her intern-teaching responsibilities.
3. To provide the student with opportunities to gain practical experience in the specific tasks of the agency.
4. To provide physical facilities and materials necessary for the student to carry out his or her assigned tasks.
5. To notify the Faculty Supervisor of any difficulties the student might have in carrying out his or her task.
6. To dismiss the student if he or she is not fulfilling the agreed contract.

Responsibilities of the Field Supervisor

1. To interview and assess the student's suitability for placement with the agency.
2. To write a learning contract with the student that identifies learning goals and assignments commensurate with the educational objectives of PS 480.
3. To orient the student to the agency, including agency policies, procedures, services, administrative structure, and linkage to other agencies.
4. To provide the student with tutorial instruction necessary to carry out assigned tasks.
5. To provide the student with evaluative feedback about his or her performance.
6. To provide the Faculty Supervisor with two written evaluation reports of the student's performance—one midway through the placement and one at the end of the placement.

Responsibilities of the Student

1. To arrange a placement interview with the agency.
2. To report to the agency at the date and time specified for the beginning of placement.
3. To participate in formulating the learning contract with the faculty supervisor that articulates learning objective and learning assignments.
4. To act as a mature, professional person at the assigned agency.
5. To develop professional work habits in completion of agency assignments.
6. To attend scheduled conferences with assigned faculty member.
7. To observe the agency's schedule for working hours. In the case of illness or other extraordinary circumstances necessitating absence, the student is expected to notify his or her site supervisor about the reason for the absence and expected date of return. The student must arrange to make up the time missed to complete the 110 or 220 hour requirement.
8. To seek assistance from the faculty supervisor if problems are encountered.
9. To arrange with the agency supervisor for the termination or orderly transfer of work assignments before leaving the agency.
10. To complete an evaluation of the field experience at the end of the placement.

Responsibilities of the University Practicum Coordinator or Faculty Supervisor

1. To identify and select practicum sites that will offer meaningful political and public service experiences.
2. To coordinate and monitor the practicum experience.
3. To allocate sufficient time to meet and coordinate with the agency and student on work assignments and other information essential to a well integrated field experience.

II. Legislative Internship Program

Responsibilities of Legislator, Legislative Aid, and/or Legislative Intern Coordinator

1. To consider a student for placement without respect to race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability (unless the student is not able to function in the agency setting), or political belief.
2. To provide the student with opportunities to gain practical experience in the specific tasks of the Legislature.
3. To provide physical facilities and materials necessary for the student to carry out his or her assigned tasks.
4. To notify the faculty supervisor of any difficulties the student might have in carrying out his or her task.
5. To dismiss the student if he or she is not fulfilling the agreed contract

Responsibilities of the Program Coordinator

1. Contact students in the fall semester about the application process.
2. Interview and assess the student's suitability for placement at the Legislature.
3. To write a learning contract with the student that identifies learning goals and assignments commensurate with the educational objectives of PS 480.
4. To orient the student to the legislature, including legislative policies, procedures, services, administrative structure, and linkage to other agencies.
5. To provide the student with tutorial instruction necessary to carry out assigned tasks.
6. To provide the student with evaluative feedback about his or her performance.
7. To arrange University transportation to the legislature – If funds and transportation are available.

Responsibilities of the Student

1. If not provided by the University, the student is responsible for his/her transportation to and from the state legislature.
2. To arrange a placement interview with the legislative internship coordinator and legislator.
3. To report to the legislature at the date and time specified for the beginning of placement.

4. To participate in formulating the learning contract with the faculty supervisor that articulates learning objective and learning assignments.
5. To act as a mature, professional person at the assigned legislative office.
6. To develop professional work habits in completion of legislative assignments.
7. To attend scheduled conferences with assigned faculty member.
8. To observe the legislative office schedule for working hours. In the case of illness or other extraordinary circumstances necessitating absence, the student is expected to notify his or her site supervisor about the reason for the absence and expected date of return as well as notifying the program coordinator. The student must arrange to make up the time missed to complete the 110 or 220 hour requirement.
9. To seek assistance from the faculty supervisor if problems are encountered.
10. To arrange with the legislative supervisor for the termination or orderly transfer of work assignments before leaving the internship.
11. To complete an evaluation of the internship experience at the end of the placement.

III. **Research Internships**

Responsibilities of the Faculty Member

1. To consider a student for placement without respect to race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability or political belief.
2. To provide the student with opportunities to gain research experience of potential value in academic or policy careers.
3. To provide physical facilities and materials necessary for the student to carry out his or her assigned tasks.
4. To dismiss the student if he or she is not fulfilling the agreed contract.
5. To provide the student with tutorial instruction necessary to carry out assigned tasks.
6. To provide the student with evaluative feedback about his or her performance.
7. To write a learning contract with the student that identifies learning goals and assignments commensurate with the educational objectives of PS 480.

Responsibilities of the Student

1. To participate in formulating the learning contract with the faculty supervisor that articulates learning objective and learning assignments.
2. To complete all activities mutually agreed upon with the faculty supervisor by the end of the internship period.
3. To develop professional work habits in completion of agency assignments.
4. To attend scheduled progress meetings with the faculty member.

5. To seek assistance from the faculty supervisor in a timely fashion if problems are encountered that prevent continuation or completion of research.
6. To complete an evaluation of the research experience at the end of the placement, including hours worked, material produced, and a paper describing research methods employed, and any other forms as require.

IV. PROBLEM SOLVING AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Proper procedures and channels should be followed if a student experiences any difficulty or becomes dissatisfied with his or her field placement, and are as follows:

1. In agency placements, the problem should be discussed constructively and in an issue-oriented fashion with the agency supervisor. A student doing a research internship should discuss the problem in a similar manner with the faculty member he or she is working with. Any problem a student has in the legislative internship program must be brought immediately to the Political Science Program Coordinator.
2. For students in agency placements, the problem will attempt to be resolved at the agency level with the faculty supervisor, who will subsequently discuss the situation with both the student and agency supervisor when appropriate. If a problem arises in the research internship and cannot be resolved by the supervising faculty member, the student can bring it to the attention Faculty Supervisor. Final resolution of the problem must rest with the faculty member supervising the research.
3. If a satisfactory solution cannot be achieved, the student may elect, with consent of both the faculty supervisor and the agency supervisor, to terminate the placement. If that occurred the student cannot drop the course during the allowed time period. Otherwise, the student will receive an “unsatisfactory” grade for the course.

If an agency supervisor, faculty member, or legislator is dissatisfied with a student’s performance, the procedures to be followed are:

1. The supervisor or legislator should immediately bring the issue to the student’s attention in order that the student may help to solve the problem.
2. When appropriate, the supervisor or legislator should work with the student to modify the assignment contract so that the supervisor’s expectations can be stated in constructive terms.
3. If the student’s performance does not adequately improve using the above procedure, the following step(s) should be taken:
 - Agency placements – The agency supervisor should immediately contact the faculty supervisor to determine what corrective action should be taken.
 - Research placements – The faculty member should confer with the faculty supervisor to determine what corrective action should be taken.

- Legislative internship – The legislator should immediately contact the faculty supervisor to determine what corrective action should be taken.
4. Unexplained absences, breaches of agency, office, or legislature protocols, or apathetic performance of assignments constitute grounds for dropping the student from the internship program. In such cases, the student has the option of withdrawing from the course during the allowed period of time, or receiving an “unsatisfactory” grade for the course.

FIELD PLACEMENT INSURANCE COVERAGE

All students whose internship is an elective to meet degree requirement are covered by liability insurance carried by the University. All student activity approved by the host agencies and field supervisors as part of the field placement is covered except of “wanton and willful” neglect, irresponsibility, or inaction. In order to ensure that adequate liability coverage exist, the “Memorandum of Understanding” must be completed and returned to the Practicum Coordinator prior to the first week of field placement. Completion of the student activities and assignments sections of the contract is important in the process of certification of coverage. It is not acceptable for that section to be left blank since the assignments reflect activities intended to address placement objectives, and thus, legitimate the practice as meeting course requirements.

Should host agencies be unwilling to grant students approval to practice within that agency without additional assurance of liability coverage, a certificate of insurance for that agency can be negotiated with the University’s Purchasing Office.

APPENDIX C
APPLICATION FORMS

**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY—PUEBLO
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AGENCY PLACEMENT APPLICATION

I. Student Identifying Information

Name _____ Date _____

Local Address _____

Telephone _____

Advisor _____

Semester and year internship is desired _____

Semester and year you plan to graduate _____

II. Academic Preparation

Class Standing _____

Indicate below the classes that you have taken that are relevant to your desired placement.

III. Placement Preference

A. List the type(s) of political setting that you would like to do your placement in.

B. List any experience you have had in the area(s) of your preference.

C. Briefly explain the relevance of you preference for your future career plans.

**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY—PUEBLO
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RESEARCH INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

I. STUDENT IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Name _____

Date _____

Cell Number _____ Telephone Number _____

PID Number _____ Advisor _____

Semester and year internship desired _____

II. ACADEMIC PREPARATION

Class Standing _____

POLSCI 240 is recommended for the research internship:

Have you completed 240? Yes__ No__ Grade in 240 _____

Have you completed another research internship? __Yes__ No

If yes, with whom _____ (Keep in mind that only 6

Indicate below the classes that you have taken that are relevant to your research intership

Briefly explain why you want to complete a research internship

Political Science Program Legislative Internship Program

General Information:

The Colorado General Assembly is in session each year from early January to early May. Our student interns travel to the Capitol two days per week to function as aides to individual House or Senate members. Duties vary from one legislator to another, but generally include some research, communication with constituents, attendance at committee hearings, and clerical and errand work. Students register for POLSC 480 and receive 6 credit hours. (Six credits count for the Political Science major, 3 for the minor.)

Eligibility:

Students from all majors may apply. It is good to have some social science or political science course-work background but one need not be a political science major. Preference is given to seniors, to students with a good grade point average (3.25 and above in all courses) and to students who have successfully completed an internship.

Assignments and Grading:

Academic assignments include (1) maintenance of a daily journal; (2) completion of a mid-term and final paper; and (3) daily reading of the legislative reporting in the *Denver Post* or other newspapers (4) an evaluation by your legislator (or supervisor). Grades will be based upon the quality of journal and papers, and appraisal by the legislative sponsor. A satisfactory or unsatisfactory is recorded at the end of the semester.

Schedule:

Internships begin in Denver in January and end in May. Students may continue through spring break but are not required to do so, so long as they are sure to inform their legislator that they will not be there. Similarly, legislators must be notified by phone, immediately, of absences due to illness. In instances of bad weather and dangerous road conditions, we do not attempt the trip to Denver.

Conduct:

The performance and appearance of interns makes a statement about themselves and about CSU-Pueblo. Students must conduct themselves in a professional manner. Also, students are not to lobby or act as reporters.

Application:

Students wishing to apply for the program should complete the application form and return it along with an unofficial transcript and resume to the Political Science Program Coordinator.

Criminal Background Check

The Colorado General Assembly will conduct a criminal background check on all students before they are placed with legislators.

Interview at State Capitol

All students will be interviewed by legislative internship coordinators at the Capitol or by legislators via the phone. You must be available for either or both.

**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY—PUEBLO
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SPRING LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

Due Date: Return as soon as Possible

Return to the Political Science Program Coordinator. Attach one copy of your unofficial transcript and a copy of your resume.

PLEASE ANSWER EVERY QUESTION AND TYPE THE FORM

Name: _____

PID: _____

Local Address: _____

Permanent Mailing Address: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

Major: _____ Minor: _____

Current GPA: _____

Class Standing and Hours Completed toward Degree: ____

Provide the names and telephone numbers of two (2) CSU-Pueblo faculty members who will be providing a reference letter/e-mail for you. Arrange for those faculty to provide those letters to the Political Science Program Coordinator.

1.

2.

Political Affiliation (Required for placement at the legislature): _____

Previous Internships, Internship Advisor, and Grade Received:

Would you prefer to work in the State Senate or House of Representatives? _____

Provide a 1-2 page typed statement explaining why you wish to participate in the legislative internship program with your application.

APPENDIX D
EVALUATION FORMS

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY—PUEBLO
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ACTIVITIES AGREEMENT FORM

Briefly describe the tasks you expect the student to carry out in your agency during his or her internship:

 Agency Supervisor Date Student Date

Copies should be retained by student and agency supervisor. Original should be return to faculty supervisor.

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PRACTICUM MIDTERM EVALUATION

Introduction

The midterm evaluation is an opportunity to provide the student with positive reinforcement for growth or achievement of competencies and to indicate areas in which additional growth is need. The evaluation form should be completed by the field supervisor and reviewed together by field supervisor and student.

Section I: Identifying Information

A. Student _____

B. Field Supervisor _____

C. Agency _____

D. Faculty Supervisor _____

Section II: Practicum Activities

A. Please describe the student's practicum activities to date:

B. Frequency of Supervision: Daily ___ Weekly ___ Bi-Weekly ___

Section III: Performance Rating

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PRACTICUM FINAL EVALUATION

Introduction

This evaluation form is to be completed by the field supervisor in consultation with the student toward the end of the placement. This final evaluation must be submitted to the faculty supervisor prior to the last day of the semester in order for the student to receive credit for the course.

Section I: Identifying Information

A. Student _____

B. Field Supervisor _____

C. Agency _____

D. Faculty Supervisor _____

Section II: Contractual Agreement

Extent to which the student fulfilled the agreed upon tasks of the placement.

Excels _ Competent _ Adequate _ Needs to Work _ Unsatisfactory _

Section III: Skills and Knowledge Experience

Identify specific knowledge and/or skill that the student has acquired as the result of the practicum experience.

COMMENTS:

Field Supervisor _____
(signature) (date)

Student _____
(signature) (date)

Copies should be retained by the field supervisor and student. Return original to the faculty supervisor.