

*POSC 40960: Civic Literacy Internship*  
Summer 2017

Grant Ferguson

Office Hours

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by appointment

- **Course Description**

*You MUST register for this course to get credit, which requires the permission of Dr. Ferguson & getting a code from the Department of Political Science main office. Aside from that, you register for this course just like you do any other, & it is your responsibility to do so.*

Howdy! This internship is intended to expose students to government offices and advocacy agencies involved in making public policy at the local level. You may have heard the phrase, “All politics is local.” This internship experience is your opportunity to see first hand the political process firsthand. *Please make sure that Dr. Ferguson has the name and contact information of your primary supervisor by the end of the first week of your internship.*

- **Internships - What Are They?**

Internships are work-learning experiences that allow students to work in supervised, career-related opportunities for specific periods of time. Academic internships are tied to the classroom-based learning, which, along with the reflective processing of experience, ultimately leads to learning by doing.

- **Benefits**

Research and anecdotal information about internships tell us that students benefit enormously from internships on several levels, personally, professionally, and academically. Personally, internships allow students to develop personal growth, self-reliance and confidence, and overall maturity. Professionally, student internship definitely help to develop career goals.

Academically, putting into practice specific classroom-based knowledge is invaluable to test and apply the theories and methods learned in the classroom. Internships also allow students to learn from practitioners in the field as well as how to utilize non-campus based professional resources and information in the practical application of classroom-based knowledge/learning.

Studying the process of public-policy making from a first hand perspective will also give students the opportunity to better understand the actual way that policies are made in implemented in local government and to observe first hand the impact that decisions can make.

Finally, completing your internship will give you insight into the workings of an office environment, including the positive and negative aspects. From this experience, students can begin to analyze the type of office environment in which they are most likely to succeed.

### • Internships As Self-Directed Learning

Unlike a traditional class, an internship experience is a self-directed learning experience that asks the student to have the primary responsibility for articulating concrete learning goals and objectives. Students are also expected to adopt the necessary strategies to achieve these goals and to evaluate the experience at the end of the class.

### • Internship Requirements

The following are required for you to be awarded 3 credit hours on a strictly Pass/No Credit basis:<sup>1</sup>

1. Completion of approximately 150 hours of work at your internship<sup>2</sup>
2. Completion of weekly, 1-page journal entries, including a weekly time log, according to the guidelines below.
3. Completion of an online talent profile survey<sup>3</sup>
4. Set up & have a short meeting with someone from the TCU Leadership Center <sup>4</sup> about their opportunities for student leadership development (or, if you are not in Fort Worth this summer, set up a meeting for August or September of the fall semester)
5. 2 meetings during the semester with Dr. Ferguson
6. Completion of a 6-page reflective paper, described below, & completion of a work portfolio<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>While this is a Pass/No Credit course, exceptional, eligible interns are eligible to win the yearly Mary Volcansek Civic Literacy Award, which comes with a considerable monetary prize.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Ferguson may have your supervisor verify your hours during the semester.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. Ferguson will email out the survey link by August 4th of the Summer 2017 semester.

<sup>4</sup>You can find information about them here: <https://sds.tcu.edu/students/leadership/leadership-center/>

<sup>5</sup>If you turn in at least 90% of your weekly journals on time, you have the option of emailing me and asking me to exempt you from doing a portfolio at the end of the semester. But you **must** get my approval to be exempted.

- **Required Book**

Maxwell, John C. 2007. *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, 10th Anniversary Edition. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Please order this book as soon as possible, since you will need to read it to write your journal entries. It is available inexpensively via Amazon.

- **Weekly Reflective Journal Learning**

The internship requires that you complete a weekly journal. The internship coordinator will evaluate your satisfactory completion of the weekly journal entries. Your weekly assignments are contained in this syllabus.

To complete your journal entries, follow the directions specified in general and for each week below and email your weekly entry as a Word or .pdf document to Grant.Ferguson@tcu.edu. You should add a new entry each Friday of the semester or the summer. Each entry should begin or end with a log of the hours you worked that week. You must complete your journal entries to receive credit for the course.

Every week, your journal entries should contain a quick recap of what you worked on in the office that week, observations you have on what works well in the office versus what does not from an organizational perspective, how you are developing as a professional, and any new lessons that you learn that may impact your education or career choices. **In addition**, your journals should include the following particular information in the specified weeks:

**Weekly Directions:**

1. Week 1 (June 5-9): Include your thoughts on the Introduction, Chapter 1, & Chapter 2 of Maxwell
2. Week 2 (June 12-16): Include your thoughts on Chapters 3, 4, & 5 of Maxwell
3. Week 3 (June 19-23): Include your thoughts on Chapters 6, 7, & 8 of Maxwell
4. Week 4 (June 26-30): Include your thoughts on Chapters 9, 10, & 11 of Maxwell
5. Week 5 (July 3-7): Include your thoughts on Chapters 12, 13, & 14 of Maxwell
6. Week 6 (July 10-14): Include your thoughts on Chapters 15 & 16 of Maxwell
7. Week 7 (July 17-21): Include your thoughts on Chapters 17 & 18 of Maxwell

8. Week 8 (July 24-28): Include your thoughts on Chapters 19 & 20 of Maxwell
9. Week 9 (July 31-August 4): Include your thoughts on Chapter 21 of Maxwell
10. Week 10 (August 7-11): Include your thoughts on the Conclusion of Maxwell, & overall thoughts on the book

- **Meetings With Dr. Ferguson**

You must meet with Grant Ferguson at least twice during the course of your internship to review your internship. You are responsible for contacting Dr. Ferguson to set up these meetings.

- **Final Paper & Portfolio**

Your reflective paper for the internship should be 6 pages and can be turned in with your portfolio to Grant Ferguson in Scharbauer 2007A, or emailed to Grant.Ferguson@tcu.edu. It is due by the last Friday of the summer semester (Friday, August 11th).

It should be 6 double-spaced pages in length (with 12-point font & 1-inch margins) and recount 1) your overall impressions of the office in which you worked (both positive and negative); 2) whether or not the internship was useful to you from an educational and career perspective; 3) major lessons you learned from the internship; 4) how the leadership lessons from Maxwell book helped you develop at your internship and as a person; and 5) whether or not you believe TCU should place interns in the office in the future.

Your portfolio should contain examples of projects on which you have worked in the office. This portfolio can serve as a collection of materials that demonstrate your abilities and experiences.

I understand that some interns will work in positions that do not generate a portfolio. If this situation applies to you, you may submit an alternative 3-4 page paper detailing the skills you have gained in addition to your reflective paper. Both the reflective and skills papers may be submitted electronically.

- **Students with Disabilities**

Disabilities Statement: Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.