PLCY 293  
Public Policy Internships

Instructor: Dr. Daisha M. Merritt  
Office: Abernethy Hall, 218A  
Office Hours: Tues 10-12, Wed 9-11, or by appointment  
Email: daisha@email.unc.edu

UNC Public Policy (PP) offers students the opportunity to integrate and apply their academic knowledge and skills in a real-world policy environment through external internships.

Course Description
Directed Individual Internships offer students an opportunity to both enhance and reflect upon their internship experiences. With the completion of additional assignments, public policy students receive a total of 3 hours of academic credit for external internships, when the internships are designed to allow the student to do policy-relevant research, policy analysis, program evaluation, and policy advocacy under the supervision of a mentor at a nonprofit, nongovernmental, or governmental organization.

(Note: PLCY 293 counts as an Experiential Education course in UNC’s General Education Requirements. PLCY 293 does not count as a field elective toward the PLCY major.)

Course Expectations
Students enrolled in PLCY 293 are expected to complete a minimum of 112 hours of work experience (e.g., 8 hours/week for 14 weeks). No more than 15% of this time may be devoted to clerical work (e.g., photocopying) or data entry. In other words, at least 96 hours must be devoted to non-clerical work.

Course Goals
This internship experience is designed to:
- connect classroom and experiential learning concerning Public Policy
- allow for first-hand experience
- enhance and develop skills in a Policy setting
- gain knowledge of an aspect of Public Policy
- improve critical thinking and problem solving skills
- explore Public Policy career options

Course Format
Each student is required to meet with the instructor three (3) times per semester. SAKAI will be used for assignment submission, announcements, and electronic records. The Internship Portfolio is to be handed directly to the instructor at the student’s final meeting.

Course Assignments
- **Experience:** A minimum of 112 hours of work experience. Students are required to keep an hour log. Logs are to be included in the students Internship Portfolio, with Internship Supervisor’s signature.
  - **Due date:** Last day of classes for the semester
- **Internship Work Plan**: Students are required to submit a working schedule of their expectations and plans for their internship experience.
  - Due date: Beginning of second week of classes

- **Internship Portfolio**: The Internship Portfolio is a creative product while also being reflective of your work throughout your internship. Portfolios should be in hard copy and submitted at the end of the semester to the PLCY 239 instructor. (See Internship Portfolio guidelines below).
  - Due date: Last day of classes for the semester

- **Journals**: Journaling is a great way to reflect on the internship experience (see suggested prompts). A reflection may be brief, approximately 250 words. Interns are required to submit four (4) journal entries. These are to be submitted through SAKAI.
  - Due dates: End of week 4, week 8, week 12, and last day of classes

- **Supervisor Evaluation**: The Supervisor Evaluation consists of an evaluation from the employer with respect to the student’s performance. The evaluation should include an assessment of the student’s performance as an intern and the achievement of the assigned tasks. This should be submitted on letter head via email to the PLCY 293 instructor (daisha@email.unc.edu).
  - Due date: Last day of classes for the semester

**Recommended Reading:**
All students enrolled in an internship are encouraged to read the following:

**Grading**
Grading will be based on timely submission of your course assignments, attendance of the three (3) required meeting with the PLCY 239 instructor and quality of your work. The following weight will be given to each of the course components.

- Employer/Supervisor Evaluation: (30%)  
- Internship Portfolio: (40%)  
- Journals: (15%)  
- Work Plan: (15%)

**Description of Assignments**

**Internship Work Plan**
The Internship Work Plan is designed to offer students the opportunity to individualize their assignments and customize their experience. Students are to submit the internship work plan which includes answers to the following questions:
- Why are you interning?
- What opportunity does this offer you?
- What are your specific duties?
- What is your work schedule?
- How are you going to reflect upon this experience?
- What are your writing assignments?
What will you include in your Internship Portfolio?

**Internship Portfolio**
The Portfolio of work completed during the internship should help you:

- Assess your learning
- Connect your experiences with your academic knowledge
- Reflect on your future endeavors
- Provide evidence of your performance
- Document your skills and individual experience

The Internship Portfolio is not only a way for you to personally reflect upon your experiences, it also offers you the opportunity to provide future employers with evidence of your work experience. Internship Portfolios should be laid out as follows:

1. On a front cover page, display your NAME, SEMESTER (Fall 2015), INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT, and NAME OF INTERNSHIP MENTOR.

2. The second page should be a table of contents with page or section numbers.

3. The third page should include your internship contract.

4. The fourth page begins your introductory 1-2 page essay which should address the following points:
   - Why you are completing an internship, where you are interning, a brief description of your organization - make sure to include their mission statement, if applicable - , and finally a list of your duties and responsibilities.

5. A copy of your resume

6. Sample of your work

7. Final Reflective Essay
   The Final Reflection Essay should be approximately 2,500 words.
   The reflective essay is designed to offer you a reflective writing experience. In experiential learning, theory draws heavily from David Kolb’s model of learning. While writing this paper think about the questions: What? So What? And Now What? What was the purpose of your internship? What is the mission or goal of the organization you worked with? What was your role? Why is this important? Why should others care about this organization? Why was the work you accomplished important? Why will it help others? Is there a social impact? Is this directly related to a certain population? And finally, what happens now? Where do you go from here? What happens to the policy work that you assisted with? What happens to the population you were focusing on? How does this impact your future? How does this impact the future of public policy?

8. Internship Placement Site Assessment
   Provide a candid evaluation of the internship experience as it relates to the placement and your mentor. Would you recommend this internship to another student? (Your comments will be kept confidential.)
Journal Entries
Reflecting on your internship experience is an important part of your career development. During an internship, you discover your skills, values, strengths, and interests. Taking time to reflect on your past internship experience gives you an opportunity to use your encounters as a guide and resource in your career exploration. Journaling is an opportunity to assist you in integrating materials and lessons from your internship experience, previous courses, work/community service experiences and your Public Policy classes.
Below are some suggested prompts:

- **Personal Reflection**: How well are you communicating with your site personnel? What are the expectations of your placement from your perspective? What are your observations on employee satisfaction and productivity?
- **Career Pathways**: Talk to people working for your organization. What were their first work experiences in the field? How did their careers progress? What skills are required for leadership in this organization? Have any of your expectations about the career world changed as a result of your internship?
- **Organizational Structure**: How are staff and projects organized in your organization? Is the organizational structure hierarchical or not? Who are the leaders of your organization? Who manages day-to-day operations? What are the roles and responsibilities of all key individuals within your organization? What classroom theories are in practice at your organization?
- **Problem Solving**: How are projects run in your organization (e.g., by individuals, by teams)? When problems occur, how are they solved? When successes occur, how are people in the organization credited for their work?
- **Accomplishments**: What were your greatest accomplishment(s)? What successes did you experience? What did you learn from those accomplishments or successes?
- **Challenges**: What did I find most challenging about that internship? What setbacks did you experience? What did you learn from those setbacks?
- **Personal Strengths and Weakness**: How were you able to apply your current skills? What skills did you learn? What did you discover are your greatest strengths or skills? What did you discover are your weakness or skills that need more development? Overall, what impact did this experience have on your personal growth?

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grade Appeal
I take the evaluation and grading of your work very seriously because I know that most of you take the preparation and writing of your work very seriously. If you think you deserve a higher grade on a paper or project, you may write a letter and explain why you would like to appeal the grade. Before making an appeal, you should review your work and the assignment format and model paper, I provided in class. After I receive your letter, I will re-read your work within 1 week. Depending on my re-reading, your grade may stay the same, be raised, or be lowered. This system is designed to minimize frivolous grade appeals and to ensure that you have carefully examined and reflected on the quality of your work before deciding to initiate a grade appeal.
Honor Code
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-led honor system for over 100 years. Academic integrity is at the heart of Carolina and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. The student-led Honor System is responsible for adjudicating any suspected violations of the Honor Code and all suspected instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the honor system. Information, including your responsibilities as a student, is outlined in the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected (see http://honor.enu.edu/).

The honor code plays an integral part in this course. Upon enrollment of this course you will be representing Carolina to the larger community. How you represent yourself and the work you complete, directly affects the communities view of UNC-CH and its students. Please keep this in your mind during all client meetings and while completing your projects.

Plagiarism
In written work (including overheads or handouts used in presentations) words drawn from others should be indicated by quotation marks and ideas drawn from others should refer to their source. If you are unsure about what needs to be cited, please talk with me or ask for assistance from the writing center. Plagiarism is a serious offense which can result in failure of the course and suspension from the University. To make sure that you understand what plagiarism is, please read http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/plagiarism/. Also see the following link for an engaging animated tutorial on plagiarism: http://www2.lib.unc.edu/instruct/plagiarism/.

Oral and Written Assignment Evaluation Policy
Writing and public speaking are essential to success in public policy analysis. Students will be held to professional standards in the field of public policy. Students should not submit first drafts and should carefully proof read all work. The following factors will be considered in evaluating student assignments:

- **Content**: Responds to the assignment’s questions. Develops and supports a central thesis. Provides a focused argument throughout the essay/talk.
- **Clarity and Presentation**: Writes/speaks clearly by developing a coherent, well-organized paper; arranging sentences in a logical and coherent manner; using correct punctuation, spelling, and grammar; and providing correct citations in the APA format.
- **Comprehensiveness**: Has reviewed the relevant literature and material, shows an in-depth understanding of the topic, and is able to critique differing points of view on the topic.
- **Creativity**: Draws the reader/listener in and engages him/her in the topic. Makes an original contribution to the topic. Presents material in an interesting and unique way that elucidates the ideas.
- **Accuracy**: The paper has no obvious errors. All facts are derived from assigned readings or materials or cited if from another source.

Discrimination and Harassment Policy
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students. The Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Related Misconduct Including Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment, Sexual Violence, Interpersonal Violence and Stalking. Any form of violence or harassment, including sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking is unwelcome at the University. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate UNC resource at http://sexualassaultanddiscriminationpolicy.unc.edu/.
Accessibility Resources & Service
The office of Accessibility Resource & Service provides services and reasonable accommodations to currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate/professional students with disabilities. Their mission is to provide students with disabilities equal access to the services, programs and activities of the University so that they may, as independently as possible meet the demands of University life. ARS can be reached at SASB (student and academic Services Building), Suite 2126, 450 Ridge Road, 919-962-8300 or accessibility@unc.edu. For more information see: http://accessibility.unc.edu/

Professional Communication
Professional practice requires professional communication skills. All assignments, written or verbal, must be presented in a professional manner. Attention to use of non-sexist, non-racist stigmatizing language is critical…Translation: be sensitive to the use of language!! Proofreading is required!! Professional dress according to agency standards is expected. Where such standards are not met, the professor may administer a ten percent (10%) grade reduction on the written assignment and/or final grade.

Professionalism, Classroom Etiquette and Participation
Students are expected to cultivate the following habits and characteristics. Consistent deficits in any of these areas may impact the final grade.

- Punctuality
- Attention
- Follow Through/Dependability
- Meeting of Deadlines
- Ability to handle stress
- Respect of self and others
- Ability to use humor appropriately
- Assumption of responsibility for actions
- Flexibility
- Work organization
- Ability to accept written feedback
- Ability to accept verbal feedback
- Integrity
- Ability to use humor appropriately

Written Work Back-Up
Keep a second copy of any written work submitted. If for any reason work submitted is lost/misplaced/not available, instructor cannot assume that work was submitted and was of acceptable merit. Likewise, keep papers returned with a grade or comments should grade lists be lost or inadvertently deleted from an instructor computer.

Syllabus Changes
The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project or other deliverable due dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

I have carefully reviewed this syllabus and agree to complete the internship course assignments as specified.

Student’s Name: __________________________ Signature: ___________________________________