



CAPE Academic Internship Learning Work Plan – Sample Syllabus

Please use the guide below to develop your internship learning work plan in collaboration with your supervising faculty member.

Please complete the following information for your internship site:

Internship Title: [Title]

Semester/Duration: [Semester/Start-End Dates]

Location: [Internship Location]

Supervising Faculty Member: [Supervisor's Name]

Objectives

After successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Create relationships and professional connections that help them pursue their career goals.
- Apply and develop skills such as public speaking, writing, research, civic engagement and leadership, cultural competency, and practical knowledge working in political offices, agencies, and/or organizations.
- Evaluate and apply the knowledge gained in academic courses to agencies and organizations involved with policy formulation and implementation.
- Explain the challenges and opportunities of various professions related to political science.

Assignments

In collaboration with your supervising faculty member, choose assignments as appropriate. Some examples are listed below:

Sample Assignment #1: Organization or Office Profile

Do some basic research into the organization or office where you are interning.

- What is its mission and how does it seek to fulfill that mission?
- Who are the audiences or constituents that the organization represents or advocates for?
- What is the budget and where does funding come from?
- What is the history of the organization?
- What is the current legislation or policy priorities of the office/organization?

If a specific elected official:

Legislators/Executives

- Name, district, party affiliation



- Age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, education level
- Career background (political and/or non-political)
- Number of years in current role
- % of vote received in the last general election
- 3 issue positions for which your politician is best known
- Prominent donors to your politician's campaigns
- Ideology on economic, social, and environmental issues
- Lobbyists
- Name of organization
- Lobbying expenses over the past 3 years
- General positions on economic, social, and environmental issues (as applicable)
- Identify constituents

Constituent Profile:

- Economics
- Prominent industries
- Unemployment rate, income levels, poverty rate, etc.
 - Demographics
- Population, and population breakdowns by race, ethnicity, age, income, etc.
- Urban/rural breakdown
 - Politics
- Partisan voter registration
- % voted Democrat/Republican in 2020, 2016, 2012
- 3 specific issues that are important to your constituents
- Constituents' general positions on economic, social, and environmental issues

Resources for Office/Organization Profile:

- OpenSecrets (<http://www.opensecrets.org/>)
- Project Vote Smart (<http://www.votesmart.org/index.htm>)
- Ballotpedia (https://ballotpedia.org/Main_Page)
- IGS Research (<http://igs.berkeley.edu/library/research/govweb/>)
- California Secretary of State (<http://www.sos.ca.gov/>)
- Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/>)
- California Department of Finance (<http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/>)
- Almanac of California Politics (book)



Sample Assignment #2: Weekly Internship Log

1. Summary of Activities & Key Accomplishments

Provide a brief overview of the tasks and projects you worked on this week. Highlight any significant activities, meetings, or events. List the major accomplishments of the week. Include completed projects, reports, or any contributions you made to ongoing projects.

2. Challenges and Solutions

Identify any challenges or obstacles you encountered during the week. Describe how you addressed or plan to address these issues, and what you learned in how to approach these challenges in the future.

3. Goals for Next Week & Supervisor Feedback

Set goals for the upcoming week. What do you plan to achieve or focus on? Identify specific tasks or areas where you want to improve. Document any feedback received from your supervisor or team members. Note any areas for improvement or positive reinforcement.

Sample Assignment #3: Research Papers

Learning Objectives Paper: Students should focus on objectives in the following areas:

A. *Professional:* How do you expect this internship to help you pursue your career goals?

B. *Civic:* What political knowledge or civic skills (e.g public speaking, writing, research, civic engagement and leadership, cultural competency) do you hope to obtain through this internship?

C. *Scholarly:* Do you expect your internship to confirm/disconfirm what you have learned as a student of political science? What concepts and theories do you see happening in-action at your internship site?

Legislative Analysis Paper: should include answers to the following questions:

A. What are the current policy priorities of the office or organization, and what are the strategies being used to advance those priorities (i.e. legislation, co-authored bills, administrative policy, advocacy efforts, support letters)?

B. How is the organization or office serving its audience or constituents and communicating with them?

C. What political science theories can the student observe happening in-action through these methods?

Sample Assignment #4: Resume

Interns will integrate their internship experience into a resume that also includes their professional objective(s), educational information, and other relevant experiences.



Readings:

In collaboration with your supervising faculty member, choose readings as appropriate. Some samples are listed below:

Schwarz, Madeline. Winter 2013. "Opportunity Costs: The True Costs of Internships." *Dissent*, <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/opportunity-costs-the-true-price-of-internships>

Thompson, Derek. May 2012. "In Defense of Unpaid Internships." *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/05/in-defense-of-unpaid-internships/257000/>

Bureaucracy and Administration

[Fischer, Frank, and Carmen Sirianni, eds. 1984. *Critical Studies in Organization and Bureaucracy*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.](#)

Campaigns and Elections

[Semiatin, Richard, ed. 2020. *Campaigns on the Cutting Edge*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.](#)

[Simpson, Dick and Betty O'Shaughnessy. 2016. *Winning Elections in the 21st Century*. Lawrence, KS: Kansas University Press.](#)

Conduct of Internships; Learning by Doing

[Brown, John S., Allen Collins, and Paul Duguid. 1989. "Situated Cognition and the Culture of Learning" *Educational Researcher* 18\(1\): 32-42](#)

[Reeher, Grant and Mack Mariani. 2002. *The Insider's Guide to Political Internships*. Boulder: Westview.](#)

Congress and Congressional Internships

[Waxman, Henry, with Joshua Green. *The Waxman Report: How Congress Really Works*. New York: Twelve Publishing.](#)

[CMF. 2020 \(1984\). *Setting Course: A Congressional Management Guide*. Washington, DC: Congressional Management Foundation.](#)

State Legislatures

[Rosenthal, Alan. *Heavy Lifting: The Job of the American Legislature*. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2004.](#)

California



[Boyarsky, Bill. 2007. *Big Daddy: Jesse Unruh and the Art of Power Politics*. Oakland: University of California Press.](#)

[Micheli, Chris. 2021. *The California Legislature and Its Legislative Process: Cases and Materials*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.](#)

[Starr, Kevin. 2007. *California: A History*. New York: Modern Library Press.](#)

Massachusetts

[McDonough, John E. *Experiencing Politics: A Legislator's Stories of Government and Health Care*. California/Milbank Series on Health and the Public. Berkeley: University of California Press; New York: Milbank Memorial Fund, 2000.](#)

(McDonough was in the MA State House for 10 years and has a Ph.D. in public policy.)

Vermont

[Wright, Ralph G. *Inside the Statehouse: Lessons from the Speaker*. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2005.](#)

(Wright was Speaker of the Vermont House.)

Wisconsin

[Loftus, Tom. *The Art of Legislative Politics*. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1994.](#)

(Loftus was Speaker of the Wisconsin State Assembly.)

Judicial or Legal Internships

[Breyer, Stephen. 2011. *Making our Democracy Work: A Judge's View*. New York: Vintage.](#)

[Gibson, James L. and Michael Nelson. 2017. "Reconsidering Positivity Theory: What Roles Do Politicization, Ideological Disagreement, and Legal Realism Play in Shaping U.S. Supreme Court Legitimacy?" *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 14 \(3\): 592-617.](#)

[Scalia, Antonin. 1998. *A Matter of Interpretation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.](#)

Political Activism

[Alinsky, Saul. 1971. *Rules for Radicals*. New York: Vintage.](#)

[Graham, Bob, and Chris Hand. 2016. *America, The Owner's Manual: Making Government Work for You*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.](#)

[Liu, Eric. 2013. "Why Ordinary People Need to Understand Power." TED Talk, September \[video\].](#)



Public Policy

Allison, Graham T. 1971. *The Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Boston: Little, Brown

Brown-Dean, Khalilah L. 2019. *Identity Politics in the United States*. New York: Wiley.

Ingram, Helen and Anne L. Schneider. 2005. "Introduction: Public Policy and the Social Construction of Deservedness." In *Deserving and Entitled*, ed. Helen Ingram and Anne L. Schneider. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Lindblom, Charles. 1957. "The Science of Muddling Through." *Public Administration Review* 19:78-88.

Meltsner, Arnold J. 1976. *Policy Analysts in the Bureaucracy*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Weiss, Carol H. 1980. *Social Science Research and Decision-Making*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Race and Ethnic Politics and Policy

Alexander, Michelle. 2020 (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press

Kendi, Ibram X. 2019. *How to Be an Antiracist*. New York: One World.

Muhammad, Khalil Gibran. 2019. *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wing Sue, Derald. 2015. *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Non-Academic or Popular Press Readings: Leadership- and Career-Related

Burnett, Bill, and Dave Evans. 2016. *Designing Your Life*. New York: Knopf.

Dweck, Carol. 2012. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Kahneman, Daniel. 2013. *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Langer, Ellen. 2016 (1997). *The Power of Mindful Learning*. Boston: Da Capo Lifelong Books.

Maxwell, John C. 2007 (1998). *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Pink, Daniel H. 2010. *Drive*. New York: Penguin.

Pollak, Lindsey. 2012. *Getting from College to Career*. New York: Harper Business.



Attendance and Professionalism

- Punctuality and regular attendance are crucial.
- Maintain professionalism in communication and behavior.
- Notify your supervisor in advance if unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances.