Judicial Internship
Political Science 400 (Section 002)
Fall 2013

Professor Information
Professor Ryan Owens
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 9-11-or by appt.

Class Description. The goal of this class is to teach you how High Courts (especially the Wisconsin Supreme Court) interact with other institutions to make policy. The Judicial Internship class offers advanced undergraduates with stellar records a unique opportunity to gain firsthand experience working within the judicial system of the state of Wisconsin. Interns will learn about the field of judicial administration, meet with key figures in the administration of the courts and provide research as needed by the Director of State Courts. The program offers interns a chance to gain different experiences than they receive from standard courses. By working within the state court system, students will learn first-hand how the third branch is administered.

Interns will perform a number of important tasks. They may summarize articles on the courts; prepare memos for the Director of State Courts or legislative liaison; and/or draft correspondence with critical figures. Interns may also conduct research for speeches and briefings. Finally, interns will examine a topic of interest within the court system and write a 30-page paper to the Director. The paper topic must be approved by me. This graded paper will serve as a useful writing sample should interns desire to apply for law school or graduate school.

Please note that this research is unrelated to the casework of the courts. Interns will not work on cases pending in the court system.

Sometime during the semester, interns will have lunch with the Chief Justice, and any other justices who elect to participate in the luncheon. Additionally, throughout the semester, interns may be allowed to participate in official or semi-official events, where appropriate.

Requirements and Grades. Each week, I will assign a number of required readings. Unless otherwise noted, all articles will be available on the course website. I will base your grade on your weekly in-class participation (30%), your final paper (50%), and your final presentation (20%).

I expect you to come prepared to all classes. This means that you have read the material assigned and can discuss it. I expect students to be present and able to talk about the reading material for the day’s class. Unprepared classes are boring to teach and even more boring to sit through. So please come prepared.
Your final paper will be a report on an issue related to the modern court system (e.g., how to deal with social science and the law, how computers can be a problem/benefit to the system, etc.). You should work out your paper topic in conjunction with the Director and me.

There is only one required book for this class: John Monahan and W. Laurens Walker. 2010. Social Science in Law (7th Ed.) Foundation Press. While the new hardcover version of this book is expensive, older and soft cover editions are available online at a much cheaper price.

**Class Behavior.** We all want to learn while in class, so do not speak out of turn or otherwise cause disruptions in class. Be respectful to your fellow students. If you fail to do so, university guidelines require me to take action. For more information, please see http://www.students.wisc.edu/rights/.

**Academic Integrity.** All students are held to the university's academic integrity standards. For more information on those, please see: http://students.wisc.edu/saja/integrity.html.

**Students Requiring Need-Based Accommodations.** Students who are requesting any accommodations on the basis of disability should schedule an office appointment with me within the first three weeks of the semester. Please schedule this office appointment by email. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach me before or after class to discuss your accommodation needs. The McBurney Disability Resource Center (263-2741) provides resources for students with disabilities (http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/). You will need to provide documentation of disability to them in order to receive official university services and accommodations.

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**Schedule**

**September 4: Introduction**

- Discussion of syllabus
- Expectations of class

**September 11: Judicial Independence**


**September 18: Judicial Selection in the States**


• Malia Reddick. “Judging The Quality Of Judicial Selection Methods: Merit Selection, Elections, and Judicial Discipline.”

**September 25: Courts in the Digital Age**


**October 2: Discussion of Research Projects**

**October 9: The Effect of the Media on Courts**


• Richard L. Vining, Jr. and Phil Martin. “An Economic Theory of Supreme Court News.”

**October 16: Courts and Budgeting**


**October 23: Judicial Legitimacy**


**October 30: Decision Making on State Supreme Courts**


November 6: Social Science and Law: A Primer

• M&W: Ch. 2, section 2.

November 13: Using Social Science to Determine Facts

• M&W: Ch. 3, section 1, 3, Ch. 5 section 2C.

November 20: Using Social Science to Make Law

• M&W: Ch. 4, section 2A, 2C, and 2D.


• M&W: Ch. 6, section 1, 2.

December 4: Social Science and Policing

  • David Weisburd and Cody W. Telep. 2010. “The Efficiency of Place-Based Policing.”

December 11: Presentations and Wrap Up.