Dear Politics and Law Interns:

You have already received a lot of information about the eight credit internships. Nonetheless, students I have spoken with generally would like more information on preparing for their internship and on the internship journal.

Please contact the Center for Study Abroad if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Lynda Powell
Professor of Political Science

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REQUIREMENTS FOR PSC 397 EUROPEAN POLITICS INTERNSHIP

(1) Preparing for your internship. The University of Rochester offers a great variety of internships. You may be engaged in quite different tasks than other students on the program, and it is impossible to anticipate exactly what you will encounter in advance. Every internship is inevitably impacted to a varying degree by current political events and by the immediate interests of your supervisor. The best preparation for your internship is to gain a broad understanding of culture, politics, and, if applicable, business or law.

There are several sources of information you should consult. First, read one of the introductory political science texts on the politics of the country in which you will be living and on the EU if you chose Brussels. Second, read journalistic sources for current events. I recommend reading the weekly magazine the Economist. It covers British politics in depth, but it also contains excellent discussions of general European politics, the EU, American politics and of business. Third, if you have little knowledge of American politics, read a good basic text in American politics and follow current political events. You will find that many people abroad will ask you questions about American politics, and, further, it is easier to analyze the politics of another country when you have a firm grounding in the politics of your own country. Consult the Suggested Reading List that was included with your letter of acceptance.

(2) What is an analytic journal? Our internships require you to keep a journal for you to receive a letter grade. While your journal should include a description and evaluation of your daily work in the internship, it should primarily be analytical. An analytic journal is not meant to be a research paper. The substantive content of the analytic component will vary depending on your internship and on your interests. You
should use the theoretical knowledge and skills you have acquired in your coursework (both at home and abroad), combined with any relevant experiences you have had to place your internship experiences in a broader context and to learn from them.
Politics and Law Internships. You should reflect upon how the slice of European politics that you experience compares with American politics (especially party and legislative processes) and with the images, models and descriptions of your host country's politics, found in scholarly and journalistic literature about representation, politics, and policy processes in contemporary democratic political systems. It is also appropriate to discuss and to analyze political events that occur even if you have no direct involvement in them through your internship.

Several examples may clarify this discussion. One student said that she had attended a committee meeting in Parliament shortly after studying the committee system in the British Politics course. The committee system she observed differed from the textbook description of a committee system in action in several important aspects. She tried to explain and use her knowledge of the political system to understand the differences.

Students often comment on the party loyalty observed in Parliament, frequently mentioning the disadvantages associated with following the party line. Very few students observe the positive side of such a party system in terms of voters being able to hold candidates accountable for government actions. Be sure to take your analysis the next step beyond the obvious. Many students make interesting comparisons between working in politics in another country and working in politics in the U.S. If you have had a comparable experience, use it as a basis for comparison; but be sure you know your American politics.

One student in Brussels compared constituent perceptions of the job of a European MP with that of a British MP. Another student discussed the differences in attitudes toward Europe between party members who were Euro MPs and those who were MPs in the home country. Other students have discussed the electoral structure that selects MEPs.

If you are working outside the government structure in a law office or in the government affairs office of a corporation, for example, apply the same logic of analysis to your system. If you have worked in a comparable organization in the U.S., compare the two and try to understand the differences in terms of differences in the political system or in terms of other relevant factors. Try to understand how interest groups and/or legal institutions fit in the broader political spectrum. An economics major in a law office might contrast the economics of crime in Britain versus the U.S. A psychology major might discuss differences in jury behavior depending on differences in the selection process in the two countries. Keep in mind that these internships are political internships and all the other comments about politics internships apply to them also.

Some additional practical comments: instead of discussing a large number of topics superficially, choose a small number of topics for detailed analysis. You may wish to follow a few topics throughout your journal. You might, for example, raise questions in an earlier entry that you return to in a later entry. Typically, analysis involves asking questions, finding relevant information to address the questions that were asked, and
drawing conclusions based on the evidence to answer the questions, and perhaps raise further questions. Be sure to discuss evidence that disagrees with your interpretation as well as evidence that agrees with it. Use all the facilities available to you in studying a subject - for example, ask questions in your internship, and use a library.
**Plagiarism.** Normal stipulations about plagiarism apply. A statement on plagiarism is enclosed.

(3) **Journal Length.** Limit the length to a maximum of the equivalent of 20 pages of 250 words each. This is easily adequate for you to cover the material needed. Content is much more important than length. Number and date each page of your journal.

Be sure that your journal is legible. A typed or word-processed journal is preferred. If you handwrite your journal, write only on one side of each page. Send the original and BE SURE TO KEEP A PHOTOCOPY. Please do not send in any supplementary material beyond your journal. Write the journal in English.

(4) **Sending your journal.** Be sure to send your journal to the Center for Study Abroad in Rochester so that it is received within two weeks of the official end date of your program. You may email or mail your journal, but in either case, it must be received by the deadline (not postmarked). Your journal will be returned to you after a grade is awarded.

**Late Journals:** Journals received more than four weeks after the program has ended will have their grades lowered by 1/3 of a point (e.g., A- to B+, B+ to B). Journals cannot be accepted for evaluation eight weeks after the program has ended, without exception.

**Confidentiality**
As a student intern, you will have access to places, persons, and information that should be considered confidential. While you may wish to share information about your placement with friends and family, keep in mind that you should share no more than the name of your organization, e.g., House of Commons, Victoria and Albert, King’s College London and its mission (government, museum, teaching hospital). Divulging more than that could be detrimental to the department or organization. Your internship supervisor will let you know if there is other information that is off-limits. When in doubt, ask.

It’s easy to share information with friends and family via email, texting, blogs, Facebook, My Space, and other means of communication. Remember that these are not confidential; anyone can access your private accounts or pages. Therefore, do not discuss your internship or your co-workers using these, or similar, modes of communication. Many businesses and organizations regularly check electronic communications and pages for mention of themselves. Your internship may be terminated if you publicly share information about your placement.

**BREACH OF PROFESSIONAL COURTESY:** University of Rochester guidelines prohibit any personal use of your internship’s office stationery and supplies. This includes any envelopes, copier paper, correspondence notes, or letterhead. If your supervisor indicates that you may use a departmental printer to print your journal or personal correspondence, you must supply the paper. Printer paper, notebooks, envelopes and the like are widely available at stationers and departments stores everywhere in Europe. Questions concerning the use of your supervisor’s office
equipment and property, such as computers, typewriters, copiers, fax machines, or telephones, are to be directed to your Internships in Europe on-site director. *NOTA BENE:* Journals submitted on stationery embossed or watermarked with your office’s logo, or mailed in an envelope belonging to an office or department will have grades lowered by one full letter grade, e.g. A- to B-, or B to C.

Rev. 6/12