Course Syllabus
PUBP&ADM 597
Public Policy Internship

Instructor: Satu Zoller

Texts: No required text, the internship is an applied, supervised experience. The instructor will work with the student and internship client to develop a short reading list on the topic of the internship if necessary.

Objectives:

The Master of Public Policy internship is an important part of the student’s graduate experience as it provides them practical experience which complements and enhances the knowledge and skills gained in the academic program.

In addition to fulfilling the work requirements of the internships, students must complete a weekly journal which is shared with the course instructor as well as a written internship report at the end of the internship. The internship report should accomplish several goals: it details and summarizes the learning and accomplishments during the work of the internship; it examines an important public policy question stemming from the student’s work in the internship; and it discusses the potential benefit to the student in terms of their future professional career in public service.

The internship is a planned, supervised and evaluated experience in public policy that provides students with an important introduction to the field of public policy. The internship is a 3-credit requirement during which the student works 10-12 weeks full time under supervision in an approved public policy setting with an agreed upon work plan.

The internship placement shall be in an organization (government, nonprofit or private organization) approved by the instructor of the course. Students are expected to identify an internship host organization. Using the resources already developed at CPPA, including a database of prior MPPA internship placements and the MPPA alumni database, the course instructor will be able to assist students in finding an appropriate internship placement.

Once the organization has been identified the student, the course instructor, and the student’s supervisor within the host organization complete the internship contract and work plan.

Requirements:

Most students in the MPP will complete their internship requirement in the summer prior to their first year of full time enrollment in the academic program. The internship is worth three credits, and is graded on a satisfactory/not satisfactory basis. The internship work requirement is twelve weeks, full time. If students wish to complete the internship at a
different time they can do so with the permission of the instructor, as long as they meet all of the requirements of the internship course.

Prior to beginning their internship all students will be required to meet individually with the course instructor to discuss the placement and to ensure that all requirements in the contract (work plan) are met. There will not be weekly meetings; rather each student will remain in regular contact with the course instructor during the internship via email, participation in an online component to the course, and/or telephone. To guarantee continued contact, the students will be required to submit weekly e-journals to the course instructor.

I. Internship Contract
Prior to beginning work in the host organization a contract, or work plan, must be developed by the student and their supervisor, and must be approved by the course instructor. All parties (student, supervisor and instructor) must sign the contract prior to the students’ beginning the work of the internship. The contract must include the agreed upon details of the internship including the nature of the work, specific learning objectives, activities, and outcomes of the internship, as well as logistical details including work hours, work site and any special arrangements.

II. Internship Journal
Students are expected to keep a bi-weekly one-page e-journal that will be shared with the course instructor every other week. The journal should document the student’s work, observations and insights concerning their placement experience.

III. Internship Report
After completing their internship, students are required to write a 15-20 page internship report based on their experience in the internship organization. The specific report topics will be determined by the student and the instructor, and will vary somewhat based on experience but should accomplish several goals:

a. The report should detail and summarize the student’s learning and accomplishment during the work of the internship. This should not just be a list of what was done during the internship, but could include aspects pertaining to the student’s analysis of the organization and its mission. Possible topics in this area could include: the student’s observations of the effectiveness of the organization in accomplishing its goals, an analysis of the student’s own development during the internship (possibly based on journal entries), and/or the benefits of the internship for the student in terms of skills and/or knowledge gained.

b. The bulk of the report, at least 12 pages, shall examine an important public policy question motivated by the work in the internship. This part of the analysis will include a review of other scholarly and policy literature on the topic. The student will ideally have been placed in an organization working on a policy area which is of interest to the student, so this section should include the student’s analysis of how the organization’s work is affecting a specific policy area. This report could also include a discussion of
how well the student thinks this organization works with other organizations and/or who the key players are in this policy area and how the organization fits into the field.

c. The report shall address the potential benefit to the student in terms of their future professional career in public service. This section should include information on professional contacts made during the internship and how the student foresees these contacts being useful in future professional development, a description of the student’s networking strategies and attempts, the level of success of these attempts, and any insights the student gained during the internship as to the value of professional networking.

IV. Internship Evaluation

Upon completion of the internship the Internship Supervisor must complete an internship evaluation provided to them by the course instructor, and submit the evaluation to the instructor.

Grading:
The internship will be graded on a mandatory pass/fail basis (or satisfactory/nonsatisfactory). All requirements listed above must be completed in order to receive a grade of pass.