Objective of this course

The purpose of this course is to help your Washington experience become one that serves your long-term intellectual as well as your personal and professional growth. The work product will involve taking one piece of the Washington experience and turning it into an original research project that addresses a question of academic importance. The goal will be to help you develop or strengthen your ability to go beyond responding to an instructor’s questions and prompts when you write. Instead, this course will expect you to define and execute a scholarly research project and to write up the results in about 25 pages in a well-sourced, persuasively argued and clearly written end product. The steps in that process (described later in this syllabus) will be discussed in class and executed through a series of assignments and paper drafts that last throughout the semester, culminating in an oral presentation and final paper. All paper topics and research questions must be approved by the instructor. Possible paper topics appear after the sequence.

Office hours:

In addition to the mandatory appointments described in this syllabus, additional meeting times are available to those who need or want them. Adam prefers in-person appointments to be scheduled after class on Friday. Prof. Malbin can meet after class Friday or Thursday evening. Either can also make formal telephone appointments at other times. For any appointment, you should come with something written to discuss (or email it in advance of a telephone appointment) and you should take notes during the meeting. You should email detailed notes of the meeting immediately afterwards to both Prof. Malbin and Adam Kress. These should have the level of accuracy and detail that your office would expect if asked you to cover a meeting or hearing and should include any decisions or next assignments.

Book to Purchase for POS 495:

Available as new or used paperback or on Kindle.
Grading:
The grade for POS 495Z will be based on the final draft of the paper as long as you finish each required interim step in a timely and serious manner. A lack of effort and unsatisfactory work on any earlier step will result in a reduction of the final grade at the rate of up to one plus or minus per assignment. These penalties will not apply to submitted work showing effort, even if the instructors consider the work problematic. The point of a multi-draft project is to submit work, get feedback and then revise or sometimes even restart. Policy: A failure to produce work product that shows the developmental steps on the way toward a final paper will create a presumption that you have not done the work and that the paper is not yours and therefore should not pass. All changes in topic must be approved in advance by the instructor or the paper will not be accepted.

Library:
You will be expected to do library as well as Internet research. The Library of Congress is one of the world’s greatest libraries. We will have an orientation class taught by a reference librarian on January 31. The LoC has wonderful collections, but it is a closed-stack facility. That means you have to request materials and wait. In addition, many of its reading rooms are only open 8:30-9:30 on MWTh and only until 5 on TFS. I recommend that you start using the library early in the semester and keep going back.

Also useful: Gelman Library, George Washington University, 2130 H St NW.: 7AM – Midnight. GW card is said to be needed, but they have regularly given access in the past with a SUNY ID. Near Foggy Bottom Metro. http://www.gelman.gwu.edu/.

Academic Honesty:
Students are expected to adhere to the university’s regulations concerning academic honesty. A full set of guidelines appears at the end of this syllabus. You are expected to read these guidelines, study them and follow them. From past experience: pay particular attention to what they say about the need for citations when paraphrasing or summarizing. Violation will result in a severe penalty, such as a failing grade for the course, and referral to the appropriate academic authorities.

Citation formats:
Citation in APA or MLA style will be accepted. Manuals for these citations may be found on the university library’s website at http://library.albany.edu/cfox#top for APA and http://library.albany.edu/cfox?type=mla for MLA. These sources are generally good. You are expected to follow one of these the manuals consistently. Government documents are not adequately handled in the manuals. Therefore you will also need to use an additional resource made available on Blackboard for the kinds of government documents not covered by the standard manuals above. (This will especially apply to Congressional documents).

Note that if you use within-text parenthetical citations, the first words within the parentheses – usually the author’s last name, year of publication and page number – should match the first words in the “works cited” page at the end of the document. The “works cited” page should be presented in alphabetical order by author’s last name. (Your documentation guides will tell you when the organization issuing a document should be considered the author.)
Sequence of Steps for the course:

In the course of preparing this paper, you will learn (or reinforce what you have learned in other writing courses) about each of the key steps in a research project. These are spelled out with assignment dates in the syllabus. They include the following:

- First you will begin with a general subject area of interest. You will read secondary source material to give you factual narrative background information to help you begin defining your study.

- Second, you will need to identify a research question the paper will ask, the answer to which will be your paper’s thesis.
  - To give the papers an academic foundation, your case studies will generally be testing theses drawn from the relevant scholarly literature. Typically, the literature may suggest alternative explanations or theses for what you will study and the evidence you find will help you argue which approach better explains what you see.

- Third, you will identify and find the evidence (including primary source evidence) appropriate to answer the question. Many students find they have to refine or change their research questions at this stage.

- Fourth, you will draft the paper in stages, refining your thesis (and thesis question) as you write.

- Fifth, you will review and critique your own draft thoroughly – not only for copy editing, but to test the logic of your argument and the adequacy of your evidence. In the course of doing so, you will consider contrary theses that a critic might put forward to explain what you have found. The paper should anticipate and respond to these critical readers.


HOW TO THINK ABOUT POS 495 PAPER TOPICS

Typical papers either (1) grow out of an issue area with which your internship organization is dealing, or (2) are about your organization and/or similar organizations – how they operate and their roles in the process. Other subjects may be accepted, including ones that grow out of POS 341, but all paper topics must be approved by the instructor. We suggest the following as topics to consider – issues first, then other subjects. In all cases, you will be given (and be expected to read) general political science reading appropriate to your potential research question.

PAPERS ABOUT SPECIFIC ISSUES OR DECISIONS:

- Students in any internship may write about the politics of any specifically defined issue or past decision in which your office has an interest. There are a few keys to this kind of paper:
  - To assure adequate documentation and a workable thesis, the issue or decision should have occurred. The research paper should not be an exercise in speculation. However, speculation and prediction based on research of past events is legitimate in a paper’s closing section.
  - You are encouraged to look at the politics or process of the issue rather than the merits of one choice over another – for example, how or why issues are on the action agenda, how or why a proposal passed or defeated, interactions among the branches, etc.
• Issues need not be legislative. They can be about executive branch actions or regulations (or decisions not to act), or about interest groups’ actions on the issue.

• Potential law students might want to focus on legal issues or strategies. Most papers of this type will involve finding and reading briefs and other primary source material, as well as opinions.

• Communications students could look at media campaigns by allied interest groups (source material may be difficult to find). They also could document media coverage or framing for an issue in different time periods or under different conditions.

• Public policy or economics students might consider assessing whether a policy has accomplished its own stated objectives. Students who do these papers should have learned the appropriate technical tools to do such an analysis and should have access to the needed data or information. For students who do not have the technical tools or data, it is always appropriate to consider how political actors’ assessments of past successes or failures influence their later actions.

• Here are a few things to avoid in an issue paper:

  o The paper should not be an argument in favor of or against a particular policy. A research paper is not an opinion essay or brief.

  o Do not pick an issue area on which your office is not working unless you have previous academic course work on the specific topic. You cannot develop a good research topic before you have learned a general subject area; there will not be time for both in one semester.

  o Topics on global issues (international relations or comparative government) are acceptable, but need to be defined with care to satisfy the expectation that you work with primary source documents. Students could consider writing about a directly related subject with US research, such as US policy toward ____ or legislative-executive interactions over US policy toward ____ etc. UN, World Bank, and other organizational documents may also be available in English.

  o Do not bite off more than you can handle in a 20-25 page paper. (Classic example: the student who one wanted to write about US policy toward the Middle East, with no further definition.)

PAPERS ABOUT OTHER SUBJECTS (i.e., not about specific issues or decisions):

• For students working in an interest group, political committee or non-governmental organization:
  o A paper about the organization, perhaps comparing it to one or more in the same arena.

• Students in political or communications internships have written successful papers about the changing role of political party committees, political campaigns, and the media.

• Students on Capitol Hill could consider:
  o Comparing the politics/influence of a committee with the parallel committee in the other chamber, or over time under a different chairperson or different party control.
  o Any other aspect of “life on the Hill” that can be defined in an appropriate research question.

• Students working in an executive agency might consider:
  o Interagency or internal executive branch politics, or legislative-executive relations in a specific issue arena.
  o Changes in agency politics or behavior under different leaders.
  o The difficulties of implementation.

• Research papers growing out of a theme covered in POS 341 may also be submitted for approval. As with other subjects, this would need to begin early – long before (and distinct from) whatever you do for the team presentations in POS 341.
### SCHEDULE FOR POS 495

Square brackets indicate [reminders] about what is going on in the same week in the other courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan 22-27</th>
<th>See 341 syllabus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31</td>
<td><strong>Library of Congress</strong> – Meet at 9AM. Madison building, entrance on C St and 1st St SE for Reader Registration cards. Fill out online form in advance: <a href="http://www.loc.gov/rr/readerregistration.html">http://www.loc.gov/rr/readerregistration.html</a> Leave coats in Madison building. Walk underground to Jefferson building. <strong>10:30-12:</strong> class for researchers taught by LoC librarian. After the class for researcher, we will walk as a group through the public spaces of the Jefferson building and end up back in Madison to retrieve our coats: [For other subjects, see 341]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Feb 2</td>
<td>[First internship log]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri Feb 7</td>
<td><strong>Pick</strong> tentative paper subject (topic can change). This will be used for next week’s assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Feb 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Th Feb. 13</td>
<td>6-8 PM Alumni Reception in honor of Washington Semester at Bloomberg LLP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Fri Feb 14 | **Moving from a Subject to a Problem to a Thesis Question**  
Reading:  
Craft, ch 3-6  
U. of Washington Writing Ctr.  
Bring laptops to search for sources for next week’s assignment.  
Discuss how to use narrative secondary sources to narrow in on a case.  
**Paper:** Take your subject and turn it into a research question, using *Craft*, ch. 3-4. |
| Sun Feb 16 | [Submit 342 log] |
| Fri Feb 21 | White House Tour (This is our requested date. Not yet confirmed. Date may change.)  
Read Wikipedia entry on the White House (Blackboard)  
[Read *Parachute* excerpt for 342.] |
| See 3/28   | |
| Su Feb 23  | **Submit** 2 pp. progress report summarizing key points learned from narratives, items consulted. |
| Fri Feb. 28| **Sources and citations.**  
How to find Gov Docs online. Bring laptops.  
Reading:  
Citation manuals in Blackboard folder.  
When you must Cite (pp. 7-9 of this syllabus)  
[341: Civil War] |
| Sun Mar 2  | [342: Submit informational career interview.] |
| Fri Mar 7  | 495: Formal appointments (mandatory).  
**Bring written thesis question, research design.** (1-2pp.)  
Reading assignment for next week to be sent after meeting. |
| Sun Mar 9  | |
| Fri Mar 14 | Read differentiated reading assigned after 3/7 appointments.  
**ALSO READ:** Wikipedia entry on the Capitol (Blackboard)  
**12:30 Capitol Tour** (confirmed). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun Mar 16</td>
<td>Submit refined thesis, research plan or progress report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Fri Mar 21 | Arguments and Evidence: Read *Craft*, ch. 7-9  
[341: first round of team presentations.] |
| Su Mar 23  | [342: Submit log]  |
| Fri Mar 28 | Drafting and Revising. Read *Craft*, ch. 12-14  
[342: Submit log] |
| Wed Apr 2  | Electronically submit opening section of paper draft with thesis paragraph. |
| Fri Apr 4  | Formal, individual appointments on paper |
| Sun Apr 6  | Draft and revising: further discussion of *Craft*, ch. 12-14.  
[341: second set of team presentations.] |
| Fri Apr 11 | Draft and revising: further discussion of *Craft*, ch. 12-14.  
[341: second set of team presentations.] |
| Sun Apr 13 | No specific assignment. Continue working of paper draft. Appointments encouraged. |
| Fri Apr 18 | Oral presentation of paper – summary of thesis + argument.  
Prepare outline or ppt. for projecting. |
| Sun Apr 20 | Submit full paper draft |
| Fri Apr 25 | Required Appointments |
| Mon Apr 28 | Final POS 495 papers due |
| Apr 29-30 | Required Appointments |
| May 5-6   | Appointments Available |
| May 9     | Final POS 495 papers due |
The following pages have been copied from: http://library.albany.edu/usered/cite/citing.html

**When and Why to Cite Sources**

**What is Plagiarism?**

Plagiarism is defined as "a piece of writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as being your own work" or "taking someone's words or ideas as if they were your own" [1].

Plagiarism is a serious issue in the academic community. While plagiarism sometimes does occur intentionally, it also occurs because the writer doesn’t understand or does not know how to avoid it. Please visit our online tutorial: Plagiarism 101 for an entertaining and interesting look at why people plagiarize and strategies to avoid it.

Plagiarism occurs when you use someone else’s ideas and PRETEND they are your own. Avoiding plagiarism doesn’t mean that you can never use other people’s ideas. It’s a widely known secret that in fact you CAN use other peoples’ ideas and even their words. For many research papers you NEED to do this in order to prove your own points. So use their ideas! Use their words! Professors expect to see in your writing that you’ve done your research and understand what the experts think when you formed your own opinions. The trick is to acknowledge who these expert ideas really belong to by CITING them!

So let’s assume you don’t want to plagiarize, you’ve given yourself enough time to do it right, but you’re still not sure about “putting things in your own words,” judging when to cite work, or how to cite it. Read on for more information and examples.

**Why Acknowledge Sources**

Doing research for a paper is an exploration and learning process. By acknowledging our sources we show our reader the path we took to come to our conclusions. Citing the authors we read shows how we tied others’ research and ideas together and how we came to learn about and develop our own ideas and opinions.

**Why should you cite your sources?**

1. Citations reflect the careful and thorough work you have put into locating and exploring your sources.
2. Citations help readers understand the context of your argument and are a courtesy to the reader, who may share your interest in a particular area of study.
3. Citations allow you to acknowledge those authors who contributed to your learning and your work.
4. Citations, by illustrating your own learning process, also draw attention to the originality and legitimacy of your own ideas.
5. By citing sources you demonstrate your integrity and skill as a responsible student and participant in your field of study. [2]

**When to Cite Sources**

While professors and scholars may have specific requirements based on the needs of their discipline, there are cases where you should **always** cite your sources.

1. **Direct quotes of more than one word.** If the author’s words are powerful or you need to be specific for your argument, the authors’ words can be used as a direct quote.
2. **Paraphrasing or summarizing.** If you want to use someone else’s idea to help you make your point or to support your own ideas, in this case you would “translate” the ideas into your own words. [NB: “Always cite.”]
3. **Information which may be common knowledge** but still unfamiliar to your reader. This would also include statistical information which may be familiar information but still requires confirmation.

4. **Not just books or articles** should be cited. Any source that you use for information can and should be cited including interviews, websites, TV programs, etc.

5. **Whenever you are not sure** if something should be cited, err on the side of caution and cite sources.

Let's look at some examples...

**Direct quotes**

How much you quote will determine how it appears in the body of your paper but whether it is one word or an entire paragraph, direct quotes need to be cited.

Lappe's explanation of a “thin democracy” addresses a number of basic flaws within our American society.

Global warming is being recognized as a major issue throughout the world and as Al Gore instructs, "it is time to make peace with our planet." [4]

**Paraphrasing or Summarizing**

This involves translating what you have read (or heard) and putting it into your own words. Paraphrasing typically refers to putting an idea or passage into your own words. Summarizing involves capturing the main idea or reducing a detailed piece to a shorter and more general synopsis.

*Instructor's additional comment: when summarizing someone else's work, it is not sufficient to drop in a footnote. The text must also say something like “according to ...” or “Smith says that...” or “some historians have argued ....”*

**HERE'S AN EXAMPLE:**

"Instructors usually allow students to find their own topics for a major writing assignment; thus choose something of interest to you so you won't get bored after a few days. At the same time, your chosen topic will need a scholarly perspective."[5]

**Paraphrase:** When students are permitted to select their own topic to write about they should choose one that is interesting to them. The topic should also be scholarly in nature so that students will be able to find appropriate research and resources on the topic. [5]

**Summary:** Students should select writing topics that are interesting and also lend themselves to academic research. [5]

A summary generally addresses the overall theme of a passage, article, opinion, etc. while a paraphrase generally restates a more specific thought or idea. The difference between summarizing and paraphrasing is sometimes obvious and sometimes subtle — do you see the difference?

**Common Knowledge? Or Not?**

Some basic facts are common knowledge and easily confirmed from a variety of sources. Statistics should always be cited, as well as opinions and less familiar facts. Information that is considered well-known within your field of study will also help determine if it is considered common or not. However, if you are not sure, cite it!

**Example 1:**

*The University at Albany located in Albany, New York and is part of the State University of New York.*

This is common knowledge and easily confirmed in a multitude of sources.
Example 2:

The State University of New York was officially established in February of 1948 and currently consists of 64 institutions. The University at Albany is one of ten University Centers that are part of the SUNY system. [1]

While the SUNY system is well known and these facts are easily confirmed, specific historical information or statistics should be cited.

How to Cite?

We’ve talked about plagiarism as well as why and when to cite. The next question is "How?"

There are two things you need to know from your professor. The FIRST is how you will reference your sources within your paper. Generally you will use one of the following options:

- **IN TEXT** citation is when your source author is included within the body of your paper. This acts as a reference to your 'Works Cited' page.
- **END NOTES** format is used in this document. The cited idea or quote is noted with a number and the source is listed at the end of the paper.
- **FOOT NOTES** format is similar to end notes however the citations are listed at the bottom of each page.

The SECOND thing you need to know is what Format and Style Guide to use. There are very specific rules about how to do this that are not included in this document. Your professor will tell you which s/he wants you to follow. The choices will typically be one of the following:

- **MLA Format and Style Guide** (Modern Language Association)
- **APA Format and Style Guide** (American Psychological Association)
- **CHICAGO** Manual of Style

Please visit the University Libraries' Cite... Web page at Cite... for information and instructions on these style guides. Once you know what your professor wants you will need to follow the rules of that format accordingly.

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