Semester in Washington
Spring 2016

RPOS 341  Washington in Perspective: From Federal City to the Nation’s Capital

RPOS 342  Washington Internship

Professor Meredith Weiss

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Course objectives
Students will learn about the history, architecture, and culture of the city of Washington—both the nation’s capital and the “real” city. They will learn how national politics has affected the city’s growth, both within and outside the federal core. They will also learn how to interpret historical and contemporary architectural and planning decisions as interpretations of national self-understanding. To solidify learning about these interactions, individual and team assignments will use (or critique) the theses in assigned readings by applying them to structured observations of the city’s buildings, neighborhoods, infrastructure, and spaces.

Class times
Meetings for RPOS 341 and 495z will be back-to-back on Fridays, starting at 9:00am (unless otherwise notified), in the 1st floor classroom at the Woodley Park residence hall. Some classes will involve (or be supplanted by) field trips. Ending times will vary; students are expected to be available all day each Friday for required activities.

Books & readings
Grant Reeher and Mark Mariani, eds. The Insider’s Guide to Political Internships: What to Do Once You’re in the Door (Westview 2002).
  • To be purchased and read (as indicated below) before you arrive in Washington.

Also recommended:  Any good guide book to Washington, DC.

One other book is listed on the syllabus for POS 495Z. All other required readings will be available on Blackboard.

COURSE POLICIES  RPOS 341, 342, & 495z

Attendance
Attendance and active participation in class is expected every week, barring legitimate medical
excuses (following UAlbany guidelines). Any unexcused absence or lateness may result in a reduction in the student’s final grade. Family visits are not acceptable reasons for missing class.

**Internet and laptops**
Students will need to conduct online research to complete the assignments in this course. Use of laptops for note-taking is permitted, and laptops may be used for some in-class group work. However, use of any electronic device during class (including laptops) for non-class-related purposes is prohibited, and may result in loss of classroom laptop privileges and/or temporary confiscation of the device in question.

**Academic Honesty**
Students are expected to adhere to the University at Albany’s regulations concerning academic honesty: [http://www.albany.edu/eltl/academic_integrity.php](http://www.albany.edu/eltl/academic_integrity.php). Read these guidelines carefully, make sure you understand all provisions, and follow them in all your courses. Pay particular attention to the need for citations even when paraphrasing or summarizing material. Violation of these rules will result in severe penalty (usually failing the assignment and/or the course, depending on the violation) as well as referral to the appropriate academic authorities.

**Papers & assignments**
Short papers for RPOS 341 should be 2-3 pages each. Internship logs and informational interview write-ups for RPOS 342 should be 1-2 pages each.

Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins, in 12-point Times New Roman (or closely comparable) font. Proofread carefully. Given the professional orientation of this program, points will be deducted for sloppy work (poor grammar, typos, etc.).

All papers and assignments are due (hard copy) on the date on which they are listed the syllabus, unless otherwise noted in class. **Late papers** will incur a penalty of ⅓ grade (e.g., from a B+ to a B) per calendar day late.

**Grading**
**RPOS 341** (3 credits, A-E)

*Individual work*
- 4 short papers @ 10% each (4 papers) or 5% (lowest-scoring paper) 45% total
- Class preparation and participation 10%

*Team work*
- 3 team presentations @ 15% each 45%

**RPOS 342** (9 credits, S/U)
A grade of S requires:
- Satisfactory performance and punctual attendance for internship
- Completion of all 4 internship logs, 2 informational interviews and write-ups, and internship evaluation
COURSE SCHEDULE RPOS 341 & 342

Readings and assignments/papers are *due* on the date for which they are listed. Note that some extracts may include more than the required portion; students are welcome, but not required, to read further.

*Details are subject to change!*

**Pre-reading before arrival in Washington**

- Reeher & Mariani, at least chapters 1-3, 6, 8, and 15

**Week 1 Introduction to Washington, professional development orientation**

Sunday–Tuesday, 17–19 January

- Move into apartments at WISH

Tuesday, 19 January, 7pm

- Welcome dinner at WISH

Wednesday, 20 January, 9:30am-2:30pm (meet at WISH)

- **Tour of DC** with Jeanne Fogle (bring a good map of the city or guidebook)
- Reading: Fogle, *Washington, DC’s Hidden History: Introduction*

Thursday–Friday, 21–22 January, 8:30am-4:00pm

- Professional development orientation (led by Jennifer Maclaughlin): Georgetown School of Continuing Studies, 640 Massachusetts Ave NW
- Thursday 5-6pm: mentor/mentee meet & greet, then 6-8pm: welcome reception (hosted by UA Alumni Association): Georgetown Law, Sport & Fitness Center, 600 New Jersey Avenue NW
- Reading:
  - Grabowski, *Congressional Intern Handbook*, chap. 4, 6
  - Gale, Internship Guide
  - Boles, *What Color is Your Parachute?*: chap. 6, pp. 41-43

**Week 2 Research skills**

25 January First day of internships

29 January

- **Library of Congress visit** and research orientation class (taught by Steve Davenport, Jefferson Building, HSS Training Center, room LJ 139B)
  - Meet at **8:30am**, Madison building (entrance at C St and 1st St SE) for Reader Registration Cards; we will then leave coats at Madison Building and walk underground to Jefferson Building
  - Fill out online form for Reader Registration card *in advance*: [http://www.loc.gov/rr/readerregistration.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/readerregistration.html)
- **Martha’s Table visit, 2:00-4:00pm**, 2114 14th St. NW
• Internship log #1 (RPOS 342): initial impressions and expectations

**Week 3**  The First Century: From Founding to Federal City to National Capital
3 February, 6-8pm
• Discussion with Congressman Lee Zeldin (R-NY, UA ’01): Cannon House Office Building, room 121

5 February
• Reading:
  o Smith, *Washington at Home*: p. xiii-xvi
  o Ellis, *Founding Brothers*: pp. 48-52 (top)
  o Map of the District of Columbia, 1800
  o *Visions for the Millennium*: pp. 1-3 + front/back cover
  o Penczer, *Washington National Mall*: pp. 7-19 (remainder is for next week)
  o Young, *The Washington Community*: Prologue + chap. 1
  o History of the Mall website: [http://mallhistory.org/](http://mallhistory.org/)
  o Lewis, *District of Columbia*: pp. 15-21
  o Bowling, Federal Town to National Capital
• Short paper #1: See reading prompt
• Choose memorials and plan team visits for 19 February: Lincoln, Vietnam, WWII, FDR, Martin Luther King, Eisenhower (in the works)
• Alumni lunch, 1pm, WISH

**Week 4**  From the MacMillan Plan and City Beautiful through the New Deal
12 February
• Reading:
  o Population spreadsheet
  o Lewis, *District of Columbia*: pp. 27-33
  o Penczer, *History of the National Mall*: pp. 20-49 (see Week 3)
  o Wilson, Architecture and the Reinterpretation of the Past
  o Clement, City Thinking, City Spaces
  o Savage, *Monument Wars*: Introduction
• In-class film: *Make No Little Plans*
• Short paper #2: See reading prompt

**Week 5**  Team Presentations #1: Memorials and Their Controversies
19 February
• Each team will present one memorial (30 minutes total per team): describe the structure/site (including photos), discuss the genesis of the plans, assess how the design embodies the memorial’s objectives, detail and analyze the controversies surrounding the memorial’s construction and/or design. In doing so, think about and test the theses in Clement and Savage (last week). See instructions on Blackboard for full details.
• Informational interview write-up #1 (RPOS 342): Who you met, how you located them, what you learned, where you should go from here (in terms of skills as well as
further interviews). Interview write-ups may be submitted early.

- **Politico visit**, 2:00-4:00pm

**Week 6**  
**Interpreting History**  
26 February

- **Smithsonian Castle visit** (meeting with Richard Kurin)
  - Come prepared with questions for Richard Kurin based on reading (and thinking ahead to upcoming presentations)
- Reading:
  - Post, *Who Owns America’s Past*: Preface
  - Henderson, Blockbuster Brown
  - Kurin, *Reflections of a Culture Broker*: ch. 1, 2, 15

- **Short paper #3**: See reading prompt
- **Internship log #2 (RPOS 342)**: Do not just describe what you did, but discuss something you *learned* since the last log (from work you have done, conversations with colleagues, current policy debates with which your organization is engaging, etc.)

**Week 7**  
**Team Presentations #2**: Museums  
4 March

- Each team will present one museum (30 minutes total per team): describe the structure/site (including photos), discuss the genesis of the plans, assess how the content/focus embodies the museum’s objectives, detail and analyze the process of or controversies around the museum’s construction and/or design. See instructions on Blackboard for full details.

**Week 8**  
**Trauma, Identity, and Public Space**  
11 March

- **Holocaust Museum visit, 11:00am** (guest lecture, Barry Trachtenberg)
- Reading:
  - *Trauma as nation-building*
    - Kelly, *Washington in Ruins*
  - *Holocaust memorialization*
    - Stier, *Torah and Taboo*
    - Young, America’s Holocaust
    - Flanzbaum, *Americanization of the Holocaust*
    - McCombs, *The Politics of Creating the Holocaust Memorial*
  - *Who has a claim on public space?*
    - Cadaval & Finnegan, “Our Voices in the Nation’s Capital”

**Week 9**  
**No class**  
18 March

- **US Capitol visit**, 2:30pm (TBC)
• Date TBD: Networking reception, together with visiting MPA students

**Week 10**  
**African-American Washington: An Overview through the 1960s**  
25 March  
• Reading:  
  o Population spreadsheet: Racial/Ethnic Makeup of Washington, DC  
  o Lewis, *District of Columbia*: chap. 2  
  o Borchert, Rise and Fall of Washington’s Inhabited Alleys  
  o Richards, Public School Governance in DC  
  o Schaffer, The 1968 Washington Riots in History and Memory  
• **Short paper #4**: See reading prompt

**Week 11**  
1 April  
• **Pentagon visit**  
  • Choose neighborhoods and plan team visits for 15 April: Georgetown, Downtown/Pennsylvania Ave, Dupont Circle/Kalorama/Adams Morgan, Shaw/U St/LeDroit Park, Mt Pleasant/Columbia Heights, Navy Yard/Capitol Hill/Waterfront  
• **Internship log #3 (RPOS 342)**

**Week 12**  
8 April  
• Reading:  
  o *Politics*  
    ▪ Self-government timeline  
    ▪ Wikipedia (!), DC Home Rule  
    ▪ Stout, Barry obituary  
    ▪ Schwartzman & Mellnik, White Voters  
    ▪ Mellnik, et al., How Muriel Bowser Won DC  
    ▪ DeBonis & Davis, Muriel Bowser Sworn In  
  o *Neighborhoods*  
    ▪ Smith, *Washington at Home*: Introduction  
    ▪ Muller, DC neighborhoods in 1979  
  o *Architecture*  
    ▪ *Visions for the Millennium*: pp. 8-10  
    ▪ Helfrich, Modernism for Washington?  
    ▪ Vogel, Corcoran Gallery’s President Resigns  
    ▪ DeBonis, DC Planners  
  o *City and Region*  
    ▪ Schrag, How Metro Shapes DC  
    ▪ Brookings, Overview of DC Region  
    ▪ Widdicombe, The Fall and Rise of Downtown DC  
    ▪ Sandalow, The “New Washington”  
• **Short paper #5**: See reading prompt
**Week 13**  
**Team Presentations #3**: Neighborhoods  
15 April  
- Reading (to get you started):  
  - Smith, *Washington at Home*: ch. 1 (Georgetown), 2 (Capitol Hill), 3 (Downtown), 10 (Dupont), 11 (Shaw), 12 (Mt Pleasant), 13 (LeDroit Park), 14 (Columbia Heights), 16 (Kalorama), 25 (Adams Morgan)  
  - Fitzpatrick & Goodwin, *Guide to Black Washington*: ch. 9-11 (Shaw/U St)  
  - Fogle, *Hidden History*: ch. 2 (Capitol Hill), 3 (Georgetown), 4 (Downtown), 7 (Mt Pleasant/Adams Morgan), 8 (Shaw/U St)  
- **Informational interview write-up #2 (RPOS 342)**

16-17 April  
Anacostia River Festival (student/alumni event)

21 April  
Final day of internships

**Week 14**  
No class  
22 April  
- **Internship log #4 (RPOS342)**

**Week 15**  
**RPOS 495 oral presentations**

Monday, 25 April  
Final class session  
Date TBD  
**State department visit**

Wednesday, 4 May (last day of UA classes)  
- **Final RPOS495z papers due**