Course objectives
The overarching theme of the course is the process and structure of government: how the
government is structured, what the different departments (or elsewhere, ministries) do, and how
the scope and character of governance has changed over time. While our primary case study will
be the US government, given our placement in Washington, DC, our actual ambit is global.
Equally important as a course objective is a focus on writing: over the course of the semester,
students will build toward a substantial research paper on one policy arena. Particularly in the
second half of the course, students will hone their ability to do case study research using a range
of primary and secondary sources, draft a research paper that marshals appropriate evidence to
support a thesis, learn how to refine the essence of a paper into a brief and understandable oral
presentation, and practice the all-important skills of revision and rewriting.

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

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.

*Read carefully* the attached document, “When and Why to Cite Sources” (available also at [http://library.albany.edu/infolit/citesources](http://library.albany.edu/infolit/citesources)).

**Papers & assignments**
Short papers for RPOS 495z should be 2-3 pages each. The final paper should be 10-12 pages. Lengths for other RPOS 495z writing assignments are as indicated. *Instructions for all papers are in the document, “Paper Guidelines” on Blackboard.*

*Those students completing their Political Science honors thesis in conjunction with RPOS 495z will register also for RPOS 400 (1 credit), meet with the professor as needed, then write a more substantial final paper (20-25 pages instead of 10-12 pages).*

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 in 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 495z** (3 credits, A-E)
- Plagiarism 101 tutorial 5%
- 2 short papers @ 10% each 20% total
- Paper:
  - Thesis questions & sources 5%
  - Draft of introduction & outline 10%
  - Oral presentation 10%
  - Final paper 40%
- Class preparation & participation 10%
COURSE SCHEDULE    RPOS 495z
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!

**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)
  - **Note:** You will be expected to do extensive library as well as internet research for this course. This orientation to the LoC will show you how to use one of the world’s greatest libraries. Remember that the LoC has limited hours and is a closed-stack facility: you must request materials and wait. Plan your visits accordingly—and start early in the semester! As a backup, you may also be able to use your SUNY ID to access the Gelman Library at George Washington University (2130 H St NW, 7am-midnight). Of course, you can readily access all the electronic journals and other online materials at the UAlbany library, as well.
  - 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
  o Fill out online form for Reader Registration card in advance: http://www.loc.gov/rr/readerregistration.html

- **Martha’s Table visit, 2:00-4:00pm, 2114 14th St. NW**
- Reading:
  o Booth, et al., *The Craft of Research*: chap. 3-5, 7
  o UW Tips & Techniques for Writing
    ▪ For more details, review the “General Social Science Writing Help” files at http://depts.washington.edu/pswrite/forstudents.html
  o Taylor, Legislative History Research (skim)
- **Practicing Academic Integrity tutorials**: Complete all the exercises at http://library.albany.edu/infolit/integrity before class; collect your email “receipts” and forward to me in one email (or print out and submit in class)

**Week 3**  The Legislature as a Policymaking Arena
3 February, 6-8pm
- Discussion with Congressman Lee Zeldin (R-NY, UA ’01): Cannon House Office Building, room 121

5 February
- **Guest lecturer**: Michael Malbin
- Reading:
  o Birkland, *Introduction to the Policy Process*: ch. 9
  o Haskell, et al., *Congress in Context*: ch. 5
  o Smith & Gamm, *Dynamics of Party Government*: ch. 7
- **Alumni lunch**, 1pm, WISH

**Week 4**  Interest Groups, Advocacy, & Expertise
12 February
- **Guest lecturer**: Andrew Rich
- Reading:
  o Nownes, *Interest Groups in American Politics*, ch. 5
  o Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise*, ch. 6?
  o Carpenter, et al., Explaining the Advocacy Agenda

**Week 5**  RPOS 341 Team Presentations
19 February
- **Politico visit**, 2:00-4:00pm

**Week 6**  Foreign Policy and Security
26 February
- **RPOS 341: Smithsonian Castle visit** (meeting with Richard Kurin)
- **Guest lecturer**: Bryan Early
- Reading:
  o Rosati & DeWitt, *The Department of State*
o Auger, The National Security Council
o Fendrick, Diplomacy as an Instrument of National Power

Week 7  RPOS 341 Team Presentations
4 March

Week 8  Environmental Policy
11 March
• **Guest lecturer**: Greg Fishbein, The Nature Conservancy
• **RPOS 341: Holocaust Museum visit** (guest lecture by Barry Trachtenberg)
• Reading:
  o Luther, National Environmental Policy Act: pp. 1-12
  o Leggett, Climate Change
  o Biermann, et al., Environmental Policy Integration
  o Fishbein and Lee, Early Lessons from Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs
  o Browse the UNFCCC website, [http://unfccc.int/essential_background/items/6031.php](http://unfccc.int/essential_background/items/6031.php)

Week 9  No class
18 March
• **US Capitol visit**, 2:30pm (TBC)
• Date TBD: Networking reception, together with visiting MPA students

Week 10  Labor and Trade Policy
25 March
• **Guest lecturer**: Mary Estelle Ryckman, Office of the US Trade Representative
• Reading:
  o O’Brien, *Workers’ Paradox*, chap. 1
  o MacLaury, The Job Safety Law of 1970
  o Krueger, International Labor Standards and Trade
  o US–Peru Trade Promotion Agreement documents:
    ▪ Labor chapter of the Agreement
    ▪ Submission process
    ▪ Submission complaint
• **Thesis questions and sources due**

Week 11  Pentagon visit
1 April

Week 12  RPOS495 appointments
8 April
• Each student will sign up for a 15-minute consultation with Prof. Weiss. Come prepared with your *draft* introduction and outline. (Consultations may be scheduled prior to this date, for those students preferring to get an earlier start on their papers.)
Reading:
  - Booth, et al., *The Craft of Research*: ch. 12-14, 16

**Week 13** RPOS 341 Team Presentations
15 April
  - Draft final paper introduction & outline due

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

21 April Final day of internships

**Week 14** No class
22 April

**Week 15** RPOS 495 oral presentations
Monday, 25 April Final class session
Date TBD State department visit

Wednesday, 4 May, 7:00pm (last day of UA classes)
  - Final RPOS495z papers due
When and Why to Cite Sources

Source: http://library.albany.edu/infolit/citesources (amended slightly)

**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. The required online tutorial, [Plagiarism 101](http://library.albany.edu/infolit/citesources), offers 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 and 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 author’s 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, you may “translate” the ideas into your own words.

3. **Information which may be common knowledge** but still unfamiliar to your reader. This would also include statistical information which may be familiar, 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—set off a quote of more than 3-4 lines as a separate block of text—but whether it is one word or an entire paragraph, any direct quote needs to be cited.

*Lappe’s explanation of a “thin democracy”* [3] 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**

Both these tools involve modes of translating or restating what you have read (or heard). *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. *Both* require citation.

**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. Whether information 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 is 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.* [6]

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. *We will use in-text parenthetical citations for RPOS 495z and RPOS 341.*
- **Endnotes** 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.
- **Footnotes** format is similar to endnotes; 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)
- **CMS** (Chicago Manual of Style). *We will use CMS (author-date) for RPOS 495z and RPOS 341*: see [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html) or the style guide on Blackboard for details.

Please visit the University Libraries’ Citation Tools webpage at [http://libguides.library.albany.edu/citationgenerators](http://libguides.library.albany.edu/citationgenerators) for information and instructions on these style guides.

**Endnotes**


