Pol-Sci 491
Truman Center Washington Internship (Off-Campus)
Credit: 3 Hours
Semester: Summer

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Beth Vonnahme
Office Location: Manheim 303i
Phone: 816.235.5844
Email: vonnahmeb@umkc.edu (preferred contact method)
Class Meeting: TBA
Office Hours: By appointment.

Course Description: This course provides students with a unique Washington internship experience in collaboration with the Truman Center. Before leaving for their internship, students will become familiar with the responsibilities of the US Congress, the factors that influence the recruitment and election of members of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the internal organization of the two chambers, and the relationship between the Congress and the other branches of government.

Required Text: Congress and its Members by Davidson, Oleszek, and Lee (provided by the Truman Center).

Student Learning Outcomes: Students will demonstrate an ability to
1. Understand the inner working s of Congress
2. Interact in a professional manner with colleagues
3. Discuss congressional elections, organization, bill passage, and/or interaction with the president.
4. Describe their internship experience

Course Expectations: The expectations for this course are as follows. Students are expected to fully attend and perform their assigned duties while in Washington. Each student will behave in a professional manner when interacting with their colleagues in the member’s office and with the Washington community. Before leaving, students are expected to read the entire textbook. Grades for this course will be based on successful completion of the internship and two written assignments.

Grade Distribution
Internship Completion 60%
Written Assignment #1 20%
Written Assignment #2 20%

Evaluation: The grading scale for this course is as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93+</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>73-76</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>63-66</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Policies:

Academic Calendar: Students are encouraged to review important add, drop or withdraw dates: [http://www.umkc.edu/registrar/acal.asp](http://www.umkc.edu/registrar/acal.asp)

Disability Support Services: To obtain disability related accommodations and/or aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD). Once
verified, OSSD will notify the instructor regarding the accommodation and/or aids. Students should then meet with the instructor to discuss their needs during the first two weeks of class.

**Academic Honesty:** The Board of Curators of the University of Missouri recognizes that academic honesty is essential for the intellectual life of the University. Faculty members have a special obligation to expect high standards of academic honesty in all student work. Students have a special obligation to adhere to such standards. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, or sabotage, is adjudicated through the University of Missouri Student Conduct Code and Rules of Procedures in Student Conduct Matters. I will not tolerate academic dishonesty in any form including plagiarism, copying, or cheating. This includes copying and pasting any material from the web. All assignments for this course are required to be individual and original. Turnitin will be used to examine a paper’s originality. You will receive a zero on the assignment if academic dishonesty is detected.

**Academic Inquiry, Course Discussion, and Privacy:** University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in Section 200.015 of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may not make any audio or video recordings of course activity (including those recordings prepared by an instructor), except students permitted to record as an accommodation under Section 240.040 of the Collected Rules. All other students who record and/or distribute audio or video recordings of class activity are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of Section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters. Those students who have written permission from the course instructor to record are not permitted to redistribute any audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded, including those recordings prepared by an instructor. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of Section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

**English Proficiency Statement:** Students who encounter difficulty in their courses because of the English proficiency of their instructors should speak directly to their instructors. If additional assistance is needed, they may contact the UMKC Help Line at 816-235-2222 for assistance.

**Campus Safety:** Inclement weather, mass notification, and emergency response guide. [http://www.umkc.edu/umkalert/](http://www.umkc.edu/umkalert/), [http://www.umkc.edu/police](http://www.umkc.edu/police), Police: 816-235-1515 or 911

**Counseling and Health Services Available at UMKC:** UMKC students may experience many challenges in their lives while attending college – stress, depression, suicidality, trauma, relationship issues, health concerns, etc. As your professor I care about your success and well-being, and want to make you aware of some helpful resources on campus. The UMKC Counseling Center ([www.umkc.edu/counselingcenter](http://www.umkc.edu/counselingcenter)), located at 4825 Troost in Room 206, offers a wide range of supportive services to students. Appointments can be made by calling 816.235.1635. UMKC Student Health and Wellness ([http://info.umkc.edu/studenthealth/](http://info.umkc.edu/studenthealth/)), located at 4825 Troost in Room 115, offers a full range of health care and promotion services. Appointments can be scheduled online or by calling 816.235.6133. The MindBody Connection ([www.umkc.edu/mindbody](http://www.umkc.edu/mindbody)) is located in the Atterbury Student Success Center in Room 112 and offers a variety of stress-reduction services.

**Grade Appeals:** Students are responsible for meeting the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled. The establishment of the criteria for grades and the evaluation of student academic performance are the responsibilities of the instructor.
The University grade appeal procedure is available only for the review of allegedly capricious grading and not for review of the instructor's evaluation of the student's academic performance. Capricious grading, as that term is used here, comprises any of the following:

• The assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than the performance in the course;
• The assignment of a grade to a particular student according to more exacting or demanding standards than were applied to other students in the course; (Note: Additional or different grading criteria may be applied to graduate students enrolled for graduate credit in 300- and 400-level courses.)
• The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the instructor's previously announced standards.

**Discrimination and Grievance Procedure:** Discrimination Grievance Procedures for Students can be found here: http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/collection_rules/grievance/ch390/grievance_390.010

**Statement of Human Rights:** The Board of Curators and UMKC are committed to the policy of equal opportunity, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability and status as a Vietnam era veteran. Commitment to the policy is mentored by the Division of Diversity, Access & Equity, but it is the responsibility of the entire university community to provide equal opportunity through relevant practices, initiatives and programs.

**Title IX:** Under the University of Missouri’s Title IX policy, discrimination, violence and harassment based on sex, gender, and gender identity are subject to the same kinds of accountability and support applied to offenses based on other protected characteristics such as race, color, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, religion, age, ancestry, disability, military status, and veteran status. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources by visiting UMKC’s Title IX Office webpage (http://info.umkc.edu/title9/) or contacting UMKC’s Title IX Coordinator, Mikah K. Thompson (816.235.6910 or thomsonmikah@umkc.edu). Additionally, you can file a complaint using UMKC’s online discrimination complaint form, which is located at http://info.umkc.edu/title9/reporting/report-online/.

While most UMKC employees are required to report any known or suspected violation of Title IX, students may seek confidential guidance from the following campus locations:

| UMKC Counseling Service Volker Campus 4825 Troost Ave, Suite 206 Kansas City, MO 64110 Phone – (816) 235-1635 | UMKC Counseling Service Health Sciences Campus Health Sciences Building 1418 2464 Charlotte Kansas City, MO 64108 Phone – (816) 235-1635 (open Tuesdays, 1-5pm) | Student Health and Wellness 4825 Troost Ave., Suite 115 Kansas City, MO 64110 Phone - (816) 235-6133 |

**UMKC Connect:** Important information is available to undergraduate students in UMKC Connect accessed through Blackboard. Throughout the term, students may receive emails regarding course grades or academic performance. Students are expected to address information posted in a timely fashion. This information may be shared with the student’s Success Network made up his or her academic advisor(s) and other campus resources so that UMKC may fully support the student’s success.
Course Assignments:

Written Assignment #1: The first written assignment should be completed before you leave for your internship (by June 1st). Please choose one of the following topics and answer it fully in an 8-10 page essay (double-spaced, 12-pt font). You may rely on additional readings to supplement the textbook.

1. Congressional Elections
   - Focus: How are members of Congress elected today? How have congressional elections changed over time? How are they different and how are they the same? Do House and Senate elections differ? How and why? How are congressional elections financed? Do changes need to be made in how congressional elections are financed or in the rules governing congressional elections?
   - Readings: Davidson et al., Chapters 3-5

2. Congressional Organization
   - Focus: What is the role of political parties and committees in Congress? What is the relationship between the party leadership in Congress and congressional committees? When are parties most powerful? When are committees most powerful? How are House committees and parties different from Senate committees and parties? What changes have occurred in the basic operations of the Congress in recent decades?
   - Readings: Davidson et al., Chapters 6-7

3. How a Bill Becomes a Law
   - Focus: Describe the simple account of how a bill becomes a law? What is missing from this description? What complexities do we often ignore? What procedures can members of Congress use to move legislation forward? What procedures can members of Congress use to block legislation? How are House and Senate procedures different?
   - Readings: Davidson et al., Chapters 8-9

4. Congress and the President
   - Focus: Describe the relationship between the president and Congress when it comes to policymaking and policy implementation. Are there differences between domestic and foreign policies? How much of this relationship is grounded in the Constitution, statute, custom, political tenor, or other elements? Is the relationship balanced or does one entity have more power than the framers intended?
   - Readings: Davidson et al., Chapters 10, 14, and 15

Written Assignment #2: The second written assignment should be completed once you have finished your internship (by August 1st). However, you should take notes throughout your internship to use to write this essay. Please answer the following in an 8-10 page essay (double-spaced, 12-pt font):

1. Please provide background information on your representative and district.
2. Describe the setup of the office (staff, roles, hierarchy, etc.).
3. Describe your responsibilities over the course of your internship. Were you surprised, pleased, or shocked by any duties you were asked to perform during your internship?
4. Discuss three lessons you learned during your internship.
5. How does your member of Congress balance his/her responsibilities to constituents, his/her political party, relevant interest groups, and personal values, concerns, and interests (Chapter 5 of the textbook might help with this)?