

HOBBY FELLOWS 2023

University of Houston Department of Political Science – Hobby School of Public Affairs
POLS 4198/4298/4398/4498/4598

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Hobby School of Public Affairs in partnership with the Department of Political Science offers independent study courses to students participating in approved government internships such as the Hobby Fellows program in Austin. Hobby Fellows work 40 hours plus per week beginning in January and concluding at the end of May. Intern responsibilities may vary, depending on the intern's professional experience and interests as well as the needs of the office.

The primary objectives of the Hobby Fellows program include the following:

- Providing students the opportunity to gain first-hand experience working in government and politics.
- Generating insight into the realities of the legislative process and how it relates to traditional theoretical perspectives of political science.
- Educating students about the possibilities of public service and politics as a career choice.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will master basic concepts, theories and methods of studying government institutions and public policy. They will also gain knowledge of the state government structure and contemporary political issues in Texas.
- Students will write clear and original papers directed to the appropriate audience.

UH POLICIES & RESOURCES

Syllabus Changes

Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email.

Excused Absence

Regular class attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework are important contributors to student success. Absences may be excused as provided in the University of Houston [Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy](#) and [Graduate Excused Absence Policy](#) for reasons including: medical illness of student or close relative, death of a close family member, legal or government proceeding that a student is obligated to attend, recognized professional and educational activities where the student is presenting, and University-sponsored activity or athletic competition. Under these policies, students with excused absences will be provided with an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam or other work that contributes to the course grade or a satisfactory alternative. Please read the full policy for details regarding reasons for excused absences, the approval process, and extended absences. Additional policies address absences related to [military service](#), [religious holy days](#), [pregnancy and related conditions](#), and [disability](#).

Honor Code Statement

Students may be asked to sign an honor code statement as part of their submission of any graded work including but not limited to projects, quizzes, and exams: *"I understand and agree to abide by the provisions in the (select: [University of Houston Undergraduate Academic Honesty Policy](#), [University of Houston Graduate Academic Honesty Policy](#)). I understand that academic honesty is taken very seriously and, in the cases of violations, penalties may include suspension or expulsion from the University of Houston."*

Helpful Information

COVID-19 Updates: <https://uh.edu/covid-19/>

Coogs Care: <https://www.uh.edu/dsaes/coogscare/>

Laptop Checkout Requests: <https://www.uh.edu/infotech/about/planning/off-campus/index.php#do-you-need-a-laptop>

Health FAQs: <https://uh.edu/covid-19/faq/health-wellness-prevention-faqs/>

Student Health Center: <https://uh.edu/class/english/lcc/current-students/student-health-center/index.php>

ACADEMIC CREDIT

Hobby Fellows are required to take POLS 4398 (or the equivalent) and may earn up to 12 hours upper level political science credit depending on their degree plan and previous internships/independent study courses. Any additional hours earned beyond the required 3 hours are graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (with no effect on GPA). The Department of Political Science limits the number of graded hours for all internships at 9. For example, if you previously earned 3 hours of graded credit through the Civic Houston Internship Program, you can earn up to 6 hours graded credit in other internships. **You are required to speak to your advisor about the number of hours that is best for you.** The Hobby School cannot determine the appropriate number of hours for your degree plan.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE REQUIRED COURSE

Being an intern is both exciting and demanding, and it is easy to get fully involved in the political and legislative activities in Austin. To insure students complete the academic part of the program, the requirements are as follows:

Term Paper (50% of the course grade)

Analyze & compare *How Things Really Work* with personal opinions and observations of the legislative session.

Governor Hobby's memoirs discuss public service and "how things really work." Consider the three following topics covered in Gov. Hobby's book and discuss them in terms of your personal political philosophy (conservative or liberal) and your observations compared to Gov. Hobby's experiences:

1. Term limits
2. Seeking bipartisan solutions
3. Limiting government

While it should be apparent you have read Gov. Hobby's book, this paper should emphasize what *you* think about these three topics; in other words, the majority of your paper should not be a summary of the book.

The length of the paper is a minimum of 10 pages (no larger than 12 font and margins no larger than one inch).

The term paper should be emailed to the instructor at rcross@uh.edu and is **due on Monday, February 27, 2023. Late papers will lose 5 points per day.**

Journal (25% of the course grade)

The *typed* journal has a *minimum of one page per week*. The primary content of your journal should be a discussion of your activities and projects. You may also discuss legislation your office is sponsoring.

Be sure to answer the following in your last entry: Based on your legislative experience, is public service an attractive career option? Explain why or why not. Also, what surprised you the most about the legislative session? Explain.

The journal is due on the first of each month and is submitted to rcross@uh.edu AND jlruand@central.uh.edu . Late papers will lose 5 points per day. The program director will provide feedback on the journal submissions.

Journal submissions are due on the first day of the following months: February, March, April, May* and June

*** May 1: This journal should include a brief summary of your overall experience. The summary is used in the program's annual report, and it is very important for current and future donors.** The program director will provide samples from previous reports.

Performance Evaluation (25% of the course grade)

Your office supervisor will complete an evaluation of your performance. The program director will send your supervisor the survey.

Course Grades

Grades are calculated on the following university level scale:

A	100-93	B	86-83	C	76-73	D	66-63
A-	92-90	B-	82-80	C-	72-70	D-	62-60
B+	89-87	C+	79-77	D+	69-67	F	59-0

Photos

Please send photos of your session activities to Jessica Ruland at jlruland@central.uh.edu. The photos will be posted on the Hobby School's social media and website. Advisory board members and donors love photos so send them to us!



Hobby School of Public Affairs

UNIVERSITY OF **HOUSTON**

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