

Washington Semester Program
American National Government and Politics, Unit II
RESEARCH PROJECT SYLLABUS
(4 Credit Hours)

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Fall 2008
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INTRODUCTION

Please read this document carefully. You are responsible for adhering to all the rules delineated in the contents below. **Please do not ask for special treatment because it would be unfair to your classmates.**

The research project provides an opportunity to conduct original research on a subject which interests you. It permits a more in-depth inquiry on a domestic policy issue. The project represents a more detailed investigation into a topic within your field of study which grows out of your involvement in the seminar and internship. In emphasizing original research and by utilizing the unique resources in Washington, D.C., the research project is not a typical term paper built upon hours of library research. Rather, it is a fresh, innovative endeavor using primary resources, government documentation and interviews with decision-makers and practitioners.

The purpose of the following syllabus is not only to advise you of the procedures and requirements of the research project, but also to serve as a teaching vehicle. Since the research project involves guided independent research, this syllabus provides answers to questions that will save you time in the end. It also includes a lengthy section on "Writing the Research Paper" which will enable you to focus, conceptualize and complete your paper. Always remember to consult me when in doubt. One of my main functions is to provide you direction and advice on the best way to proceed with your paper. Thus, as you will see the process is set up with deadlines for you to meet these objectives. Based on vast experience and, also as a former Washington Semester student myself, deadlines enable you to reach your goal in the end.

PART ONE--EXPECTATIONS AND BASIC REQUIREMENTS

A. Originality: The project is fundamentally original first-hand research. The student is expected to move beyond a simple examination of secondary sources into the realm of primary source collection through interviews, observation of policy making and contacts with relevant individuals, agencies and organizations for information. This is a key to a superior paper.

B. Current/Washington-Based Research: The project focuses on a contemporary American political or policy issue. The project should not be an historical essay or a theoretical discourse. Such approaches underutilize the Washington environment's great potential and are more

appropriate for a course at your home college or university. The project must focus on a specific issue which is germane to U.S. government politics or policy but neither foreign policy nor defense (unless it pertains to an institutional issue of Congress such as the appropriation of foreign aid). Furthermore, comparative politics and political theory are also not germane.

C. Topic Approval: Although the topic of the project is of your own choosing, it must be approved by the instructor. The topic may be derived from the seminar, your internship, or from other avenues of interest. For instance, the topic may be an outgrowth of an issue considered previously in a term paper or class. Once you have found a topic that interests you, a preliminary research proposal (typed) must be developed and submitted in class on Tuesday, August 26. Your final and extensive research outline is due on Monday, September 8. During the interim, we will have individual meetings to prepare for your final research outline. The final outline must contain a detailed overview of your research project and designate the approach to be taken in investigating the topic.

D. Consultation: You are expected to consult closely with the instructor during the semester. You will give a brief oral presentation during the first week of class and then submit your written preliminary proposal after class. That proposal will be the starting point for our individual consultation. Approximately one week after our individual consultation, your final written outline must be submitted for approval. I will be available throughout the semester to work with you on your project. The best advice I have for individual meetings is that if you are "stuck" regarding some aspect of your research please show me what you have on paper so that I can provide concrete suggestions on how to improve it. This will help you understand your problem better and it will enable me to help you to work out a solution much more easily. Another important piece of advice is not to let problems fester. Always feel free to see me at a mutually convenient time. I want to see each and every one of you to do well on your research project.

E. Completed Project: The completed project should run from a minimum of 35 to a maximum of 50 double-spaced typed pages. The style, footnotes, quotations, etc. should conform to scholarly standards such as those set, for instance, by Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). This manual is available for purchase at the university bookstore or Borders Bookshop and I strongly recommend that you purchase it.

PART TWO--STARTING THE RESEARCH PROJECT

A. CHOOSING A TOPIC

Perhaps the single most important step in the entire process is choosing a research topic. Fortunately, most of you have arrived here with some specific idea in mind. Choose your topic carefully. Make sure that you do not have a biased opinion of the subject matter before you begin your investigation. This will interfere with your judgement to carry out the project properly. The project should meet the following criteria:

1. The project should utilize the resources of Washington, D.C. and not be something you could have accomplished at your home school.

2. The project should be a subject that interests and motivates you. Realize the fact that you will be spending an enormous amount of time, thinking and reading about this issue.

3. The project should be manageable and completed in the allotted time frame. For example, "Prognosticating the Future of All Senate and House Appropriations Bills for the 106th Congress," is not a question that you will be able to answer in a few months of work. Do not expect that you will get access to members of Congress. If you do, then that is wonderful--but that is the exception and not the rule. Access to congressional staff members is more likely, as is access to interest groups and think-tank policymakers. One other note, survey research projects are nearly impossible to accomplish given the time and access constraints. Being realistic in your expectations will help you proceed through the project with greater facility and reduce your anxiety level. The key words here are to **NARROW IT DOWN AND BE SPECIFIC**.

4. The project should be significant. Ask yourself the "so what" question. So what if I find that Federal Reserve Board members are more likely to wear pin stripe suits than Treasury Department bureaucrats? Ask yourself if the results of your research will be useful to government agencies, lobbying or public interest groups, voters etc.

5. The project must avoid being biased at all costs. This means providing substantial attention to differing views on a subject matter. The research project is an analytical paper whose conclusions are driven by strong supporting evidence not unsupported contentions.

B. HOW TO NARROW DOWN A RESEARCH TOPIC

One of the important tasks you will face is to narrow down your topic. Below are some examples of issue categories:

1. Affirmative action is too broad a subject to study. Thus, you might want to select one of the following subject areas:

- a) reverse discrimination in employment
- b) gender based discrimination in employment
- c) race-based discrimination in higher education
- d) disability based discrimination in employment

2. Welfare--select an issue or plan to study.

- a) Medicaid Reform
- b) Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) as a replacement for Aid-to-Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).
- c) An Analysis of Title III of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (Welfare Reform Law)--Child Support Enforcement
- d) How successful is Workfare in providing jobs to single mothers
- e) Full or partial privatization of welfare services
- f) How successful have the child support enforcement provisions of the Welfare Reform Law working

3. Elections

- a) The impact of polling on presidential candidate strategy in the 2004 election
- b) Why the gender gap between men and women was so pronounced in the 2000 election, and less pronounced in the 2004 election?
- c) What voter registration and get-out-the-vote groups are doing to energize 18-29 year old voters?
- d) Technology advances in the 2006 election campaign (i.e., the internet, video etc.)
- e) How is new media (Internet, PDA's, iPhones, etc.) affecting national political campaigns?

4. Campaign Finance Reform

- a) The Impact of Contributions to Members of the House Leadership voting for interest groups supporting them.
- b) Reforming 527 groups
- c) Will Restructuring the Federal Election Commission Enable it to Enforce Campaign Finance Laws More Effectively?
- d) The Impact of Issue Advocacy Groups have on elections post-*Wisconsin Right to Life v. FEC* (2007)

If you are looking for subject areas from which to develop a paper topic, the following represent some suggestions:

The Flat Tax

A National Sales Tax

Medicare Reform--Privatization or Saving Medicare in its Current Form

Expanding Prescription Drug Coverage Under Medicare--The Clinton Plan

The Effectiveness of the Federal Election Commission

Reforming the committee structure in the United States Senate

Reforming the filibuster

Comparing the role of advertising in two Senate campaigns last year

Eliminating the Department of Commerce

Eliminating the Department of Education

Charter Schools

Vouchers for Private Schools

Eliminating the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities

Privatizing federal aviation

Privatizing postal services

Privatizing child support enforcement

Federalization of child support enforcement

Extending the anti-trust exemption to professional football

Regulating the Internet

RICO Act (Racketeering)

School Prayer Amendment or Law

Federal Emergency Management response

Wetlands policy

What constitutes "treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors" as an impeachable offense?

Employment provisions of the Americans with Disability Act

Affirmative action programs in higher education

Would raising prices on cigarettes cut demand and not encourage a black market of sales?

Is Megan's law constitutional?

Are nuclear, biological or chemical weapons a threat to the internal security of the United States?

Pending or recently passed legislation provides an excellent source of topics for research papers. Remember, you are testing something concrete and specific, not abstract. "The Ethical Implications of Congressional Scandals" is an interesting topic. Over a three-year period of time it might be accomplished; but you have a relatively compact time frame to write a thirty-five to fifty page paper. Thus, pick a subject which you can master many of the details in one semester.

Caution one: abortion can be a very difficult project to conduct given the lack of access to relevant interest groups in town. It is almost impossible to get interviews.

Caution two: In the last several years, students writing papers on the presidency papers have had difficulty obtaining interviews.

C. FRAMING A TOPIC INTO A RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Now that you have selected a topic and narrowed down the subject matter, there is one final stage which is the research hypothesis you will be investigating. The topics delineated above are still too broad to investigate so that your research focus needs to be narrowed further. Let us say you select, "employment discrimination." The hypothesis might be: "Does Title XXI of the Social Security Act (CHIP), Successfully Provide Health Insurance for Children of Low-Income Families?" **KEEP THE TOPIC SIMPLE. THE SIMPLICITY OF YOUR HYPOTHESIS WILL LEAD TO SUBJECT SUCCESS. THE MORE COMPLEX YOU MAKE THE SUBJECT MATTER THE MORE DIFFICULT THE PAPER BECOMES TO WRITE SUCCESSFULLY BECAUSE OF THE TIME ELEMENT.**

Let me provide you with another example. One of the topics above is "Technology advances in the 2004 campaign." What new technologies did the Republican party or specific Republican candidates employ that transformed the 2006 campaign from previous elections? The same example could be used for Democrats as well. (Here you are talking about e-mail, faxes, satellites, VCR tapes, DVDs, CDs, 800 number phone banks and so forth). Thus, what the research hypothesis does is focus you on a central issue of importance that requires primary source research (i.e., documents from organizations and, most importantly, interviews).

Health care provides another instance of a contemporary issue, which is addressed above. The subject is too broad to write a comprehensive paper in one semester. However, your paper could examine the issue of employer vs. individual mandates or universal coverage vs. universal access to health care or reducing Medicare and Medicaid costs or analyze one of the plans before Congress. A research question might be, is the single-payer plan the most cost-effective method to

control health care spending? If your paper topic is why congress passed the Patriot Act, then your topic is much too broad and time-consuming a task to be finished in one semester.

Remember, the next step is then to explain why the subject matter is significant. Keep in mind that you are investigating a subject that should interest the reader as well as yourself.

PART THREE--INITIAL DEADLINES

A. DEVELOPING A PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL (Wednesday, August 26) (Length 1-2 pages)

Your first approach to the topic should be based on careful thought, some knowledge of the subject and your instinct. This is important because it will guide your work throughout the semester. The preliminary should contain the following elements:

--An introductory statement of your research hypothesis in the form of a question. Explain why it is important, how it contributes to understanding how government or politics works in Washington, D.C. Finally, how you intend to test the research hypothesis for its validity.

--How you intend to gather data; (see Appendix I: Methodology, p.9)

--A preliminary bibliography

For your convenience, several research projects are on my shelf in the Reading Room. Browse through several papers because they will help you understand what is expected and required of the project. More importantly, examining former research projects will help you ascertain the type of content, format and research that these projects entail.

The same day your preliminary outline is due, you will make a short five to ten minute oral presentation on your proposal. Getting off to a fast start is essential to completing such a project. The more work and thinking you do at the beginning will save you from needless stress later on during the semester.

B. FINAL RESEARCH OUTLINE (Monday, September 8)

(Length 3-7 pages)

The final research outline should follow the criteria enumerated below. Your paper will generally follow this outline in the development of chapters. Each item in the outline below represents a chapter. I--Introduction, II--Background/Literature Review, III--Current Status of the Issue, IV--Analysis, and V Conclusion.

I. Introduction

A. Statement of the research hypothesis in the form of a question.

- B. Provide several issues or criteria on which you will base your evaluation of your research hypothesis. These will be elaborated upon in #IV. (For example, see below).
 - 1. Issue (Criteria #1)
 - a. Short explanation why it appropriately tests the hypothesis
 - 2. Issue (Criteria #2)
 - a. Short explanation why it appropriately tests the hypothesis
 - 3. Issue (Criteria #3)
 - a. Short explanation why it appropriately tests the hypothesis
- C. What is the plan of your paper. (Tell the reader what chapters will follow in your paper and why).

II. Literature/Background Review

A literature/background review evaluates previous work that has been done in the area that is relevant to your research question. The purpose of the chapter is to provide a discussion of the past issues or events that developed regarding the status of the issue you are researching.

- A. How did the issue evolve?
- B. Concept or Time Period #1--Historical and (or) conceptual development of the issue
 - 1. Cause
 - 2. Development
- C. Concept or Time Period #2--Historical and (or) conceptual development of the issue
 - 1. Cause
 - 2. Development
- D. Concept or Time Period #3 and so forth

III. Examining the Current Status of the Research Question

(This section usually involves utilizing much of the original research that you will be collecting from primary source material. The example below explains how that information may be used in this section. Let us say that your research question is, "Did 1993 Omnibus Crime Bill Fail to Pass Congress for Political or Policy Reasons?" This hypothesis may be explored through interviews with congressional staff from the appropriate committees, administration officials, think tank officials and lobbyists. You will also need copies of the House and Senate versions of the bill. Furthermore, you need to integrate published hearings, testimony and impact studies of the bill into your description. This will enable you to compare and contrast perspectives on the issue. Furthermore, note that several papers will not follow this guideline exactly. If you are writing a paper about "Technology advances in the 2004 election" there is no current status of the issue. Instead, this chapter should focus on the technology developed and used in the 2004 election).

- A. Introduction
- B. Current status of the research question (Example, Title XXI of SS Act or CHIP)

1. Provision #1
2. Provision #2

Different perspectives can also be addressed in B.1. and B.2. whether they are institutional (congress, president, interest groups), political parties (Democrats or Republicans), ideological (liberal or conservative) or any other dichotomy or trichotomy you employ. Constitutional law papers develop a separate technique, where each issue represents part of the most recent court case concerning the issues. The operative sections (B.1. and B.2.) then address different perspectives on those issues in the ruling among the majority and minority.

For example:

B. *Colorado Federal Republican Committee v. FEC* 116 S.Ct—(1996)

1. Facts of the Case
2. Majority opinion
3. Minority perspectives etc.

IV. Analysis

(For the final outline, briefly speculate what those findings might be. When you write our paper, originality comes strongly into play in this section because you are asked to speculate not only about implications for your paper but also any alternative solutions that you propose. (ORIGINAL AND INDEPENDENT THINKING IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED; BUT REMEMBER TO SUPPORT YOUR ARGUMENTS WITH EVIDENCE).

See the Introduction and I.B-3. You answer the hypothesis by evaluating the framework set up in the introduction.

- A. Did you confirm what you expected to find in your research question?
- B. If yes, explain and analyze the implications of your findings (Look back at your issues for evaluation in your introduction in item I.B 1-3).
- C. If no, explain and analyze the implications of why you failed to confirm your research hypothesis and the requisite implication that has in terms of public policy. (Look back at your issues for evaluation in your introduction in item I.B 1-3).
- D. Do you have any suggestions to improve a given policy or ameliorate a particular problem?

V. Conclusion

(The conclusion represents a wrap-up for your paper and represents the future direction for research regarding the subject matter you have just examined).

VI. Appendix I: Methodology

(How do you intend to test your research question? In this segment of the project you develop an explicit method or systematic way intended for testing your research question. The information or data you will collect may be a series of interviews with policy participants, documentary evidence (for example, agency reports), census materials, congressional committee testimony, etc. Make sure in advance that the evidence that you collect will be available to you in the time frame allotted. You may even wish to set a personal timetable for yourself to reach certain goals in the project. If you wish to submit them to me, fine. If you wish not to do so, fine).

- A. What approach (i.e., design) do you plan to use to gather your information.
 - 1. Explain
 - 2. Why the approach selected is appropriate
- B. Sources of Information
 - 1. Traditional literature sources
 - 2. Congressional hearings, testimony etc.
 - 3. Specific individuals or organizations which will be interviewed
 - 4. Others

VII. Bibliography

(You should have a respectable list of information sources at this point)

The types of sources you should pursue are: 1) original research--interviews, reports; documents, booklets etc.; and 2) traditional sources of research--books, scholarly journals, reference material etc.

C. PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR PAPER

The paper generally follows the final outline you submit for your paper. Remember, while the final outline is a blueprint for your paper, it is not written in stone. Some papers will deviate from the traditional form of a research project, as discussed above, with approval from the professor. I fully understand that during the course of your research that a paper may emphasize issues not discussed in your outline. Make sure that you inform me of any changes you are considering. That is why it is crucial to complete most of your library research at the earliest possible date. I would suggest by the end of September. Set individual targets for accomplishing your work. This will help keep you on track and relieve some anxiety. Having written a Washington Semester Research paper, I know exactly what you are experiencing.

No changes in the paper's basic subject matter will be accepted after the final outline is completed. The direction of your thesis may change, but not the subject matter which you select. In other words, you cannot switch from health care to gun control. In all honesty, there is not enough time to change the entire subject matter and complete an adequate research paper within the narrow time limits of a semester. I know from experience working with students who have not heeded this advice.

A class will be held on putting together the rough draft in late October.

PART FOUR--CONDUCTING RESEARCH

The purpose of this section of the syllabus is to acquaint you with resources and methods to conduct your research project.

A. Using the AU Library to Find Secondary Source Material

The American University library does not have the most extensive collection of source material in Washington, D.C. I suggest that you get an Inter-consortium card at the circulation desk in the library. The inter-consortium card allows you to borrow books from other university libraries in the area including: George Washington University, Georgetown University, George Mason University, University of the District of Columbia and Catholic University.

Four excellent sources of information can be found in the AU Library. They are ranked in order of importance.

1) Lists of Periodicals and Books--these two directories can be accessed from the computer terminals in the Satellite Computer Lab in Federal Hall or where terminals are available. The program is known as Aladin and represents the consortium of all major university libraries in the Washington, D.C. area which is found through the AU computer network.

2) Congressional Quarterly Almanac--a yearly compilation of congressional action on a variety of policy issues from health care to the environment to education to family issues. Many other issues are included as well. The Almanac can be found on the first floor of the library. Ask the Reference Desk for assistance. The Almanac has been published annually for well over forty years. You may also want to look at individual issues of the "Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report" which can be found behind the Reference Desk for the current year and in the basement for past years.

3) National Journal--similar to Congressional Quarterly (CQ) but focuses predominantly on the Executive rather than Congress. Yearly compilations of weekly reports can be found in the basement of the library. Similar to CQ, it has superior information on important policy issues of the day. **(NOW AVAILABLE ON-LINE).**

4) ABC Index to Political Science--a yearly index of political science articles that appeared in journals. The index appears categorically for reference. It is on the first floor of the library. Please ask the Reference Desk for assistance.

B. Purchasing Materials or Books--Secondary Sources

The research project should be treated as any other class in which you must sometimes purchase items or books for source material. Border's Bookshop, on the corner of L and 18th Streets (near the Farragut North Metro--L and Connecticut Ave. exit). Borders has the finest political science bookstore in the area with a wide range of sources on the Presidency, Congress, the Courts, political parties and elections, campaign finance and various policy issues. There is a

smaller Borders with a less extensive political science collection about a mile north of the campus on Wisconsin Avenue in the Friendship Heights area.

C. Obtaining Bills, Documents and Research Reports--Primary Sources

1) Traditional Method

If you work on the Hill, the following might be an option to consider.

Senate bills can be obtained by going to the Senate Document Room, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room B-15 (Basement). You will need to provide the clerk with the number of the bill. The other option is to call the Senate Document Room to find out if the bill is in stock. (Remember to provide the number). The next step is to request in writing the bill from the Document Room. House bills can be obtained by calling the House Document Room which accepts phone requests for bills as long as you have the bill number. To obtain the number of the bill, call LEGIS which is the tracking system for bills in Congress. The number for LEGIS is 225-1772. Rather, than running down to the Hill first, you may want to call the relevant document room to ensure that the bill is in stock. Again, make sure you present the bill number over the phone to the clerk. The number for the House document room is 225-3456. The number for the Senate Document Room is 224-7860. If you intern in the Senate or House, such documents can be obtained through your office. The location of the House Document Room has changed and is now run under the control of the Chief Administrator Officer of the House.

Your second option is to call your home congressman's or congresswoman's office here in D.C. However, waiting for information to come can take weeks and you do not have the luxury of time. It is better to pick up the information personally. Another service that congressional offices provide for constituents is to obtain research reports on policy issues written by the staff of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) or committee reports and studies.

2. Using the Internet from AU to Obtain Legislation--The Best Option

The best way to obtain congressional legislation is to use the Internet. You access the system through American University's access into the Internet as explained on the next page.

1) Type on the URL location line the following:

<http://thomas.loc.gov>

2) This takes you into THOMAS which is the United States Congress bill and law web site. Search by: 1) keyword for desired subject matter; or 2) name of the sponsor or cosponsor of the bill; or, 3) the bill number. Senate bills have an S prefix followed by the number and House bills have the prefix HR, followed by the number.

3) House.gov and Senate.gov also have web sites where committee hearings are sometimes posted. Check it out for your paper.

NOTE: Bills can be downloaded and printed out. Downloading is probably better. In addition, after you get a copy of the bill, call the congressional office of the sponsor or co-sponsor to get additional information which is of PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE. Such information might include the text of hearings, "Dear Colleague" letters, press releases or other congressional research reports.

3. Obtaining Government Documents

Another excellent source for government documents is the Government Printing Office (GPO) which is located on 710 North Capital Street. (From the Union Station Metro, walk one block down to North Capital Street, turn right and walk up two or three blocks. The GPO is a large building on the lefthand corner of North Capital and 7th Street, NW). The GPO maintains a bookstore on the first floor which contains everything from bills, hearings, government studies, task force reports and so forth. These documents are available for purchase. The collection is both wide-ranging and substantive in terms of policy areas.

For outside information, you need to contact the relevant interest groups and think tanks for information.

Once your topic is approved, I would look immediately into obtaining primary source material since time is a precious commodity.

NOTE: INTERNET SOURCES MUST BE REPUTABLE WEB SITES

D. Interviews--Primary Sources

The primary sources of information for your paper should come from interviews and documents in D.C. Utilizing these primary information sources make your paper different from what you do at your home schools. Be aggressive and do not put off interviewing until the end of the semester. Make a large contact list of individuals whom you wish to interview. The earlier you complete the bulk of your interviews, the easier it will be to write your paper. Numerous and high quality interviews make or break papers because they encompass more original research.

Sometimes locating persons to interview is not easy. What I would suggest is a broad scan of the phone book under titles beginning with "Alliance", "American", "Center", "Committee", "Council", "National", "Organization" etc.; or "Google" it with key words. There are thousands of interest groups in the D.C. area. Besides the obvious, (looking directly under your subject title) look for related subject areas as well. In addition, look at a recent Washington Information Directory, Congressional or Federal Yellow Book or Congressional Staff Directory for staff members and policy makers in government whom you may wish to interview. Do not aim too high. The Yellow Books can be found in the AU Library at the Reference desk.

Get used to playing "phone tag." Often calls are made and returned two weeks later or when you are away. Make sure you have or procure a phone message machine and that the message you record sounds professional. This machine will save your life. Tracking down individuals for interviews is an arduous process that can take much time in some cases. Often calls

are never returned. Be vigilant and continue pursuing the individual whom you wish to contact. If you do not hear from that individual within five working days, then call again. Since it is in your own self-interest to complete the project on-time and to maintain your sanity, start calling for interviews no later than late September. Actual interviewing should begin no later than mid-October. By then you should have gathered enough information to conduct interviews. Be cognizant of the fact that you have to chase down these people. Most of them are very busy individuals. To reiterate, many of these people fail to return your calls. This is typical of the working world. Do not take it personally. Perseverance is important. Your potential contact list should substantially outnumber the people whom you plan to interview. The list should be broad-based, meaning that it is representative of individuals of differing political beliefs. I cannot overemphasize how important this is to your project. You want to avoid bias in your research methodology at all costs.

Start your interviewing, if possible, with someone who can provide you an overview of the subject matter. Make sure that you interview individuals who provide a broad perspective on the issues. For instance, on welfare reform, interview those who favor or are against a particular program. On elections, interview those involved internally in campaigns such as strategists, pollsters and media analysts. In addition, you would want to interview individuals with outside perspectives such as journalists, political analysts and other political consultants.

To conduct the interview, compile a list of questions that you want to ask the interviewee. You will find that once you have asked the first several questions, the discussion will flow freely and subsequent questions will develop spontaneously.

By doing a substantial amount of background research from September through mid October, you will have enough information to interview individuals on your subject matter. If you would like to review what questions to ask or feel unconfident about interviewing people, then feel free to stop by and talk to me. Remember, it is required of the project.

SPEND FOUR TO SIX WEEKS RESEARCHING BEFORE BEGINNING TO CALL FOR INTERVIEWS.

CAUTION: INTERVIEWING RELATIVES, CLASSMATES OR FAMILY FRIENDS IS STRONGLY DISCOURAGED (UNLESS HE OR SHE IS A CURRENT OR FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL). ONE OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PAPER IS TO HAVE A WASHINGTON FOCUS.

E. The Interview Process

a. Selecting an interview list--With careful preparation write down a list of potential interviewees. Make the list long since you may need many options (at least 15 names of individuals and organizations). You never know who will be available and when. The interview list should be ideologically representative of different perspectives on the issue, i.e., Democrats v. Republicans, liberals v. conservatives and so forth. There needs to be some balance otherwise your paper will end up being biased. Obviously, pure equality does not exist so I am not asking for a one-to-one correlation.

b. Calling interviewees--What should you say? One example: "Hi, my name is John/Jane Doe and I am doing research on x. I am not a reporter. I was given your name to contact on this issue because I was told you were an expert on this issue. I was wondering if I might have a chance to chat with you in the next couple of weeks." This is one instance, of how to approach an initial call. Ask people whom you work with who they might suggest you call if your topic is relevant to your internship. **ONE OF THE BIGGEST MISTAKES YOU CAN MAKE IS NOT TO MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO GET INTERVIEWS. REMEMBER, THE MOST ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT THAT MAKES PAPERS WRITTEN FOR WASHINGTON SEMESTER DIFFERENT IS THE ABILITY TO UTILIZE PRIMARY SOURCE INFORMATION THAT IS NOT OBTAINABLE AT YOUR HOME SCHOOLS. INTERVIEWING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTE OF RESEARCH BECAUSE IT IS ORIGINAL; AND, THAT IS WHAT MAKES A RESEARCH PAPER DISTINCT. WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT AND DIVERSE INTERVIEW INFORMATION, A RESEARCH PAPER LACKS THE SOPHISTICATION AND PENETRATING INSIGHTS OF ORIGINAL RESEARCH.**

c. Setting up a time to interview an official--check with me about the schedule two weeks in advance of when you plan to interview someone so that there is no conflict.

d. The interview--Believe it or not this is the easiest part. Make a list of questions you want to ask. Tailor the questions to the expertise of the official whom you are interviewing. I would suggest setting up one of your first interviews with someone who can give you an overview of the subject matter. Once you have started with your first couple of questions, the interview usually goes spontaneously. I would strongly suggest that you not tape interviews. Most interviews last approximately 15-30 minutes. Some last as long as an hour.

PART FIVE--MAJOR PAPER REQUIREMENTS

Below are listed the major project deadlines and requirements required during the semester.

A. Progress Report (Tuesday, September 23)--Mandatory
Length 1-2 pages

During the semester you will submit a progress report.

The progress report should include:

- 1) What Research You Have Conducted
- 2) What Successes You Have Had
- 3) Report of Any Problems or Difficulties in Research
- 4) A list of interviews that you have conducted and whom you plan to interview. Your list should include a minimum of seven interviewees whom you have already interviewed or plan to interview.

B. Chapter Drafts

Draft of the Introduction (i.e., First Chapter) Due--Mandatory (Tuesday, September 23)

Second Chapter, Background/Literature Review—Mandatory (Monday, October 20). First five pages of the chapter are required. You may submit as much of the chapter or the entire chapter. The rest of the chapter, not in text form can appear in outline form.

Rough drafts on these sections will not be read after the deadlines listed above. Many students find it helpful to receive comments on early drafts of chapters.

C. Rough Draft (Monday, November 10, at the first class)

A full preliminary draft of your paper is mandatory. I realize that certain sections of the paper may be incomplete (in particular, your conclusion). The more complete your paper presentation is, the better off you will be. Do not worry about perfection at this point, just do the best that you can. Remember, this is a preliminary draft and that I am here to help you.

Requirements for the rough draft are listed below:

1. Make sure your paper is divided into chapters. If possible please put headings in your chapters to subdivide sections. This is required for the final paper.
2. Neither the bibliography nor the appendix (containing the methodology section) need to be included with the rough draft submission.
3. Please do a spell check.
4. Please number your pages. (For the rough draft, this can be done by hand). This is very helpful to me when I make comments in your paper since I sometimes need to refer to a specific page number.

D. Final Paper Due (Wednesday, December 10 at 10:30 AM--in my box)

THE FINAL PAPER IS DUE. NO EXTENSIONS GRANTED. FORMAT REQUIRED FOR RESEARCH PAPERS BY THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

1. Papers must be subdivided into chapters with subheadings.
2. The title page must comport with the standard set in the "Research Project Guide."
3. Each paper must have a one-page single spaced Precis or Abstract.
4. Each paper must have a Table of Contents.

5. The order for items in your paper is as follows: title page, abstract, table of contents, body of your paper, appendices (methodology section should appear in this part) and bibliography.
6. Make a copy of the paper for yourself since the original is kept by the program.
7. Papers must be bound to comport with the standard set in the "Research Project Guide."
8. Court cases should be fully cited.
9. Footnoting must be complete and consistent. See section "E" which follows.
10. Bibliography. See section "F" which follows the section on Footnoting.

E. Footnoting

Paranetical footnotes for books and articles should include: (last name of author year, page number). For instance, (Nixon 1976, 125). Paranetical footnotes for interviews should include: (last name of interviewee, organization, date). For example, (Wallace, National Association of Commode Inspectors 10/1/07). Paranetical footnotes from hearings or speeches should include: (last name of the speaker, committee or organization spoken before, and date). For instance, (Johnson, speech to the National Organization for Women, 12/5/07). If you are unsure how to cite a reference, then please consult with me.

For internet citations, on the World Wide Web, please use the following form. [http:](http://) and the address. If you use internet citations, then I would prefer end or footnoting. If there is missing information from the Web address, then please check with me. Most often the date of the text or page number might be missing. In that case, you may want to call the organization for the date. For the page number, if not numerically listed, count the page in order from what you have printed out. For instance, if the quote or citation was on the fifth page you printed out, then it would be page five.

F. Bibliography

For books, articles and government documents use standard procedures as outlined in Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Interviews--name of the person interviewed, organization, place of interview, date. Hearings attended--name of the testifier, subject of the testimony, name of committee or organization before who the person is testifying, date. If the hearing was gleaned from a government document, then follow standard procedures (include the appropriate page numbers).

G. Classes

The research project is not a formal class that meets on a weekly basis. However, at least one class will be held a date to be announced later in the semester on how to put together the rough draft. Informal meetings are also held after class, on occasion, when necessary. Individual meetings are the usual mode of contact on the research project between the professor and student.

H. Individual Meetings

Each month at regular intervals, you are required to stop by and brief me on the status of your project. If things are going well, then the meeting will be quite short. Remember, I am here to help you and can assist you if you incur difficulties. Never hesitate to ask for help. Do not delay or put off meeting any of today's deadlines for tomorrow. Frankly, there is not enough time in the semester for procrastination.

I. Project Deadlines

The following schedule of submissions should be consulted and adhered to for successful completion of the research project. The due dates are mandatory and listed on the next page.

Due Dates for the Research Project:

Tuesday, August 26	In-class oral presentation and typed preliminary proposal--required
Tues/Wed Sept 2-3	Individual Meetings
Monday, September 8	Final Outline Due--required
Tuesday, September 23	Progress Report/Draft of the Introduction Due--both required
Monday, October 20	Draft of the Background/Literature Review Chapter First Five Pages+ Due
Monday, November 10	Rough (Typed) Draft of the Entire Research Paper Due--required
Wednesday, December 10	Final Research Paper Due--required

All material submitted must be typed. The deadlines are necessary to keep the project moving throughout the semester and to allow enough time for proper feedback and prompt turnaround. As such, timeliness of material submitted and the quality of work presented both in terms of content and neatness are very important.

Therefore, you must meet all the specified deadlines or grade deductions will incur. Missing any deadlines will adversely affect your final grade. Please remember computer excuses or any other excuses are not acceptable for late work.

J. Grade Penalties

Failure to turn in any required assignment, denoted above, on-time will result in a one-third final grade deduction. **Enhanced penalties are in place for failing to turn in the Rough Draft on-time (November 10) which will result in a two-thirds of a grade deduction and not turning in the**

Final Draft (December 10) on-time will result in failing the course. No papers will be accepted after the final deadline nor will incomplete grades be granted.

K. How I Can Help You

Remember, a good paper requires extensive feedback from your professor! Always feel free to consult with me for help. If not during office hours, then we can set up an appointment to meet. I look forward to working with you during the course of the semester. A great research project can help you in future academic and professional endeavors.