Welcome to the 2017 Columbus Seminar! For more than 30 years, the Seminar has led the way in engaged learning at Cleveland State University. This semester, the course has been selected to be part of the Careers Across the Curriculum demonstration project, a program convened by Cleveland State University’s Division of University Engagement to study ways of building career exploration into coursework.

The Columbus Seminar is a field study of state government. Its purpose is to give students both an intellectual understanding of and experience with the basic public organizations and institutions of Ohio’s state government. This course is part of the undergraduate major in Urban Studies and an elective course in graduate programs at the Levin College. Students from other colleges are, of course, welcome to enroll. While the field experiences are common to all students, the Seminar’s academic requirements are tailored to meet different educational levels. This means that Honor students and graduate students will do an additional assignment and must perform at higher standard.

The Seminar’s focus is on how state government operates at the institutional level and how Ohio incorporates constitutional values and public interests. During the field experience, students will meet important officials drawn from all branches of state government: the legislature, the executive branch, and the court system. The Seminar will also include leaders from the state’s largest independent agency (PUCO), the media, and non-governmental...
organizations that interact frequently and intensively with the state. Seminar students will also
meet CSU alumni who work in state government or affiliated organizations in Columbus. The
Seminar’s size is limited so that students will have maximum opportunity for meaningful
interaction with the speakers.

**Required Readings**


The Ohio Constitution: https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/laws/ohio-constitution


Agency-specific materials, Supreme Court briefs, etc., as assigned on Blackboard

Other readings as detailed below or assigned (available on Blackboard).

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Battleground: Ohio, Campaigns, and Elections in the Twenty-First Century* (2011, University of

**Recommended Readings**


History of Senator Voinovich’s Career through the home page of the Voinovich Collections at
the Ohio University Library (http://www.voinovichcollections.library.ohio.edu/); Overview of
Governor Voinovich’s career in state service and documents identified for the Columbus
Seminar.

House Speaker Vern Riffe*. (2007, Kent State University Press.)

Learning Process

Students must complete the required readings by Friday, March 3, 2016. By completing the readings before the experiential part of the seminar, students will learn more from the guest speakers. In all meetings in Columbus, students must listen carefully and ask intelligent questions respectfully to show that they have done their background reading.

The class will meet initially at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 12, 2016, at the Doubletree hotel in Capitol Square of downtown Columbus. The plan is for the Sunday session to involve some lectures, presentations from CSU alumni, and walking tours. This session will help students become familiar with their surroundings.

The field experience will take place between Sunday, March 12, and Friday, March 17, 2016. During the week, Seminar students will meet in state agency locations, often in the Riffe Building or the Rhodes Tower. Some sessions will be held at an agency location, such as the Ohio Supreme Court, so that students can observe live the operations of state government. Occasionally, students will attend a night hearing of a legislative committee or even a reception. While meeting with state officials, students must dress for a business meeting and display a professional demeanor. The Seminar will have a debriefing room/hospitality suite at the hotel, where students are likely to meet with elected officials, legislative staff, agency personnel and CSU alumni for informal learning sessions and to network. On occasion, state officials may join the Seminar in the evening, and students must be available to meet them. This is why all are located in a central hotel.

Seminar students are ambassadors of Cleveland State University and the Levin College of Urban Affairs. Therefore, students must adhere to the highest standards of legal and ethical behavior at the hotel and during all agency and legislative visits. Each student must sign a waiver of liability and turn in a hard copy at the class session scheduled for January 28, 2016. The Professor reserves the right to dismiss any student from the Seminar who does not adhere to these high standards, and in this case, the student will receive a grade of F for the course.

Punctuality is required at all Seminar sessions, both in Cleveland and Columbus. Unexcused tardiness will be penalized. State officials have agreed to take time out of their busy schedules to meet the Columbus Seminar, and students must respect their commitment by arriving promptly. The arrival times of students will be monitored and recorded. Students may not miss more than two (2) of the scheduled meetings either in Cleveland or Columbus. Students who miss more than two sessions will automatically receive a grade of F for the course and be asked to leave. Please inform the Professor before the session of any schedule conflicts.

CSU’s online platform Blackboard Learn will enhance the Seminar. Students will receive the course materials and travel announcements through the Blackboard website. Checking
**Blackboard frequently is imperative in this Seminar.** In addition, students must submit their written assignments to the Professor by the deadline in the appropriate Blackboard assignment folder. **Late submissions will receive a reduced grade.**

**Reasonable Accommodation:** Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aides, and service to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of their disability. Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact a Disability Specialist in the CSU Office of Disability Services at (216) 687-2015. The Office is located in MC 147. Accommodations need to be requested in advance and will not be granted retroactively.

**Syllabus Revisions**

This syllabus is a general plan for the Seminar; changes to this syllabus may be necessary. Students will be notified in class and through Blackboard of any changes.

**Pre-Field Study, Cleveland-based CSU sessions at the Levin College of Urban Affairs**

**Saturday, January 28**
(10:00 am-noon)
Face to Face Meeting: UR241

Overview of the course – Honorable Patrick Sweeney & Professor Joe Mead
Before class, identify your state senator and representative
Signed Waiver of Liability and roommate request form will be due in class

**Saturday, March 4**
(10:00 am - noon)
Face to Face Meeting: UR254

Overview of state government institutions. Lecture by Prof. Larry Keller
Complete the readings listed under Section I before class

**Thursday, March 10**
Blackboard acknowledgement

Finalize Columbus Logistics. Every student must log in at least once after 5:00 p.m. on **March 10th** to acknowledge receipt of posted information.

**Field Study in Columbus, Ohio: March 12 through March 17, 2016 & Follow-up**

**Sunday, March 12th, 2 pm**

Location: Doubletree Hotel in Columbus
Lecture; Alumni Presentation; Overview of Week Ahead

Students should have completed all readings.

Monday through Friday: Separate schedule will be prepared.
March 13 – March 17: TBA - Agency Site Visits & Legislative Shadowing; Supreme Court oral arguments.
March 17 (2 p.m.): Goodbye Columbus

Seminar Requirements & Assignments

All students must complete 6 written assignments. As the Seminar emphasizes practical learning, these requirements are real-world assignments.

Students pursuing a Ph.D Degree must complete additional assignments commensurate with their educational level. The additional assignments are to be determined in consultation with the professor.

Assignment #1 – Agency Memo (due: Friday, March 11). Select an agency or a bureau within an agency, and write a memo describing the agency or bureau to the citizens of Ohio. Bureau is a generic term meaning the first level of an agency, such as the Ohio Highway Patrol in the Department of Public Safety. Note the purpose of the agency or bureau, its mandates and policies, and its history. Write intelligently – always assume your audience is smart but does not have college degrees necessarily – and succinctly describe your agency or bureau for the citizens. Note the requirement is to describe the agency or bureau not judge it. Write descriptively, that is, stating what is, and not normatively, that is, judging it good or bad. Half of a grade point is assigned for the quality of the writing, especially how grammatically correct it is.

The memo requirement does not mean the form as much as the intent. A memo factually informs and is thus strictly focused. Don't worry about how your format; just keep a factual succinct focus when you write. So explain the structure and purpose of a government agency, one no lower than the first level of a state department. For example, look at the eight (8) divisions of the Ohio Department of Commerce. You could select the Department or one of the eight divisions for your agency memo.

Assignment #2 - Columbus Journal (due: Monday, March 27). Write a journal that describes each session of the Seminar in Columbus and what you learned from the session. Critically
analyze the sessions, noting what worked and what didn’t. In all cases, specify why you reach the conclusions you do.

**Assignment #3: Relationship Building Letters (due: Monday, March 27).** Each student must prepare personalized letters of thanks to at least two Seminar speakers. You are strongly encouraged, although not required, to send your note to the speakers you’ve selected. The assignment also requires each student to submit the names of the officials to whom s/he sent thank-you notes and the rationale for choosing each speaker to the instructor in a Word file via Blackboard by 11:59 p.m.

**Assignment #4: Resume and Cover Letter & Peer Review (your versions due: February 17; peer-review due February 24).** Find a relevant job posting, and create a resume and a cover letter for the position. (One option is to put together an application for the LSC Legislative Fellowship (resume plus personal statement), [http://www.lsc.ohio.gov/fellowship/application.htm](http://www.lsc.ohio.gov/fellowship/application.htm) You are not required to actually apply for a position. Your materials will then be shared with one classmate, who will offer you comments. In return, you will provide peer review of a classmate’s application materials.

As an alternative to this assignment, you may opt to write a major policy analysis. Using a policy horizon of ten years, note a major issue Ohio will need to address during that time. State why the policy is needed, analyze the issues/problems it will encounter and recommend strategies by which to implement the policy. You should use any relevant literature, from government reports to newspaper articles to academic articles. You must send me an email opting for this alternative assignment by February 17. The policy analysis is due Monday, April 24.

**Assignment #5 – Policy Paper for General Audience (due: April 21)**
Select a major public policy in Ohio and write a memo describing the policy to the citizens of Ohio. This piece should be written with a specific forum in mind (such as a newspaper op-ed). You should adhere to the rules of the particular forum you have identified (i.e., op-eds typically have word limits around 750 words). You are strongly encouraged, although not required, to submit it for publication.

**Assignment #6: Event Attendance and Blackboard Reflection (due: Monday, April 24)**
Throughout the semester, attend 1 event outside of class related to state or local government service, and write a short 1-page reflection (email is okay) on each one explaining the event and any questions you have or things that surprised you about what you heard/saw. Possible events include events offered by the Law School or the Urban College Forum series; a city council meeting; a meeting of the Cleveland Police Commission; an interview with a city official; or another, similar event of your choosing with advance permission of the instructor.
Grading

The course grade is a weighted average, based on the following weights:

Graduate & Law Students:
Participation and Attendance  20%
Agency Memo (#1)     15%
Columbus Journal (#2)    20%
Thank you Letter (#3)    5%
Policy Paper (#4)      20%
Resume & Cover Letter Review (#5) 15%
Event Attendance & Reflection (#6) 5%

Grading Scale

93.5 and above = A, 89.5 - 93.4 = A-; 86.5 - 89.4 = B+, 82.5 - 86.4 = B; 79.5 - 82.4 = B-;
76.5 - 79.4 = C+, 72.5 - 76.4 = C; 69.5 - 72.4 = C-; etc.

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Plagiarism or cheating will result in an F for
the course. Cutting and pasting text from the Internet without attribution is a form of plagiarism.
Students must submit their paper assignments through SafeAssign or Turnitin in Blackboard.
SafeAssign and Turnitin are anti-plagiarism tools. The Professor will establish a SafeAssign or
Turnitin folder for each assignment.

Also, unprofessional or inappropriate behavior in Columbus will also result in a dismissal
from the Columbus Seminar and an F for the course. As stated earlier, any student who misses
more than two sessions in Cleveland or Columbus or who is consistently tardy will receive an F
for the course.

Order of Readings (Due prior to Columbus)

I. Conceptual Overview of State Government & Politics  (Due Prior to March 4)

Keller, Connecting Organizations to Philosophy & Philosophical Structure of American
Government (Blackboard)
Keller, Local Government Units (Blackboard)
Vogelsang-Coombs & Keller, Governing Ohio (Blackboard)
LSC Legislative Guide, Chapter 1, The Constitutional Framework of Ohio State
Legislative Guide, Chapter 13, Ohio: From Statehood to Statehouse
http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter13.pdf
II. Ohio's Three Branches: History & Conflict in State Government

The Ohio Constitution; [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/constitution.cfm](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/constitution.cfm)
LSC Legislative Guide, Chapter 2, The Legislative Branch [http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter2.pdf](http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter2.pdf)

III. Lawmaking & the Legislative Process

LSC Legislative Guide, Chapter 4, Organizing the General Assembly, [http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter4.pdf](http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter4.pdf)
Review House Bill and Senate Bill of Assigned Pending Legislation

IV. Policy Process & Analysis

LSC Legislative Guide, Chapter 9, Staff Services Available to the Ohio General Assembly [http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter9.pdf](http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter9.pdf)

V. The Budget & Accountability Tools

Sheridan, entire book
LSC Legislative Guide, Chapter 7, Legislative Oversight [http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter7.pdf](http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/chapter7.pdf)