FIRST YEAR SEMINAR 024 (CRN 6962) -- Fall 2014
“Sausage Making: The Legislative Process at the State level and the Role of the Advocate.”
Monday and Wednesday -- 12:30-1:45 p.m. --- 228 Meredith Hall

General news stories concerning legislation and the process of legislation usually are in reference to actions taken in the United States Congress, that is, the Senate and the House of Representatives meeting in Washington, D.C. A legislative process also takes place regularly at the state, county, and municipal level. This seminar will look at the legislative process at the state level. As part of any legislative process in the U.S., public issue advocacy is an inherent part of this action. This seminar will look not only at the steps of the legislative process, but also at advocacy, whether by agents of an issue, that is, lobbyists, or by organizations on their own or by citizen advocates.

Things to keep in mind for this class:
1) Class participation is not only encouraged. In a seminar, it is necessary.
2) Writing assignments will make up one-third or more of the semester grade.
3) Each student will be expected to make appointments with the Drake writing workshop and use that resource.
4) Special student needs and disability resources are available through the university.
5) The student counselling center is an important asset which you are encouraged to use.
6) Expected classroom conduct includes A) mobile telephones are to be shut off during the class period, B) Other electronic devices are not to be used during class time, with the exception of instances when your instructor will allow use of a laptop or a tablet computer.
7) Plagiarism will not be tolerated.
8) This syllabus and this schedule are subject to change.
9) Discussion is necessary. Respect for the opinions expressed in this class will be strongly encouraged.
10) Be curious. Enjoy this course.

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This seminar will consist of 1) instructor’s remarks, 2) assigned readings, 3) guest speakers, 4) assigned short essays, 5) two examinations, and most important 6) discussion. Six or seven guest speakers will make remarks and answer questions which, hopefully, will put a personal touch on the state legislative process and on advocacy. Our guest speakers may well appear on different days than those noted in this syllabus.

At some point during the semester, the class will visit the Iowa Statehouse and have the chance to see the chambers of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, as well as committee meeting rooms and, perhaps, staff offices.

The assigned text is *Engines of Democracy* by Alan Rosenthal. (Washington: - C.Q. Press, 2009) This book is available in the bookstore. There is also one copy in the
Cowles Library.
A second book, from which two chapters will be assigned, is The Third House by Alan Rosenthal. (Washington - C.Q. Press, 2001 - second edition) One copy of this book is in the Cowles Library and is on reserve for this class.

Assigned journal and periodical articles are available from the Cowles Library in either digital form (in the “e-reserve”) or, in the case of two of the articles, in hard copy form which are also on reserve in the library.

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Week one (August 25 and 27):
General discussion about the legislative process and advocacy.
Reading assignment: Engines of Democracy, chapter 1: “Why Legislatures are not Appreciated”.

Week two (September 3) (September 1 is Labor Day….no class):
Discussion about text chapter 1 (“Why Legislatures are not Appreciated”) and guest speaker.
Writing assignment: One page essay on chapter one of Rosenthal: Your take on why state legislators are unappreciated or even not known about. Reading assignment: Engines of Democracy, chapter 2: “Lives of Legislators”.

Week three (September 8 and 10):
Monday, Sept 8: peer review of one page essay on chapter one of Rosenthal.
Wednesday, Sept. 10: Finished draft of one page essay, as reviewed and commented on by a classmate, is due.
Discussion of Rosenthal chapter 2 (“Lives of Legislators”).
Reading assignment: Engines of Democracy, chapter three: “Rooted in their Districts”.

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Week four (September 15 and 17):
Discussion about Rosenthal, chapter three (“Rooted in their Districts”) and guest speaker.

Writing assignment: One page essay on state legislative districts and how and why they affect the views and the voting of their legislators.
Reading assignment: Engines of Democracy, chapter four: ”Legislative Parties and Elections”.

Week five (September 22 and 24):
Wednesday, Sept 24: Finished draft of this essay is due.
Discussion on both days of “Legislative parties and Elections”.
Reading assignment: Engines of Democracy, chapter five: “Interest groups and Lobbying”.

Week six (September 29 and October 1):
Discussion about Rosenthal, chapter five (“Interest Groups and Lobbying”) and guest speaker.
Writing assignment: One page essay on the effect of interest groups, how you define “interest groups” and the role of lobbyists.
Reading assignment: The Third House, chapter one: “Introduction”.
Week seven (October 6 and 8):
Monday, Oct. 6: Peer review of essay on interest groups and lobbying.
Wednesday, Oct. 8: Finished draft of essay is due.
Discussion on interest groups and lobbying, as per chapter 5 of Engines of Democracy and chapter 1 of The Third House.
Reading assignment: Engines of Democracy, chapter six, “On Legislative Terrain”.

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Week eight (October 15):
Mid-Term Examination.
Discussion about Rosenthal chapter six (“On Legislative Terrain”)
Writing assignment: One page essay on one of three topics: 1) the professionalism of legislators and/or legislative staffs, 2) the reason for efforts to limit the terms of state legislators, or 3) your understanding of the differences between the two chambers of most state legislatures.
Reading assignment: Engines of Democracy, chapter nine, “The Stuff of Law”.

Week Nine (October 20 and 22):
Monday, October 20: Peer review of essay on professionalism or term limits or differences between the chambers. Class will meet in Room 201 of the Cowles Library for a meeting with a librarian and familiarization with use of the library and research skills and techniques.
Wednesday, October 22: Finished draft of essay is due.
Discussion about Rosenthal chapter 9 (“The Stuff of Law”) and lawmaking itself. Guest speaker.

Week Ten (October 27 and 29):
Writing assignment: One page essay on the essence of the legislative process, making law and why it is often difficult and complex.
Reading assignment: The Third House, chapter nine, “Making the Case:.

Week Eleven (November 3 and 5):
Monday, November 3: Peer review of essay on the complexity of the legislative process.
Wednesday, November 5: Finished draft of this essay is due.
Discussion about the essence of the legislative process and Rosenthal’s comments about “making the Case”, direct lobbying, and the relationship between the two processes.
Reading assignment (from the items on e-reserve at the Cowles Library):
“Making the Sausage”
“Legislatures: All over the Map”
“Game Changers”
“How Educated are State Legislators?”
“Pillars of the Statehouse”
“Legislative Organization and the second Face of Power”
(Note: These articles are all very short, save the final article, which is only thirteen pages long.)
Week Twelve (November 10 and 12):
Discussion about assigned journal and periodical articles and guest speaker.
Writing assignment: One page essay on one of two topics: 1) the professionalism of legislators and legislatures themselves, or 2) the power of legislative majorities as discussed in the article “Legislative Organizations and the Second Face of Power”.
Reading assignment (from the items on e-reserve):
“Legislators Fire Up Engines”
“New Players Wield Policy Clout in State Level Legislative Battles”
“Rural Routes to Improving Health Care”
“Guns Allowed All Over - Except Near Politicians”
“Two States - Same Challenge”
“Win, Lose, or Draw: The New Nullification”
The New Nullification Movement”
“Wants and Needs meet what Government can Afford”
“Taxing Decisions”
“User Fees Inch Up”
“Behind the Numbers”
“Cautious Optimism”
(Note: Each of these articles are extremely short in length.)

Week Thirteen (November 17 and 19):
Monday, November 17: Peer review of essays on either the professionalism of legislatures and legislators or the power of legislative majorities.
Wednesday, November 19: Finished draft of essay is due.
Discussion about the variety of issues addressed in the assigned articles.
Reading assignment (from the items on e-reserve):
“The Determinants of Policy Introduction and Bill Adoption : Examining Minimum Wage Increases in the American States 1997-2006”

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Week Fourteen (November 24):
Discussion about the journal article on state minimum wage increases in the period 1997-2006. Guest speaker.
Writing assignment: One page essay on what Whitaker, Herian, Larimer, and Lang said about state minimum wage increases and your impressions of the current case for raising the minimum wage.
Reading assignment (from items on e-reserve)"
“Said and Unsaid: State Legislative Signalling to State Courts Over Same Sex Marriage 1990-2004”
“Will Same Sex Marriage be an Issue in the 2014 Midterms?”
“The Effect of Term Limits on State Legislatures and their Applicability to the Executive Branch.”
“An Unexpected Term Limit Effect”
(Note: two of these are more than fifteen pages in length. One (“Said and Unsaid”) is 18 pages long and another (“The Effect of Term limits…”) is 19 pages long.)

Week Fifteen (December 1 and 3):
Discussion about the legislative process and advocacy.

Week Sixteen (December 8):
Final Examination.