

**UC Riverside WASHINGTON SEMINAR    Wednesday 9-12 am Room 317**

**INSTRUCTORS:** Tim Russell and Dale Kent

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tim Russell: Wednesday 1-2: 334A. Dale Kent: Wednesday 12-1: 332. Those who are absolutely unable to see us at these hours can make an appointment by e-mail to meet us at an alternative time.

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**AIMS OF THE SEMINAR:**

The seminar is intended as a weekly forum for the UCR community of students to share and enhance their experience of Washington DC as the political center of the nation, and a city where its cultural and social values are conspicuously displayed in museums, and discussed in the media. You will be asked to reflect analytically on these special assets of the national capital, and on your experiences of internship here in relation to the questions we are considering. The three modules which constitute the course, each occupying three weeks, focus on the vision of the nation represented on the National Mall in its museums and monuments, political Washington and the role of the media in decision-making, and the presentation of the nation's cultural heritage in the National Gallery and the Smithsonian art museums.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**PAPERS:** You will be asked to write three papers, each of approximately 2000 words, on the questions considered in each of the modules. The papers for modules 1 and 2 will be due and should be submitted as a Word e-mail attachment to Tim on the Monday after our week 3 discussion, i.e. Monday October 22 and Monday November 12. The third paper is due two days after our final class, by 9am. Since the quarter ends that day, no extensions can be given and any paper not submitted on or before that deadline cannot be considered in your final result.

Each of the three papers is worth 25% of your final grade.

**ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION:** Class attendance and participation are essential for our seminar. You may miss one seminar for reasons of illness or other commitments without penalty. If you miss more than one seminar, you will begin to lose grade points and if you miss more than three seminars (including your "free" miss, you will lose all attendance points.

Attendance and participation are worth 25% of your final grade.

**READING:** You are expected to have most of this done by the first week of each module so that you can participate effectively in the introductory discussion.

## **WEB ACCESS TO COURSE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MATERIALS:**

This is on the J-drive. To get to it, go to MY COMPUTER on the START menu. Once you bring up the MY COMPUTER screen you should select the J-drive. Then open the folder entitled HASS 191W. Readings for each module will be in the folder in a PDF format. Those for Module 1 are already there.

**TEXTBOOK:** The Rough Guide to Washington, DC, by Jules Brown. You must buy this.

**September 26:** Introduction to the course and to one another.

**MODULE 1.** The National Mall as a self-consciously crafted face America presents to the world.

### **Questions for discussion and to be addressed in your paper:**

What vision of the nation are the memorials and museums on or around the Mall intended to present? Considering as many of these as you like, but not less than four, discuss some of the various ways in which the messages they send might be read. You should also refer to the controversies surrounding the nature and policies of these museums and monuments, decisions about what to put or not to put on the Mall, and equally significant, what is not represented there.

### **Alternative paper topic, also to be considered in class discussion:**

Propose and justify a new monument or museum to be placed on the Mall, giving a detailed description of what it is intended to represent.

### **Readings:**

The Rough Guide, pp. 45-60.

"The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Washington Mall: Philosophical Thoughts on Political Iconography" by Charles and Stephen Griswold.

"The Statue Near the Wall: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Art of Remembering", by Karal Ann Marling and Robert Silberman.

In addition you will find the websites of the major museums full of information to help you answer these questions.

### **Week One: October 3:**

General discussion of the questions and issues.

**Week Two: October 10:**

Excursion (three hours plus travel) comprising these monuments and memorials on or around the mall (see The Rough Guide); Lincoln, Jefferson, Washington, FDR, Vietnam, plus the interior of the National Air and Space, flagship of the Smithsonian museums.

**Week Three: October 17:**

Discussion bringing together readings and excursion experience and relating them to the questions raised in this module.

**MODULE 2. Political Washington and the role of the media in decision-making.****Questions for discussion and to be addressed in your paper:**

How do lawmakers, the law, and the White House interact with the media in making controversial decisions? Do the media directly affect law-makers or mostly through public opinion?

**Week one: October 24:**

Readings and discussion focused on a specific issue, to be selected after class discussion in Introductory session.

**Week two: October 31:**

Out of class, for the whole week, read the op-ed page and other political pages of the Washington Post, the On-line blogs, and listen to the political segments of National Public Radio (some of the daily news, All Things Considered, Talk of the Nation, etc. – also available on line). In class, report and present your findings.

**Week three: November 7:**

Discussion bringing together readings and your internship experience and relating them to the questions raised in this module.

**MODULE 3. The National Gallery and the Smithsonian art museums.****Questions for discussion and to be addressed in your paper:**

What do the movers and shakers of the nation (the federal government officials and the business-men/ patrons of the national museums) define as essential culture? What do they believe Americans need to know about the world of art

and culture? How do the patronage and the installations of these museums ensure that the nation learns the appropriate lessons?

**Week one: November 14:**

Reading on the founding and function of the national museums and the Smithsonian institution; the key private patrons and donors – the Mellons, J.P. Morgan, Samuel Kress, TO BE POSTED ON THE J-DRIVE.

**Week two: November 21:**

Visit to the National Gallery of Art and one of the Smithsonian museums, depending upon the particular interests of our group, to be selected in our first class.

**Week three: November 28:**

Discussion of the role of patrons and museums in shaping the presentation of culture to a wider audience.