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Erika Llenza

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Mayor Visits, Talks Politics



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While students at other universities rely on textbooks and classroom discussion to learn about politics and government, students in Darryl Paulson's, Ph.D., *Urban Politics and Government* class supplemented their learning with a face-to-face discussion with St. Petersburg City Mayor Rick Baker Monday, June 4.

The mayor visited Paulson's class to talk to students about the challenges and responsibilities that come with his position.

He explained to students that a mayor's responsibilities can be generalized into three basic categories: (1) managing the city's business—such as building roads and sidewalks and ensuring utilities are functioning properly; (2) handling the crisis of the day and (3) advancing the city's mission.

Citing examples such as damaged water mains, facilitating environmentally friendly practices and opening dog parks to support quality of life, Mayor Baker painted an honest picture of a day in the live of an urban city mayor.

"It is always a positive experience for students to be able to combine the theory of politics from the textbook with the political reality confronting elected officials," said Paulson. "The students were pleased that the mayor spent about a half hour outlining his objectives and then spent another hour answering their questions. It is a learning experience both for the students and for the mayor."

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