

Undergraduate Program >The Internship Program

Political Science Internship Program

The political science internship gives students an opportunity to gain important experience beyond the classroom through work at a governmental or private agency concerned with public policy. Students interested in pursuing an internship are responsible for locating a position and completing the academic course of study for obtaining credit. The internship course (POLI 3901) is taken just like a normal course - it lasts for a full semester and a letter grade is assigned at the end. For most internships, students can earn three hours of academic credit. These hours count toward the total number of hours required for a major in political science but not toward field requirements. The course can be taken in any semester (fall and spring) as well as during the summer term.

General Requirements

There are three general requirements for the internship (the course syllabus provides additional details):

1. Satisfactory completion of work at an approved position. Approximately 10 hours of work each week is expected for a minimum of 120 hours over the course of the semester. An evaluation form is sent to your supervisor at the end of the semester to gauge your performance.
2. Reading and writing assignments. Early in the semester I will assign a series of books related to your internship that you will be asked to read and write reports on. There are generally four books assigned and students are expected to provide a 4-5 page written summary and analysis of each book.
3. Journal of activities. A daily or weekly report of your work activities must be submitted along with the number of hours worked for each entry.

*NOTE: the internship work may not be applied to any other internship program. In other words, you cannot use the internship hours toward another academic program of study other than POLI 3901.

Steps in the Process

1. Find an internship position. See below for general guidance.
2. Obtain department approval for the internship and registered for the course (contact Dr. Wayne Parent at popare@lsu.edu). Credit will not be given for work completed prior to obtaining department approval.
3. Complete all the duties assigned by your internship supervisor and hand in all academic components (book reviews and journal) on time.

Where to Find an Internship

Local Government

-contact your local Metro-Council Member to ask about opportunities. A list of members by district can be found at the bottom of The Advocate web-site (www.2theadvocate.com). A list of local agencies at the city and parish level can be found at the Baton Rouge web-site (www.ci.baton-rouge.la.us).

State Government

-contact your State Senator or State Representative to ask about opportunities. A search engine to obtain contact information for these members can be found at the bottom of The Advocate web-site (www.2theadvocate.com) or by going to the Project Vote Smart web-site (www.vote-smart.org).

-contact state agencies or executive departments directly to inquire about possibilities (www.state.la.us/gov.htm).

U.S. Congressmen and U.S. Senators

-Members have district offices in addition to their D.C. offices. Again, Project Vote Smart (www.vote-smart.org) provides a search engine to locate contact information.

Other Local Organizations

- interest groups
- political parties
- political campaigns

Opportunities in Washington, D.C.

- working for a member of Congress or for a political party or interest group at the national level.
- there are some organizations in D.C. that locate internships for you and provide an academic curriculum: The Washington Center and The Institute for Experiential Learning.

If you have questions, or when you are ready to obtain departmental approval for an internship, contact Dr. Wayne Parent (popare@lsu.edu).