



WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

WSU Department of Political Science
Washington D.C. and Topeka Internship Packet
Spring 2010

Deadline: October 12, 2009

**Please refer all questions to Dr. Mel Kahn, Internship Coordinator
(316) 978-7136 or melvin.kahn@wichita.edu
Lindquist Hall 419**

Overview

The Washington D.C. and Topeka Internship Program offers qualified undergraduate students, regardless of major, the opportunity to intern and study in Washington, D.C. or Topeka, and earn 9-12 hours of course credit. The internship period is from January 15 to May 1, 2010. Placements are available with members of Congress, the executive branch, interest groups, environmental organizations, education and trade associations, news agencies, embassies, political think tanks, and other agencies. Stipends and housing vouchers are available to students.

The information meetings will be held on Thursday, September 17 and Friday, September 18 from 12:30-1:15 in Lindquist Hall Rm. 417 (Political Science Lounge).

What will you get out of it?

- An opportunity to gain valuable hands-on training (practical experience) in a professional work environment.
- A unique opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to actual situations while developing career interests and professional contacts.
- A placement site tailored to meet your interests.
- Leadership training experience.
- The opportunity to network with individuals whom can enhance you future plans/goals/employment.

How does the program work?

- Students are responsible for finding and securing their own full-time intern positions. In the event that students are unable to find an internship, help from the internship coordinator will be provided.
- Internships are available each year during the spring semester.
- Interns earn 9-12 hours (6 hours of internship; 3 hours of intern seminar in Washington; 3 hours of directed readings can be added – make arrangements with a professor).
- In Washington, the University will underwrite the cost of university-sponsored safe and clean apartment housing. Additional stipends will also be provided that cover part of the extra living expenses. Topeka interns will also receive a housing allowance.
- Students must pay WSU tuition for the semester, plus living expenses.
- Washington Interns live in apartments secured by the University. Summit Hills Apartments are near the Silver Springs Metro stop. Two-bedroom apartments accommodate three individuals. Apartment arrangements are provided. Topeka interns are responsible for finding their own housing.

How do I apply?

- We require an application form, 300 word personal statement, resume, unofficial transcript, a writing sample, and three letters of recommendation. All required material, including letters of recommendation should be forwarded directly to: Delia Wallace, Senior Administrative Assistant, Department of Political Science, 418 Lindquist Hall, Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita, KS 67260-0017. Moreover, all letters of recommendation should be sealed and the references should write their signatures across the sealed flap of the envelope containing the recommendation.
- Juniors or seniors majoring in any subject and possessing an overall GPA of 2.8 or above are eligible to apply.

How will I be graded?

- Interns must complete a research paper focusing on a substantive issue relevant to the internship.
- Interns must keep a daily journal of their internship experience.
- The intern must have a satisfactory evaluation from the on-site supervisor.

Choosing an Internship?

The purpose of an internship is to provide a student with the opportunity to work in a setting that can provide a first-hand practical learning experience.

Students are responsible for finding and securing their own full-time intern positions. In the event that students are unable to find an internship, help from the internship coordinator will be provided. The internship coordinator will maintain a list of prospective internship sites. However, students are not limited to the list. Students should feel free to ask the internship coordinator for help in locating opportunities more suited to their interests. A prospective intern is required to submit a brief description of the proposed internship to the internship coordinator before the internship begins. The internship coordinator reserves the right to reject a proposed site if the internship does not meet departmental standards. *All students must sign an internship contract with the internship coordinator prior to the appointment of the internship.*

Interns are responsible for delivering all relevant information about the internship to the internship coordinator before the internship begins. This information should include: the name(s) of the on-site supervisor(s), phone numbers, addresses, work hours, and copies of any written material received from the on-site supervisor about work requirements.

Interns are normally assigned to a government agency at the federal, state or local level, or with a private organization. Someone supervises them in the agency or organization. Interns perform duties for the agency for a given number of hours per week for a specified period of time. Full-time internships are 36 to 40 hours per week for the entire semester. Every Tuesday students meet with Stephanie Moore the on-site internship coordinator, for the internship seminar.

At the conclusion of the internship, the internship supervisor at the agency or organization will provide a performance evaluation of each intern to the WSU on-campus coordinator.

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about the Washington D.C. and Topeka Internship Program

- Q: What impact does the internship have on my other financial aid?
A: The internship stipends are disbursed by the financial aid office. Any outstanding fees that are owed will be deducted from your stipend before a deposit is made into your bank account, so you want to make sure your fees are paid to receive your full stipend while serving as an intern.
- Q: Can I take an additional job beyond my internship?
A: No. The program is designed as a full-time internship. You'll work hard, usually 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and sometimes longer. In addition, you'll have a major paper to write, daily journal, and may be taking one other course. Working at an outside job seriously compromises the purpose of the internship.
- Q: How long does the internship last?
A: Formally, it runs from January 15 through May 1, and final papers are due the first week of May. Informally, it may start a little earlier or later than January 15 – often because some offices want you to start on a Monday.
- Q: What are the Internships like?
A: In general, they require full-time work for an elected official, a governmental agency, an interest group, a research outfit, or a campaign. Both the director of the program and the student are responsible for making sure that the intern does real work, with some substantive responsibilities. This does not mean that you are immediately writing speeches for your senator; you will spend some hours at the copying machine. Your part of the bargain, of course, is that you will be responsible and work hard.
- Q: Will the internship coordinator help in obtaining an internship?
A: Yes, if needed. Obtaining an internship is one of the important parts of your learning experience. You may know (or think you know) exactly what you want to do, but you should give yourself a chance to look at a variety of possibilities. There are excellent internship guides on Table 14 in the Ablah Library Reference Room on the first floor, and <http://www.politixgroup.com/>.
- Q: What goes on besides working at an internship?
A: Every week, usually Tuesdays, there is a seminar that takes place at various locations with a guest speaker. These speakers include ambassadors, senators, a federal judge, representatives, executive branch officials, lobbyists, and media experts.
- Q: Where will interns live?
A: Interns live in Silver Spring, Maryland at the Summit Hills Apartments, just outside the District line and very close to a metro stop. The apartments are adequate (three to a 2-bedroom unit), but scarcely luxurious. The rent includes utilities. There is round the clock security. If you are selected, you must make a \$250.00 non-refundable deposit toward your apartment. If students fulfill the Summit Hills Apartments Housing agreement, the \$250.00 deposit will be refunded. Any student not fulfilling the Summit Hills Housing agreement will not only forfeit the \$250.00 deposit, but be required to pay the full pro-rated share of the semester's apartment cost as provided in the contract.

Q: Are the apartments furnished?

A: There are beds, tables, chairs, sofas, etc, but there is none of the following: silverware, towels, sheets/blankets, TVs, or toasters.

Q: Is medical care available?

A: Students participating in the program should have medical insurance that will cover them in DC. Bethesda has a hospital near the Silver Springs Apartments, and George Washington University Hospital is a major comprehensive medical center.

Q: Can I obtain a job from this internship?

A: Yes. That should probably not be your primary goal, but it is certainly possible. Some graduating seniors have stayed in DC, and many juniors have returned to work there after graduating. The informal networks in Washington are very strong, and many past interns have helped current students begin their careers in D.C.