

Internship Policy

Department of Political Science



Internship Eligibility Criteria:

In order to be eligible to apply for an internship for academic credit in the Department of Political Science, you must meet the following criteria:

- Have at least a 2.85 GPA.
- Complete application materials

How to get Academic Credit for your Internship:

If you complete the process, you can receive up to 3 credit hours for your internship. You will not receive academic credit for previous work completed as part of an unregistered internship or part-time job.

1. Identify your host organization and get an internship offer from them. You must work at least 10 hours per week for 15 weeks to earn 3 hours of credit.
2. Meet with your supervisor at the host organization, and complete the Initial Intern Agreement Form.
3. Complete the Internship Application.
4. Email the forms to polisci@umkc.edu and schedule a meeting to get permission to enroll in Poli Sci 491 (all interns) and to complete the Summer Due Dates Form (only for summer interns).
5. After the Internships Coordinator notifies you that you have permission, enroll in Pol-Sci 491 on Pathway.
6. Complete requirements throughout the semester (see below).

About the Course: Pol-Sci 491

- Pol-Sci 491 is typically 3 credit hours. Requests to do more or less than 3 credit hours should be discussed with the designated contact.
- Pol-Sci 491 counts toward your Political Science major or minor requirements.

Requirements throughout the Semester:

1. Midsemester Internship Progress Report (5% of your grade)
2. End of Semester Internship Report (5% of your grade)
3. Blog Post on Poli Sci Internships Blog (25% of your grade)
4. Research or Reflections Paper (40% of your grade)
5. Supervisor Evaluation (25% of your grade)

All of these requirements should be submitted electronically to polisci@umkc.edu.

Midsemester Internship Progress Report:

Complete and submit this report via email by Friday of the 8th week of classes for spring and fall semester internships. For summer internships, set a due date for this report in your 1st meeting with the Internships Coordinator. Note that this form requires your supervisor's signature.

End of Semester Internship Report:

Complete and submit this report via email by Friday of the last week of classes for spring and fall semester internships. For summer internships, set a due date with the Internships Coordinator in your 1st meeting. Note that this form requires your supervisor's signature.

Blog Post:

Complete and submit a blog post for publication on the Poli Sci Internship Blog. The Poli Sci Internship Blog is where our students access information about internships. The blog posts are intended to give students an idea of the internship experience, so we encourage you to share your experience with others. Complete and submit this blog post for publication by Monday of the last week of classes for spring and fall semester internships. For summer internships, set a due date for the blog post in your 1st meeting with the Internships Coordinator. You are free to blog anonymously if you prefer. Blogging anonymously will not affect your grade.

Research Paper:

Complete and submit a research paper (unless you choose to submit a reflections paper) on a topic related to the substantive area in which you worked by Friday of the last week of classes for spring and fall semester internships. For summer internships, set a due date for the research paper in your 1st meeting with the Internships Coordinator. For example, if you worked on an election campaign, you could write a research paper on any aspect of elections or campaigning. If you worked for an organization or institution, you could write a paper on the public policy areas the organization addresses. Submit the topic for your research paper for approval to Internships Coordinator by Friday of the 8th week of classes for spring and fall semester internships. For summer internships, set a due date for the topic in your 1st meeting with the Internships Coordinator. The research paper should be approximately 10-12 pages in length, double-spaced, 12-pt font.

Reflections Paper:

Complete and submit a reflections paper (unless you choose to submit a research paper) by Friday of the last week of classes for spring and fall semester internships. For summer internships, set a due date for the research paper in your 1st meeting with the Internships Coordinator. The essay should answer the following:

1. Please provide background information on the organization, agency, firm, or elected office.
2. Describe the setup of the office (staff, roles, hierarchy, etc.).
3. Describe your responsibilities over the course of your internship. Were you surprised, pleased, or shocked by any duties you were asked to perform during your internship?
4. Discuss three lessons you learned during your internship.
5. For those interning in political or governmental groups, how does the organization, agency, elected official balance competing interests (voters, political parties, interest groups, and personal values)? For those interning in private firms, how does your firm interact with government (lobbying, the courts, City Council, etc.) and balance governmental concerns with the firm's values, concerns, and interests?

The reflections paper should be approximately 8-10 pages in length, double-spaced, 12-pt font.

Supervisor Evaluations:

On Friday of the last week of classes for all semesters, the Internships Coordinator will send a performance review form to your supervisor. You can view the form your supervisor will use to evaluate your performance, along with all of the other forms, on our website.

If Problems Arise:

Our Internship Policy emphasizes the importance of cooperation and communication among the Department, the Host Organization and the Student Intern. If any issues arise with your host organization or supervisor, contact the Internships Coordinator to discuss them immediately.

About Withdrawing:

The internship agreement is a formal commitment to a particular organization and work schedule. If, however, for some reason the student must withdraw from the internship, the intern must first contact the Internships Coordinator and then talk with his or her supervisor at the host organization. If at all possible, the host organization should receive at least a two week notice before withdrawal. Depending on the circumstances and at the designated internships contact's discretion, the student may receive an incomplete.