FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For interns accepted into the program

I don’t know what kind of position I want. What should I do?

Only you can decide what interests you and what fits into your future plans. Think about what interests you in the political system, and use this to guide your selection. If you can’t think of anything you want to do, it may be that you shouldn’t be doing an internship, and it may be better if you defer your internship until you are more focused.

I have a pretty good idea about what kind of internship I want, but haven’t obtained a slot anywhere. How should I go about finding an internship?

Part of the internship experience is finding and obtaining your position. You will probably need to do some research to identify opportunities, and then to take some initiative to apply for and obtain a spot. There are links on the class website that may help you to do this, depending on what kind of position you want. Most government offices have a section for prospective employees that contains internship information. Most political organizations with websites will contain similar information. But you shouldn’t hesitate to pick up the phone and make a call to inquire about opportunities. This will often save you time and get you valuable information.

I’ve looked on the web, on bulletin boards, and asked around, but I still can’t find a slot. Can I get help from the coordinator?

Yes. Email him at jhenson@mail.la.utexas.edu or call him at 512.232.7282.

How many hours should I work?

Interns for the standard 3-hour course should work 9-12 hours per week over the regular semester.

I’m having trouble finding information that helps think about my particular position for the purposes of writing the paper. Where can I find help on this?
Start with the recommended textbook on Texas government and politics. If you can’t find helpful information there, try doing some research in the library (using books and/or academic journals) on the office you’re working in and on the roles it and institutions like it are expected to play in the political system. And don’t forget that if you are working for a well-established organization (like a government agency), you can utilize the organization’s institutional memory in the form of records and long-time employees to help you gather information and think about the organization and your role in it.

I don’t understand what the instructor is looking for in the writing assignments. What can I do?

Interns are encouraged to come to my office during office hours or to email him to make an appointment.

For prospective interns

How do I apply for the internship program?

Fill out an application completely and return it to the Government Department office in Burdine 536 between 8 AM and 4:45 PM.

What are the requirements for being admitted into the internship program?

Upper-division standing (60 completed semester hours; 12 semester hours of government completed, including GOV 310L and GOV 312L or GOV 3TX & GOV 3US; Cumulative GPA must be 3.00 or higher AND Government GPA 3.00 or higher; and Consent of the internship coordinator (Dr. Henson).

I already have a position in a political organization or government office. Can I sign up and just get credit for work I’ve already done?

No.
How about if sign up for the class and just do the class work, based on time I’ve already spent interning in an office?

No.

I’m already a fulltime employee of a government office or political organization, and I meet the above requirements, so I just want to get some credits for my job by signing up for the internship class, okay?

No. You are a full-time employee, not an intern.

I’ve already arranged an internship that will be active during the semester I want to take the class. Is this okay?

Yes. This is great, as a matter of fact, and if you meet the admission qualifications, it increases the likelihood of being admitted to the program.

I applied once before and didn’t meet the qualifications. Can I apply again?

Yes.

Are there deadlines for applying for internship program?

Yes, see the main webpage. In special cases, and space permitting, late applicants may be considered. Contact the coordinator with inquiries.