

Requirements for an Internship in the JCU Department of Political Science

Internships are designed to meet Political Science Department goals of increasing substantive knowledge in a political science, subfield, increasing communication skills and preparing students, according to interest, for future careers and graduate school.

To begin the internship process:

1. Email (cswearingen@jcu.edu) or visit my office to discuss the internship requirements.
2. Secure an internship. There are many public officials, agencies and nonprofits who would be happy to have an intern. If you don't know where you want to intern, I am happy to discuss it with you. It is your responsibility however to secure the internship.
3. Once the internship is lined up, email me again with your Banner ID. I will email the registrar and ask her to clear you for PO 390A (in the case of 1 credit hour), B (2 credits), C (3 credits) or D (6 credits). You can get 4 credits by enrolling PO 390A and PO 390C together (or 5 credits by enrolling in PO 390B and PO 390C). 50 contact hours at your internship are required for each course credit
4. Once the registrar has cleared you, then go in to Banner and add the 390 course(s). You have to do this in order to get credit.

Internship requirements

1. A **letter** from your internship employer on agency letterhead outlining your responsibilities and including contact information for the employer. This should arrive in my office before you begin your internship. This is your opportunity to negotiate your internship experience in terms of your projects and assignments. Try to secure some projects that you will be able to claim at least partial credit for in future job interviews. I can coach you on this.
2. A **journal** that you write in at least 2x week. This is not a list of everything you have done. Rather you should be reflective about the duties you are performing. What is the relationship between what you are doing and the political system? Where does your work connect to what you have learned in your political science courses?
3. An 8-10 pp. **paper** (for 3 hours) tying your experience to political science readings or coursework.
4. Another **letter** from your employer on agency letterhead at the end of the internship specifying that your assigned duties were performed to his/her satisfaction and that the requisite number of hours have been fulfilled.
5. The appropriate number of contact hours (50 contact hours for each academic credit).

*You will not be awarded credit for the internship unless you have satisfactorily fulfilled all 5 criteria. If you have any questions about them (for example, questions about paper content), then it is your responsibility to contact me and clarify that the work is acceptable.

*Turn in all materials during the last week of classes in the semester for which you hope to receive credit. If you don't hand it to me personally, send a follow-up email making sure I received it. Make a copy of all materials before you turn it in and keep that for future reference.

Notes

1. Students are expected to attend their internships regularly and reliably. When you interview for the internship or when you meet your internship boss, make sure you understand the expectations. The letter will spell out what you'll be doing but you need to understand what hours you need to work (not just how many but which ones), where you need to do the work (at the office? At home? Some combination?), how much supervision is available, the work culture of the organization, etc.
2. Research the organization's website in advance of your first contact with the organization, listen actively during the interview or on the first day, and ask good questions. You are interviewing each other in a sense.
3. Also the first time you show up, make sure you dress in business attire. If no one is dressed that way, then you can be more casual in the future but it's better to be overdressed than underdressed especially for an interview or the first day.
4. Aim to work independently on a daily basis but document your work and check in with the boss when you need more direction (this shouldn't be every day). If you haven't seen your boss in a week (say he or she is traveling), send a brief progress email letting them know what you have accomplished.
5. As your internship advisor, you should contact me when you have questions or need guidance about your internship. I am here to help you if you have questions, problems or could just use some guidance.

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