

Public Affairs Internships

Although these are called Internships, it's important that students understand that they are focused on preparing students for careers in policy research, analysis and evaluation. As such, internships in these areas involve the production of a practical research project on a current issue geared toward understanding how government works, how NGO's or private organisations influence government, or how the operations of public organisations can be improved.

Description

Students will have an active experience by working in a policy-related role (research, formulation, management) in a public affairs-oriented organisation such as a government department (Commonwealth, State or local), an independent statutory authority, an NGO or community-based organisation, or a private firm which has a strong public policy component to its work. The central task will be to complete a policy research report (or a collection of smaller, research-related pieces of work such as briefings) of relevance to the organisation. Students are expected to work in a team environment in their agencies, and this may occasionally require them to complete management or administrative tasks; such activity is allowed under the subject so long as it doesn't overwhelm the students' policy research and writing.

Outcomes

By successfully completing this subject students will have developed the following skills:

- a comprehensive understanding of the role of their host organisations
- analytic, policy research, and report-writing skills
- practical skills regarding the provision of research for policy impact
- time management and organisation skills
- an awareness of ethical issues regarding research
- problem solving skills
- interpersonal skills that come from interaction with a range of people inside and outside their host institutions

Categories

166-039 Public Affairs Internship

In this subject students will have active experience working for a senior person with a policy-making and management role in the organisation in which they are placed. The central task will be to complete a policy report of relevance to the organisation.

- Offered Semester 1 and 2
- 25 points, equivalent to two subjects
- Estimated 10 Placements for all International Students

166-013 Parliamentary Internship

In this subject students will have active experience working for a Member of the Victorian Parliament in the settings of Parliament, the Parliamentary Library, Parliamentary Offices and electorate offices. Each student will complete a research project for an MP on a topic of concern and interest to the MP.

- Offered Semester 1 and 2 (not Sem 2 2010)
- 25 points, equivalent to two subjects
- Estimated 15 Placements for all University of Melbourne Students

672-382 Sociology Internship

In this subject a student, under academic supervision from the sociology program, undertakes a sociological research project in an organisation outside the university, such as a trade union, social

movement, women's organisation, welfare service provider, government or non-government organisation or business organisation. The project will be determined jointly by the student and the organisation concerned. Students must be working on a degree or have a Sociology major in order to apply.

- Offered Semester 2
- 25 points, equivalent to two subjects
- Estimated 10 Placements for all International Students

Qualifications

- Students should have completed 2-2.5 years of courses/classes in the core areas of study: Political Science, Public Affairs/Management, Policy, International Relations/Studies/Affairs or Sociology.
- Selection is merit-based and spaces are limited, thus competitive. Students should have a competitive average, typically 73/74% and higher based on past selections.

Application and Acceptance Process

- Students should contact the Course Coordinator noted in the Subject Description in the Handbook. Please also list your interest on your subject selections submitted with your study abroad or exchange application and someone from the Faculty will contact you once your initial university application has been received and your subject list has been reviewed.
- Students will be sent a Student Guide including an additional application form covering the Internship selected. Please read this carefully as it will have further details about the subject and the placement.
- Students may note multiple internships on their application, in order of preference.
- Applications are to be submitted to the subject coordinator.
- Application deadline is 1 November for the February semester. Applications will be assessed and students notified end November/first of December.
- Application deadline is 31 May for the July semester. Applications will be assessed and students notified first or 2nd week of July.
- Students who have been selected for the Public Affairs and Sociology Internship subjects will need to research organisations and contact them to secure a place. Students will be provided a 'useful contacts' list, but are not limited to the agencies on this list. Students should be available to start this process as soon as they are accepted, and thus at the end of the semester prior to their arrival in Melbourne.
- Students selected for the Parliamentary Internship will be assigned to a particular Member of Parliament and do not need to research this beforehand.

Assessment

1. Research report (6,000 words) OR for the Public Affairs or Sociology Internships a portfolio of shorter research and other work pieces amounting to 6,000 words (75%). The Parliamentary Internship does not offer a portfolio option.
2. Reflective essay (2,000 word) (25%)
3. Workplace supervisor's assessment (on the form provided in this guide) of student's attendance, participation and 'appropriate endeavour' at your placement
4. Academic support and supervision is provided by the Course Coordinator and the University of Melbourne. Work supervision is provided by a manager in the placement agency.