



WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

**Anderson Hall 318
725 E. Church Street
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383**

**610-436-2743 (PSC Dept.)
610-436-3364 (for faculty)**

**Dr. John Kennedy, jkennedy@wcupa.edu
Dr. Linda Stevenson, l Stevenson@wcupa.edu
Chair, Dr. Chris Stangl, cstangl@wcupa.edu**

INTERNSHIP SYLLABUS, AND SUPERVISOR – STUDENT INTERN AGREEMENT

(Revised August 2025)



WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

I. OVERVIEW

- A. The Department of Political Science offers students the opportunity to do internships. Such experiences take place outside the regular classroom environment. Their purpose is to provide students with field placement learning in organizational settings which reflect their career interests.
- B. Internships are intended for students to:
 - 1. explore various areas of career interest
 - 2. develop job-related skills and competencies
 - 3. contribute to the success of an organization
 - 4. build upon traditional classroom learning
 - 5. expand intellectual horizons
 - 6. grow professionally and personally
 - 7. enhance resumes and
 - 8. engage in networking

II. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

- A. Internships are intended for highly qualified students who meet the following criteria:
 - 1. Major or minor in one of the Political Science tracks: Government and Politics or International Affairs
 - 2. Class status of junior or senior, or special approval by Internship Director and Department Chair
 - 3. overall G.P.A. of at least 2.5
 - 4. proper completion of the application process
 - 5. agree to all conditions set forth in this Internship Contract
 - 6. add the Internship credits no later than the official Add/Drop date of the term in which internship is taking place
- B. A total of 15 Internship Credits may be earned over the course of one's undergraduate studies in Political Science. These may occur during the Fall, Spring or Summer sessions. We highly recommend students choose internships during their junior or senior years of study, since it increases the potential for you to move from intern to employee if you are closer to graduation. These credits can be split up during these different terms (i.e. 9 credits in summer; 6 credits the following Spring semester). Since an internship is not a formal course, internship credits do not fulfill the upper-level course requirements for one's PSC electives.



- C. The usual internship workload equates to the following number of site hours for a Fall or Spring term (15-week semester); or Summer (# of hours can vary over summer terms I and II (May – August):

Credits of Internship	Fall/Spring Hours Per Week	Summer Total Hours Overall Per Credit
3	8	140
6	14	220
9	20	300
12	26	380
15	32	440

Students can work with the Internship Director to determine exact breakdowns of weeks and hours required to earn specific credits over the summer.

III. STUDENTS: INTERNSHIP CREDITS AND PLACEMENTS

- A. To start the process, students should schedule a meeting with the department's Directors of the Internship Program (Dr. John Kennedy (American Politics), Dr. Linda Stevenson (International Relations); the Chair of the Department (Dr. Chris Stangl, Anderson Hall 318); other PSC Faculty members as appropriate.
- B. Registration for PSC 412 Internship credits must be approved by the PSC Internship Directors first, in for them to remove the registration hold with either the Chair or department secretary.
- C. Find a Placement: The Political Science Department offers a database of past placements on the website, and in binders available in the Department office. Likewise, internship and job opportunities are listed on the WCU Career Development site. Students and alumni can sign up for a customized selection of biweekly updates through the "Career Communities" Ram Career Network for new internship opportunities. Students are also encouraged to pursue their own Internship assignments, through their networks, however this should be done in consultation with a PSC Faculty member or one of the Directors and ultimately must be approved by a PSC Director the Chair. The PSC Internship Directors will assist students in locating assignments that are suitable toward their interests.
- D. Resume ready? It is recommended that students have a resume prepared to share with the PSC Internship Director; make revisions if necessary and send them to the agency if they request it. The WCU Career Development Center is an excellent resource for resume-writing support.



IV. FIELD SUPERVISORS AND STUDENTS: WORK REQUIREMENTS

The WCU Political Science FIELD SUPERVISOR – STUDENT INTERN AGREEMENT, found at the end of this document must be filled out, discussed and agreed to by the Field Supervisor and the Student Intern, and take the following conditions into account:

- A. Student responsibilities must be clearly delineated, and work of a clerical nature should comprise no more than twenty percent (20%) of their overall time in the field.
- B. Students performing internships within a governmental agency are prohibited from engaging in political activity as part of their responsibilities. Internships that entail political activities are available, but must be independent from non-partisan, civic-oriented internships.
- C. Once begun, the student may not change to another assignment during the internship, without the approval of the Faculty Supervisor and Internship Director
- D. The Internship is to be the equivalent of a job. Professional conduct is expected. Contacting one's workplace is expected if one must miss work because of illness, emergency, or any other reason, and the time missed must be made up.

V. FIELD SUPERVISORS AND STUDENTS: PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

- A. Field supervisors will be asked to complete an evaluation form from the WCU Political Science Department relevant to the students' job performance. Factors used to evaluate this performance will include (but not limited to) the following categories:
 - 1) Fulfillment of work expectations: adherence to policies and procedures, attendance, punctuality
 - 2) Professionalism: appearance, attitude, dependability, integrity, judgment
 - 3) Learning and Skills Acquisition: aptitude for job's particular skills, oral and written communication, relations with others
 - 4) Quality of performance: able to conceptualize and organize assignments, work without supervision, be flexible, be productive

VI. WORK PERFORMANCE AND FIELD SUPERVISOR'S GRADING EVALUATION

- A. Supervisors are generally responsible for making the work performance evaluation and grade. The Director of the Internship Program, however, may make an independent assessment of all these factors based on relevant data. Where the two judgments are in conflict, the assessment of the Program Director will prevail. Termination for cause from the agency will result in a failing grade for the internship.
- B. The Field Supervisor should complete the required student evaluation form, sign it, and forward it directly to the Program Director. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the Field Supervisor should not forward the evaluation form through



the student. While it is expected that the Field Supervisor will review the completed evaluation form with the student, it is not required that they do so.

VII. STUDENT EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

A. PROFESSIONALIZATION: As is widely known, internships are an important way to gain experience, and to professionalize yourselves as you complete your undergraduate studies. In the interest of aiding, you in developing your self-marketing skills, these three requirements are included to enable us to work with you in your transition from student to professional. Additionally, we highly recommend the last on the list, of attending job fairs, and/or working with the internship supervisor and other faculty to look for jobs in your field.

1) Revise/Customize your Resume! In the process of acquiring an internship, it is important to have your resume in shape and to adjust it as needed for different applications/placements. Get professional (free!) advice on improving/learning how to customize your resume and cover letters advice for your job search. You have already paid for this privilege through your tuition and fees, so take advantage of it now and even after you graduate! WCU Twardowski Career Development Center, you can email the resume to them, and they will get your feedback within 48 hours; or email in your resume and go to Lawrence Center, Room 225 for a face-to-face meeting with one of the Career Development advisors, for a much more comprehensive discussion. If there is interest/need, the workshops can be organized to meet these needs as well, for all interns, or for small, customized groups.

2) Internship Contract: Before or during the first week of your internship, it is your responsibility to discuss and fill out our PSC Department contract with your internship supervisor. The purpose of this contract is to delineate the primary tasks you will be doing during the term. This is very important to do at the beginning of the term, in case any issues arise later. The idea of the contract is that students, supervisor and PSC Department internship director have a common document from which to start a conversation if the need should arise for any adjustments over the course of the semester.

3) Highly Recommended: Job Fairs/Job Search: Likewise, we highly recommend that you attend a job fair, or if unable to do so, at least document the ways in which you are job-hunting in the field, and share it with us (i.e. create a list of the links to search engines, Linked In, etc. that you are using). This can help us to help you, as well as alert us to new developments in the field, which we can then share with other students following you out into the "real world."



Students' grades are based on their performance in the internship (80%), and completion of the following administrative tasks and response papers (20%):

B. Journals and Final Paper (20% of your grade):

FIRST TIME INTERNS:

- 1. Bi-weekly Journals (10%):** describe one's job responsibilities and what one is learning from the experiences. Submit these 1–2-page journals bi-weekly to D2L site or by email, as organized by you and your faculty supervisor.
- 2. Final Project: Applying your Knowledge and Experience: Where does my organization fit in with Political Science? (10%)** In consultation with your PSC Dept. faculty supervisor, for the project you may use one of 3 modes of communication:
 - 1) a 4-6-page paper; OR
 - 2) Create a professional poster using a PowerPoint slide format, OR
 - 3) Record a professional style video.

The purpose of this project is to document what you learned from your experiences in the internship and explain how it fits into the related subfield of Political Science. This should be presentable to your internship supervisor, and your PSC Dept supervisor, other interns, faculty and PSC majors. The project should contain the following:

- A.** Some basic research on how the work of your office is considered in the discipline of Political Science should be done, to aid you in contextualizing your experience in careers in this field. Include 2-3 academic articles at least about your specific organization or others like and how it functions, what issues, debates, etc. about it in the subfield. Articles must be referenced in your project and citations included as appropriate.
- B.** Subfields include i.e. Law office - legal or constitutional studies; Non-profit – Public Administration, Organizations; State and local government - impact on policymaking or work for region represented. Internationally-related – impact on some international issues, such as immigration, trade, conflict resolution, etc.
- C.** If this project needs revising for a satisfactory grade, your faculty supervisor may ask you to resubmit it.

SECOND TIME/ REPEAT INTERNS:

If you have already done an internship or are repeating a second term for the same internship, submit the bi-weekly journals to D2L or via email. No paper is required if you are working in the same placement in a second term.

- C. Placement Evaluation:** Two weeks before the conclusion of your internship, provide evaluation form to your Field Supervisor for their input on the grade. Then, fill out Student Evaluation in last week of your internship, and turn it in to your PSC Faculty Supervisor, and upload it on to D2L Internship site. This will be confidential unless otherwise specified.



VII. FIELD SUPERVISOR – STUDENT INTERN AGREEMENT

- 1) To be completed and signed by Field Supervisor and Student
- 2) A copy maintained at the Field Placement Office, and
- 3) By the 2nd week of placement, students should upload a copy/scan/photo of the original to the PSC 412 D2L site; and the original should be turned in to your PSC Faculty Supervisor.

Student Intern, Field Supervisor, and PSC Internship Director all understand that the assigned duties and responsibilities must be performed in a timely fashion and at a level equal to or exceeding all standards and that the Student Intern will comport themselves in a professional manner, consistent with the norms and expectations of the internship organization.

Both the Field Supervisor and the PSC Internship Director will train, advise, and counsel the intern about the nature of the assignments as well as expected standards. Every effort will be made to help the intern have a successful experience. However, students who continually fail to remediate poor quality performance and/or unacceptable behavior will be withdrawn from the internship and be awarded a failing grade for the course.

DATE: _____

I. INTERN RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Credits to be granted: _____ Hours expected _____
- b. Internship Schedule:
 1. Days and Times: _____
- c. Internship Responsibilities:
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

These stipulations are understood and agreed to by:

STUDENT INTERN

Name (printed/signed): _____

Local Address: _____

Phone(s): _____ E-Mail Address: _____

FIELD SUPERVISOR

Name (printed/signed): _____

Name of Organization: _____

Office/Placement Address: _____

Phone(s): _____ E-Mail Address: _____