

Whether it's living and working full time in Washington, DC, doing engaged work in the local community, or working on a campaign, internships are an excellent way for students to get practical experience in a job related to their field, serving as a valuable complement to academic course work in Political Science. We strongly recommend our students consider working as an intern during their time at UMaine.

The Department of Political Science offers many opportunities for students to earn academic credit for their internship experiences. This informational sheet provides important information about our offerings. Please see one of our faculty members for more information or with any questions you may have. We are always pleased to work with students in designing internship experiences tailored to their own specific interests.

Our internship offerings fall under two broad categories: a) established programs that are offered every year, and b) student-arranged internships that can be applied toward academic credit.



## A. ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS

The ***Peter Madigan '81 Congressional Internship Program***, started in 1958, is our flagship internship program and one of the oldest congressional internship programs in the nation. It is open to juniors and seniors from any UMaine major on a competitive basis. Each spring, several UMaine students are selected to live in Washington, DC while working full-time in a congressional office. Interns in the offices of Maine's congressional delegation are normally paid a monthly stipend to help defray living costs in DC. Readings and reports are required in addition to performing staff work in a congressional office. Congressional Interns earn up to 9 credits for the internship and 3 credits for a required academic seminar. Applications are announced and interviews conducted each fall to fill the spring internship positions. For further information contact Professor Richard Powell, 243 North Stevens Hall.

The ***Kenneth Palmer Maine State Legislative Internship Program*** is open to juniors and seniors from any UMaine major on a competitive basis. It involves working two days per week in Augusta for approximately 14 weeks, from early January until early May. Students are assigned to the office of a member of the legislative leadership. Readings and reports are required in addition to performing staff work in a legislative office. State Legislative Interns earn 6 credits for the internship. Applications are announced and interviews are conducted each fall to fill the spring internship positions. For further information contact Professor Richard Powell, 243 North Stevens Hall.

The ***Maine Public Policy Scholars Program***, offered by the Margaret Chase Smith Center, is available to all UMaine juniors or seniors on a competitive basis. The Maine Community Foundation funds the program for students across the University of Maine System. Policy Scholars undertake a major research project involving some aspect of Maine public policy during the academic year. Scholars work with an outside mentor and a faculty member in Political Science in the development of a research project and paper. Scholars from the University of Maine System campuses will meet together to discuss their research in progress several times over the course of the year and convene in the spring to present the results of their research. Six hours of academic credit are awarded under the program. A stipend is also provided in the form of a tuition grant, along with funds for travel and other expenses related to the research project. For further information, contact Professor Amy Fried, 130 North Stevens Hall.



## B. STUDENT ARRANGED INTERNSHIPS

There are numerous opportunities for students to earn academic credit for internships in a wide variety of settings, tailored to their own interests. Internships can be completed during the academic year or over the summer. Some of the most common internship settings are:

- Local offices of US Representatives and Senators
- Washington, DC offices of US Representatives and Senators
- State legislative offices
- Local and state governmental offices
- Candidate campaigns for local, state, or national elective office
- State political party organizations
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Issue advocacy groups
- Non-profit community organizations
- Law firms or legal assistance organizations

The process for setting up student internships for academic credit is as follows:

- Students have the primary responsibility for arranging their internships. Political Science faculty members can provide helpful advice about employers to approach and application suggestions. Application deadlines vary by employer, but the normal application window is about 3 months prior to the start of an internship.
- Employers often send us information about upcoming internship opportunities. We post these opportunities to our Facebook page on a regular basis, so please be sure to “Like” us (University of Maine Political Science Department) if you want to find out about a host of interesting possibilities.
- To obtain academic credit for an internship, students must get advance approval from a faculty member in Political Science who will supervise the internship experience **PRIOR** to the start of the internship. The student must provide the faculty member with the name and contact information of the host organization and supervisor. All internships sponsored by the Department of Political Science must be in a political setting. Other types of internships may be sponsored by other departments on campus.

- After obtaining faculty approval, students should contact the Administrative Assistant in the Political Science office (207-581-1871; 229 N. Stevens Hall) to register for POS 493. Please note that students will be paying tuition for all academic credits that are awarded.
- Students are required to work at least 125 hours during the semester to earn 3 credits. Interns must submit a bi-weekly progress report, normally by email, to the sponsoring faculty member.
- Students working at least 250 hours during the semester may earn up to 6 credits. In addition to a bi-weekly progress report (described above), students seeking 6 credits for an internship must also complete an independent research project of an academic nature to be arranged with the supervising faculty member.
- At the conclusion of a student’s internship experience, the student is required to have the internship supervisor submit a signed letter on organizational letterhead to the sponsoring faculty member that attests to the number of hours worked and job performance of the intern. This letter must be received by the sponsoring faculty member before a grade can be submitted.

All internships are graded with a traditional letter grade (i.e. pass/fail is not an option for POS 493). Grades are determined by the supervising faculty member, primarily based on the internship supervisor’s assessment and the bi-weekly progress reports.

Students may apply a maximum of 6 credit hours in POS 493 toward the Political Science Major requirements or 3 credit hours toward the Political Science Minor. In addition, UMaine graduation requirements stipulate that students may use no more than 12 credit hours in internship settings toward degree requirements.



**For more information, please contact a faculty member in Political Science or the departmental office:**

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229 N. Stevens Hall  
(207) 581-1871  
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