The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

Congressional Internship Program Description

The Panetta Institute extends its mission of service through its Congressional Internship Program. This program is open to undergraduate students in their junior or senior year with an interest in public service within any academic discipline from the twenty-three California State Universities and three private colleges and universities. This internship provides the opportunity to work and live within the rich cultural, historical and political heritage of our nation’s capital. As interns with Congress, students gain firsthand exposure to the American political process while attaining professional learning experience that offers meaningful, practical work experience and provides an opportunity for career exploration and development.

The sponsor and donors of the Panetta Institute make it possible to offer this opportunity without regard to a student’s financial background. Since the Panetta Institute pays all expenses, any qualified student can participate regardless of family income. Student selection is based on exemplary scholastic record, potential for a public service career and interest in politics.

Two-Week Orientation

A fundamental part of the Congressional Internship Program academic curriculum is the two-week orientation designed to supplement the intern’s experience through attending and participating in the class sessions, and then completing reflective, substantive session reviews. Experts in their respective fields’ present seminars during this orientation. During the first week of the orientation, seminars concentrate on: United States Congress, the legislative process of regular order, House of Representatives parliamentary rules and procedures, budget and appropriations process, congressional committees and structure, elections, congressional-presidential relations, federal and state relations, American jurisprudence as lead by the U.S. Supreme Court and the role of a free press in a democracy.

Guest Speakers

The 2022 two-week orientation included a series of seminars presented by Secretary Leon E. Panetta on Defense Policy, Cyber-Security, National Security, Congressional Structure and Committees and Foreign Policy. In addition to Secretary Panetta’s seminars a total of forty experts consisting of distinguished representatives from Congress, government agencies, military, press, academia and public policy institutes addressed the interns with their unique insights and expertise during the course of forty-nine seminars.

The Founders and the Creation of the American Republic
The Honorable Leon E. Panetta, Chairman of the Panetta Institute for Public Policy

Congressional Leadership, Committees and Policymaking
The Honorable Leon E. Panetta, Chairman of the Panetta Institute for Public Policy
The Presidency, the White House and the Executive Branch
The Hon. Dan Quayle, Forty-Fourth Vice President of the United States

History of Congress—The Historical Background to Current Congressional Dysfunction
Richard Kezirian, Ph.D., Professor, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

The Role and Responsibilities of the U.S. Intelligence Community
Jeremy Bash, Esq., Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (2011-2013)
Chief of Staff to the Director of the CIA (2009-2011)

United States Foreign and Defense Policies: Global Flash Points
The Honorable Leon E. Panetta, Chairman of the Panetta Institute for Public Policy

Foreign Policy in the Middle East
Matthew Spence, J.D., Ph.D., Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the
Middle East (2012-2015)

The Impact of the Press and Media on Politics
Dan Balz, Chief Correspondent, The Washington Post
Carla Marinucci, Senior Write, Politico California Playbook

Fiscal and Monetary Policies
Maya MacGuineas, President, Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget

The Policy Making Process
Sonia Banks, Esq., Professor, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

The Judiciary: Recent Supreme Court Decisions
The Honorable Ming Chin, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of California
(1996-2020)

California’s Relationship with Washington, D.C.: Differences between the Federal and State
Governments
The Honorable Sam Farr, United States Representative, District 20 (2013-2017)
District 17 (1993-2013)

California Politics and Governance: The Relationship between Local and State Governments
The Honorable Simón Salinas, California State Assembly, District Twenty-Eight (2000-
2006); Monterey County Board of Supervisors, District Three (2006-2018)

Effective Communication Skills
Sonia Banks, Esq., Professor, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

Presidential-Congressional Relations: How Congress Works—A Realistic View
James Copeland, White House Deputy Assistant to President Jimmy Carter
(1977-1979)
Les Francis, Deputy White House Chief to President Jimmy Carter (1977-1979)

Balancing the California Budget: An Exercise
Stephanie Leonard, Communications Project Manager, Next 10

Congressional Gridlock and Partisanship
The Honorable Blake Moore, United States Representative Utah, District One
The Honorable Josh Gottheimer, United States Representative, New Jersey, District Five
Economic and Budget Policies of the United States  
Joe Minarik, Ph.D., Chief Economist, Office of Management and Budget  
(1993-2001)

California’s Natural Resources: Water, Energy and Fire  
The Honorable John Laird, California State Senator, District 17, California Secretary of Natural Resources Agency (2011-2019)

Congress and Cybersecurity Issues: The Links Between Cybersecurity and National Security  
John Arquilla, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Department of Defense Analysis, Naval Postgraduate School

Economic and Trade Policies of the United States  
Joe Minarik, Ph.D., Chief Economist, Office of Management and Budget  
(1993-2001)

Consensus Building: From the Legislative Perspective  
The Honorable Jim Cunneen, California State Assembly, District 24, (1994-2000)  
The Honorable Fred Keeley, California State Assembly, District 27, (1996-2002)

Consensus Building Exercise  
Sonia Banks, Esq., Professor, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

Issues and Impact of U.S. Healthcare Policy  
Hector Flores, M.D., Founding Member and Co-Director White Memorial Medical Center Family Residency Program

Imperial Competition between Democratic and Autocratic Nations  
Leo Blanken, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Defense Analysis  
Naval Postgraduate School

National Security Policy  
Admiral Michael Mullen, U.S. Navy (Ret.), Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (2007-2011)

Policy Approaches to Achieving Equality in American Democracy  
Benjamin Jealous, National President and CEO, NAACP (2008-2013)

Order in the House of Representatives: Rules and Procedures  
Jason Smith, Esq., Parliamentarian, The United States House of Representatives

Social Justice Policy: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
Mel Mason, Executive Director, The Village Project  
Regina Mason, NAACP President, Monterey Bay Chapter

Election Reform—Making Democracy Work  
Ryan Coonerty, Third District Supervisor, Santa Cruz County

Duties and Responsibilities of a Congressional Intern  
Kaylen Chase, 2021, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy  
Congressional Intern  
Karen Garcia, 2021, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy  
Congressional Intern  
Nicholas Stark, 2021, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy  
Congressional Intern
The Future of Education: The Challenges Facing K12 Education
Niu Gao, Senior Fellow, The Public Policy Institute of California

Immigration Policy Issues and Trends: Comprehensive Immigration Reform
Theresa Cardinal Brown, Director of Immigration and Cross-Border Policy
Bipartisan Policy Center

U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Jimmy Panetta, United States Representative, 20th District
California

U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Marty Russo, United States Representative, Illinois, District Three (1975-1993)

Administrative Operations and Managing Decisions in a Congressional Office
Jodie Torkelson, Chief of Staff, Office of United States Representative Rick Nolan
Eighth District, Minnesota (2013-2019)
Sylvia M. Panetta, District Director, Office of United States Representative
Leon E. Panetta, Sixteenth District, California (1977-1993)

Growing Income Disparity: U.S. and California Wealth and Income Inequality
Paulette Cha, Research Fellow, Public Policy Institute of California

The Impact of Climate Change
George Somero, Ph.D., David and Lucile Packard Professor of Marine Science
Emeritus, Hopkins Marine Station, Stanford University

The Impact of Intellectual Technology: The Role and Responsibility of Technology in a Democracy
Dorian Daley, Esq., Executive Vice President and General Counsel, Oracle

Education Policy
The Honorable Janet Napolitano, President, University of California (2013-2020); U.S.
Secretary of Homeland Security (2009-2013); Governor of Arizona (2003-2009)

U.S. Foreign Policy
Michèle Flournoy, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (2009-2012)

Politics and Policy of Aging and Diversity
Fernando Torres-Gil, Ph.D., U.S. Assistant Secretary of Aging (1993-1997)
Professor of Social Welfare, UCI.A

Congressional Internship in Washington D.C.

During the orientation, the Panetta Institute conducts intensive phone interview training sessions with each student to prepare them for their phone interview with a Congressional office within the California delegation in Washington, D.C. The Panetta Institute then arranges interviews with Congressional staff members and secures each student's appointment to intern for a congressional office.
Following the two-week orientation at the Panetta Institute, interns begin their two and one-half months internships for a member of the California congressional delegation on Capitol Hill.

**Washington D.C. Seminars**

In addition to their work in congressional offices, interns attend weekly seminars on policy issues and different aspects of government. These seminars are scheduled in Washington, D.C. with nationally-renowned experts exclusively for the Panetta Institute’s interns. In 2022, the Washington D.C. seminar schedule included a special meeting with Secretary Leon E. Panetta and a group photograph with him along with presentations by:

**Dr. Alan Binder**, Princeton Professor and former Vice Chair of the Federal Reserve System;

**United States Representative Ken Calvert**, along with attending a House Appropriations Committee hearing;

**Senator Tom Daschle**, former United States Senator from North Dakota;

**Michèle Flournoy**, former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy;

**Dr. Pat Griffin**, former White House Legislative Director;

**Jeffrey Horwitt**, Senior Vice President, Hart Research Associates;

**Jamil Jaffer, J.D.**, Founder, National Security Institute, Adjunct Professor of Law and Director of the National Security Law and Policy Program, along with a tour of the United States Supreme Court;

**Doris Meissner**, former Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service;

**United States Representative Jimmy Panetta**, along with attending a House Ways and Means Committee hearing and vote;

**House Parliamentarian Thomas Wickham**, along with a tour of the House floor.

**Academic Work and Credits**

The *Congressional Internship Program* is uniquely designed to have an academic focus together with an experiential learning component. **Students receive academic credit for each of the five component parts of the program for a total of twenty academic units.** Students must research and write a twenty-page comprehensive research policy paper. Students are also responsible for writing and submitting a twenty-page academic reflective journal that is a polished compendium of the student’s internship experience. Students are further graded on their internship job performance through congressional staff reviews.