**The Washington Center Internship Program
Spring and Summer 2016**

 

This a joint program involving MTSU, The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR), and The Washington Center (TWC). MTSU can award up to six TBR Scholarships each year to make it affordable for students to spend a semester at The Washington Center.

Spending a semester at TWC is an extraordinary experience. TWC staff work with to learn your professional goals and plans, and then pair you up with several possible internship placements tied to your goals. You talk to each of these possible placements—you are interviewing them and they are interviewing you—and then it is your decision on accepting a placement.

While in Washington, you work full-time at your internship placement four days a week. With the fifth day of the week, you take a three credit seminar class (there are many to choose from), and work with your TWC adviser preparing a professional portfolio.

You gain an amazing job experience, see national and international politics up close, meet many people, and get to enjoy everything the city has to offer. You also earn a total of fifteen credits—twelve credits for the internship and three credits for the seminar. And, with the TBR Scholarship, the cost is the same as if you spend the semester on campus here in Murfreesboro.

To date, about fifty MTSU students have gone to TWC, with students working in political offices, in Congress and at the White House, Departments of Education, State, Justice, Commerce, Interior, and Defense, at news organizations, with lobbying firms, at the Center for Disease Control, and a host of international non-governmental organizations dealing with human rights, slavery and human trafficking, conflict resolution, economic development, and international education. Whatever your interests and career goals, there are relevant internship placements available in Washington.

**Key Questions about the Application Process**

**-1- Who is eligible to apply?**

- The program is open to all majors. To date, we have had students from Political Science and International Relations, History, Anthropology, Global Studies, Economics, Business, Foreign Languages, Journalism, Communications, Criminal Justice, and Biology.

- The semester you will be in Washington, you need to be a junior or senior. Graduate students are not eligible for the TBR Scholarship.

- You need a minimum gpa of 3.0 for the TBR Scholarship.

**-2- How do you apply?**

- There is a two-step application process. First, you need to apply here on campus for consideration for one of the TBR Scholarships. Second, if you are awarded one of the Scholarships, you then need to formally apply to The Washington Center.

- To simplify this, on campus we use the TWC application. Thus, you will complete everything needed for the TWC application, but submit it all to MTSU first for consideration for a TBR Scholarship. Then, if you are awarded a TBR Scholarship, everything is already done and you simply submit the same material to TWC.

- Applications must be submitted on campus by **October 10**, and the steps in applying are:

 a. Go to The Washington Center “How To Apply” page, available at:
 <http://www.twc.edu/internships/washington-dc-programs/how-to-apply>

 b. Create an electronic account with TWC and complete their form and upload all the
 necessary materials, which include a one page resume, a statement of professional
 interests, an issues essay, a transcript, and two letters of recommendation.

 c. Once you have the application complete, **HOLD OFF** on hitting the “Submit” button.
 Instead, print off copies of everything and drop off the complete application with Dr. David
 Carleton, Department of Political Science and International Relations, in Peck Hall 245.
 Your letter of recommendation writers can simply email copies of their letters to Dr.
 Carleton at carleton@mtsu.edu.
 d. A decision on awarding the TBR Scholarships will be made on campus within two weeks.
 You may be asked to come in for a short interview, but this is usually only when there are
 several very similar applications for the last Scholarship or two.

 e. You will receive an email letting you know whether you received a TBR Scholarship or not.
 Everyone will be contacted, whether the news is good or bad.

**-3- What happens after you are selected for one of the TBR Scholarships?**

If you get a positive email informing you that you have been awarded one of the six TBR Scholarships, several things will happen:

 a. You will be asked to officially accept the award.

 b. You will go back into your TWC account and formally submit your application. It usually
 takes a week or two for them to process it and formally accept you.

 c. Once accepted at TWC, they will assign you an advisor, and the two of you will discuss
 your career goals and the type of internship placement you would like. They will then shop
 you around and then send you two or three possible placements.

 d. You will have phone interviews with each potential placement. These are mutual
 interviews, i.e., they are trying to find an intern they want, and you are trying to find a
 placement you want. Some or all of them will offer you a spot, and then you have the
 choice of accepting or rejecting. If you are unhappy with the options, ask your adviser
 for additional options. In the end, you accept a placement where you want to work.

 e. You will be given many options for your seminar course, and you will make that selection.

 f. If you will be attending TWC for the Spring semester, your award of the TBR Scholarship
 will be sent to the MTSU Financial Aid Office immediately, and they will work out an outline
 of how the financing will work with your particular mix of grants, aid, and so on. Usually
 this is pretty straight forward, but, if there are questions, they will sit down meet with you.

 g. If you will be attending TWC in the Summer semester, you will have the same process with
 Financial Aid, but not until February or March, in preparation for the summer.

 h. For the semester you will be in Washington, you will enroll in PS 4280: The Washington
 Experience, which is a 12 credit hour internship course to cover your time at TWC.

**-4- What happens if you are NOT awarded one of the TBR Scholarships?**

If you get a negative email informing you that you have not received one of the TBR Scholarships, you are allowed to be unhappy, but, several things:

 a. Your application will be kept active through the start of the summer term. In several past
 years, things came up that prevented one of the students selected from attending, and, if
 this happens again, we will go back to the pool of applications first in filling the slot.

 b. Some years, other TBR institutions have not used all of their allotted scholarships, and
 they have been transferred to MTSU. This only happens late in the spring, and there is
 usually very short notice, but, again, if it does happen, we will go back to the pool of
 applications first in filling the slot(s).

 c. With only six Scholarships per year, many strong applications are going to get rejected.
 The program runs every year, and you are welcome to reapply.

 d. The Department of Political Science and International Relations offers a number of other
 internship opportunities you can consider:

 - **PS 4040 - Pre-Law Internship** (3 credit hours). Prerequisites: Senior standing,
 competitive selection, PS 2440, or by permission of instructor. Familiarizes pre-law
 students with general law office procedures and an active law environment. For
 information, talk to Dr. Willis, Peck Hall 209, clyde.willis@mtsu.edu.

 - **PS 4270 - Political Campaign Internship** (1 to 12 credit hours). Prerequisites:
 Sophomore standing, PS 1005, and a 2.50 minimum GPA. Students work for a political
 campaign, a candidate for office, an interest group or a non-profit. Only six hours may
 count toward a political science or international relations major or minor. May be
 repeated for credit. Arrangement for this course must be made in advance. For
 information, talk to Dr. Langenbach, Peck Hall 252, lisa.langenbach@mtsu.edu.

 - **PS 4290 - Public Service Internship** (1 to 12 credit hours). Prerequisites: Junior
 standing and 2.50 minimum GPA. Students work for a government agency at the
 federal, state or local levels. May be repeated for credit, but only six hours of
 internship credit may count toward a Political Science or International Relations
 major or minor. Arrangement for this course must be made in advance. May be
 repeated for credit. For information, talk to Dr. Langenbach, Peck Hall 252,
 lisa.langenbach@mtsu.edu.

 - **PS 4360 - Legislative Internship** (up to 12 credit hours). A cooperative program with
 the State of Tennessee that provides for student service with the legislature on a full-
 time basis during the spring semester. Students selected on a competitive basis. Only
 six hours may count toward a Political Science major or minor. For information, talk to
 Dr. Carleton, Peck Hall 245, carleton@mtsu.edu.

**-5- Can the credit hours be used in your major and/or minors?**

The credits definitely count toward the 120 credit hours needed for graduation, and some or all of the credit “almost always” can be applied to your major and/or minor program. This simply depends on what course work you have remaining, what seminar you choose, and what type of work you will are doing in your internship placement. Some students have made arrangements to apply six of the internship hours to their major and the other six to one of their minors.

You need to talk to your academic advisers about how and where the credits can be used, and you should have these discussions before you leave for Washington rather than after you return.

**-6- Who can you contact if you have any questions throughout the process?**

Dr. David Carleton
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 International Relations
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