



Federal Semester Program



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Grant Enables Federal Semester Program to Expand Student Internship Opportunities

COLLEGE PARK, Md. – Federal Semester, the University of Maryland's innovative, interdisciplinary program in federal service, has been awarded a \$951,000 congressionally directed grant to encourage and enable high-achieving students for careers in public service, especially in the federal government.

Capitalizing on the university's location just outside the nation's capital, the selective, year-long Federal Semester program combines a fall academic seminar with a spring internship in a federal agency or other policy-related organization. Guest speakers, briefings with policymakers, site visits to agency headquarters and professional development workshops integrate classroom and real-world experiences. The program serves a diverse population of talented, public-spirited students from across the university.

"For many of the students in the program, this is the first time they've really seen their academic experience come to life," says Director Joan Burton. "We bring students into direct contact with professionals in the field and the students see that there are great opportunities to effect change and find extraordinarily meaningful work through public service and the federal government."

Baby boomers ready to enjoy their golden years will retire in droves from the federal government over the next three years, opening an estimated 273,000 mission critical jobs by fall 2012, according to the nonprofit Partnership for Public Service.

With the help of the grant and the Partnership for Public Service, Federal Semester has dramatically increased the number of student placements in federal agency internships. Last year, six of the 40 students enrolled in the program interned at four federal agencies; this year, 42 of the 60 students enrolled in the program secured internships at more than 20 offices and agencies across the federal government. The remainder of students secured other policy-related internships.

The grant also provides opportunities for fellowship support for Federal Semester students to pursue graduate studies at the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy and in other policy-focused graduate programs at the university.

This year Federal Semester offered seminars in three concentrations: health policy, in collaboration with the School of Public Health; homeland security policy, in collaboration with the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism; and U.S. Policy in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in collaboration with the Gildenhorn Institute for Israel Studies. Next year Federal Semester is launching a fourth concentration in energy and environmental policy.

The Federal Semester Program opens doors to internship experiences and serves as a pipeline to graduate study and careers in public service, especially in the federal government. The program is designed to galvanize students to make a difference. For more information, visit www.federalsemester.umd.edu

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