



## **Hobby School of Public Affairs**

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### **UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON**

#### **Hobby Fellows Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: What is a Hobby Fellow?**

**A:** A Hobby Fellow is a University of Houston undergraduate student that works as a full-time intern in the Texas Capitol during regular legislative sessions.

**Q: What is the duration of the Hobby Fellows internship program?**

**A:** The internship will begin the first day of the regular legislative session and will conclude on the last day of the regular session.

**Q: How many hours do the interns work?**

**A:** Hobby Fellows are well aware that legislative sessions can have days with significant hours of work required and are expected to do what is needed to ensure their contribution to their host office. Specific schedules are determined between the intern and the office supervisor.

**Q: Is the internship paid?**

**A:** Yes. The Hobby School of Public Affairs provides each Hobby Fellow with a stipend of \$12,000 over the course of the spring semester to help offset their living expenses while in Austin.

**Q: What are the eligibility requirements for the interns?**

**A:** UH juniors and seniors from all majors will be considered for admission to the program. Transfer students must have at least 24 hours completed at UH at the time of their application. Students graduating the semester before the program are welcome to apply. Also, students must be in good academic standing with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

**Q: How are the interns selected?**

**A:** Each candidate submits an application including a written essay, transcripts, a resume, and letters of recommendation. Each applicant is then scheduled for an interview with the Hobby Fellows Selection Committee, which generally takes 30 minutes to an hour. Upon acceptance to the program, the intern is enrolled in the accompanying academic course, earning between 3-12 upper level political science or public policy credit hours.

**Q: If the interns are enrolled in an academic course, do they receive a grade for their work?** **A:** Yes. The academic hours earned count in the same manner as other courses so the intern must pay tuition for the hours, perform the required number of hours of work during the semester and complete the written assignments. Interns do not have any class meetings and are expected to complete the academic assignments outside of the work day.

**Q: How are the interns assigned to offices?**

**A:** The internship director has extensive experience in human resource management and governmental relations and matches the interns to participating offices. Student factors

considered in assignments include the following: 1) Policy interests; 2) Partisanship and ideology; 3) Demonstrated skills such as writing ability; 4) Special skills such as fluency in additional languages or special software proficiency; and 5) Specific office requests.

**Q: What kind of responsibilities do Hobby Fellows routinely get?**

**A:** It is anticipated that most interns will be expected to do clerical work, particularly in the early weeks of their assignment. However since this is an upper level political science/public policy course, we expect the majority of interns to also be assigned more substantial responsibilities as the semester continues. Consider a student with exceptionally strong writing skills - instead of having a gifted writer spend 75% of their time filing, the intern could be given writing assignments such as drafting constituent responses, helping with legislation requests, assisting with talking points, etc. With a good work ethic, diligence and enthusiasm, interns should expect increasing responsibility as their internship progresses.

**Q: Do I need to put together a detailed job description for the intern or can work be assigned on an as needed basis?**

**A:** As long as the intern is kept busy, how the responsibilities are designated is at the office's discretion. However, it is often helpful to have a general job description available on the intern's first day.

**Q: What if an intern proves to be a bad fit for our office?**

**A:** This rarely happens (thankfully!) but if it does, the Hobby School of Public Affairs will make other arrangements for the student.

Still have questions? Please contact:

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