Tips for Getting a DC Internship

• **BEFORE APPLYING**
  - If you do not already have a specific Member of Congress you would like to intern for in mind, take some time to research each Member and familiarize yourself with their stances on various policy issues and which areas of legislation the Member is most active in.
  - Try to find a Member who does a lot of work in an area that interests you. While you will get great learning experiences no matter who you intern for; if you have a particular interest in one area of public policy (i.e. immigration, women’s rights, defense issues, etc.), apply to the office of a Member who also does a lot of work in that area. By doing so you can build on your knowledge and will be more likely to enjoy the projects you end up working on.

• **WHILE APPLYING**
  - Visit the websites! Every Congressional office has different application requirements and deadlines; many require you to submit your application materials via an online form on their website while others have you email in your application materials. To ensure you are following an Office’s application protocol follow the links provided in the Contacts table and adhere to the directions given on the Member’s page.
  - Know your strengths! If you are applying to work for a Member who is active in an area of policy that you have taken a lot of classes in, done volunteer work for, written papers on, etc. be sure you mention it somewhere in your application.
  - Emphasize your Arizona connection! Members like to have interns from their home state which can be difficult to do in their DC offices given the distance from Arizona. Resultantly, many interns in the DC offices of Arizona Members end up being students attending universities in the DC area; just being from Arizona or attending the University of Arizona will give you an advantage over applicants with no connection to the state.
  - Talk to your advisor! Many students from Arizona think they can only do DC internships during the summer but your advisor can tell you more about how it is possible to do a summer, fall, or spring semester-long internship in DC while still earning a full semester’s worth of credits from the UA. Applicants from all over the country apply for Congressional internships in the summer. Your odds of being selected for an internship are better in the fall or spring and you typically get to work on more substantive matters during these periods.
• **AFTER APPLYING**
  - Follow up on your application; persistence pays off! Congressional staffers are very busy and the Intern Coordinator likely has multiple other areas he/she is responsible for. Regular follow up contact with an office after submitting your application can be critical in being selected for an internship.
    - Roughly a week after the application deadline for an office has passed is a good time to follow up with a call or email to the Intern Coordinator if you have not yet heard anything from the office. Ask he/she if they have a timeline for making their intern selections then adhere to that timeline before subsequent follow up.
    - Use your best judgment on follow ups; just as regular contact can be necessary to obtain an internship, relentless calls or emails can turn an Intern Coordinator off from selecting you. A good rule of thumb is to follow up once a week if you were either not given a timeline for intern selection or the timeline has passed and you still have not heard from the office.
  - Apply for the Federal Relations Scholarship! The UA Office of Federal Relations offers a scholarship for UA students doing internships in DC Congressional offices that you are eligible to apply for once you have obtained your internship. The scholarship offers a full tuition reimbursement for the semester you spend in DC and a $500 per month stipend every month you are there. Scholarship info can be found at: [https://universitysecretary.arizona.edu/dc-intern-scholarship](https://universitysecretary.arizona.edu/dc-intern-scholarship)