

## 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**

In 2024, the 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-nine 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-three 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 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 Oral and Written Communication Skills*  
Sonia Banks, Esq., Professor, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy
- Criminal Justice Reform*  
Heather Harris, Ph.D., Research Fellow, Public Policy Institute of California
- 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

*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)

The Hon. Ian Oglesby, Mayor, City of Monterey

The Hon. Tyller Williamson, Mayor, City of Monterey

*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*

Erin Pruitt, 2023 Congressional Intern, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

Nicholas Stark, 2021 Congressional Intern, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

Jordan Tachibana, 2023 Congressional Intern, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

*The Future of Education: The Challenges Facing Education*

Niu Gao, Senior Fellow, The Public Policy Institute of California

*Immigration Policy Issues and Trends: Comprehensive Immigration Reform*

Julia Gelatt, Ph.D., Associate Director, U.S. Immigration Policy Program, Migration Policy Institute

*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, UCLA

## **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-renown experts exclusively for the Panetta Institute's interns. In 2024, 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

**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;

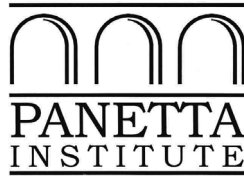
**Theresa Cardinal Brown**, Director of Immigration and Cross-Border Policy Bipartisan Policy Center

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

**House Parliamentarian Jason Smith**, 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.



## The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

# 2025 Congressional Internship Program Internship Position Description

### Program Summary:

The Panetta Institute *Congressional Internship Program* has been recognized as one of the best in the country. The Panetta Institute's twenty-sixth annual *Congressional Internship Program* will be held from Sunday, August 10 through Monday, December 8, 2025.

This semester long program begins with a rigorous two-week academic orientation at the Panetta Institute from Sunday, August 10, 2025 through Friday, August 22, 2025. The focus of this training and orientation is to prepare students for their internship work in Washington, D.C. by giving them an in-depth background to understand the most important policy challenges facing our nation. The Panetta Institute invites experts at the top levels within their fields to expand students' understanding of politics and policy.

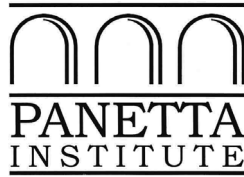
Following the orientation, on Saturday, August 23, 2025, students will travel to Washington, D.C. for their eleven-week internships with members of the U.S. House of Representatives, both Republican and Democrat, from the California delegation where they will serve through Friday, November 7, 2025. While in Washington, D.C., students are mentored and closely supervised by Panetta Institute faculty in California as well as Panetta Institute staff in Washington, D.C. Another unique feature of the *Congressional Internship Program* includes weekly seminars on policy issues that the interns attend while working on Capitol Hill with nationally renowned leaders who currently practice in their specialized field. Interns will also be required to submit weekly reports summarizing their internship work as well as summaries of the lessons presented through the speaker seminars.

Upon return to California on Saturday, November 8, 2025, interns begin to work on the academic requirements of the program: a twenty-page policy paper with evidence of research and analysis and a twenty-page reflective journal, a polished compendium of the student's intern experience. The academic program ends on Monday, December 8, 2025 with the submission of both assignments directly to the Panetta Institute for grading by the Institute's professors. The internship ends on Monday, December 22, 2025 with the submission of final grades.

Upon completion of all requirements for this course, interns will earn a letter grade commensurate with their performance for twenty (20) full-time academic units that will be posted to their university transcripts. All program costs are covered, including housing, ground transportation, travel to and from Washington, D.C. and some reimbursement for living expenses. Any academic major may apply; the program is open to qualified students regardless of income.

### Course Components:

- Participate in a two-week training session at the Panetta Institute, located at the CSU Monterey Bay campus on the Monterey Peninsula;
- Work full-time for eleven weeks in the assigned Washington, D.C. congressional office for a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from the California delegation;



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- Attend special seminars held exclusively for Panetta Institute interns while in Washington, D.C. and submit reports on all classes and seminars;
- Timely submit weekly reports and other assignments;
- Attend weekly meetings with Panetta Institute staff while in Washington, D.C.;
- Submit an experiential twenty-page journal and a twenty-page research paper consistent with the syllabus provided by the Institute; and
- Earn letter grades commensurate with their performance for twenty (20) full-time academic credits upon successful completion of the internship that must be accepted by the student's university as an integral component of the student's academic transcript.

**Position Functions and Tasks:**

Provide support to congressional office staff that includes, but is not limited to:

- Answer phones
  - o Take messages
  - o Transfer calls
  - o Conference calls
- Enter data
- Draft correspondence or other materials
- Meet and greet constituents
- Provide tours of Capitol Building
- Compile newspaper clippings
- Attend hearings and briefings, take notes and provide summaries/reports
- Conduct issue/legislative research
- Perform other work that involves the practical application of what is learned in the classroom

**Position Qualifications:**

*Education*

- Matriculating student in upper-division undergraduate status (matriculating juniors or seniors during the time of the internship – and has not applied for graduation)
- High academic standing at all colleges/universities attended (includes lower division)
- *Congressional Internship Program* academic units must be applied to the student's transcript

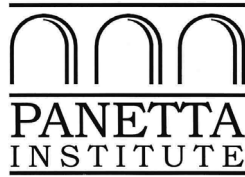
*Experience*

- Outstanding student leader, who is not a former Panetta Institute *Congressional Internship Program* participant
- Demonstrated commitment to community and public service

*Skills*

- Advanced written and verbal communication skills (especially clarity of speech)
- General computer proficiency, word processing and spreadsheet knowledge
- Ability to follow instructions carefully





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- Flexibility to adjust with poise to changing deadlines and priorities
- Ability to provide information to the public and others as directed by supervisors
- Strong organizational skills
- Ability to multi-task and prioritize assignments
- Ability to work in a fast-paced environment
- Ability to be a good team member with an attitude of doing what it takes to get the job done and doing so with a pleasant, cooperative, and professional demeanor

*Other qualities*

- Exemplary conduct at the home campus university and in the community;
- Positive attitude with a willingness to work (hard) on any project assigned by the congressional office;
- Willingness to accept work involving the practical application of what is learned in the classroom;
- Exercises maturity and sound judgment;
- Willing to abide by the Panetta Institute's Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement;
- Full-time commitment to the Panetta Institute's *Congressional Internship Program*; no extra-curricular or outside courses allowed including, but not limited to, scheduling of LSAT, GRE, MCAT, GMAT, etc.;
- Willingness to accept roommate assignments and share living quarters with other students while residing at CSU Monterey Bay and in Washington, D.C.
- State of California resident; and
- All students must have proof of health insurance that is compliant with the Affordable Care Act and that covers the students while residing and working in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and while in Northern California.