



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

... OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

... DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Rio Grande Valley Legislative Internship Program (VLIP) is an academic program of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley made possible with funding approved by Dr. Guy Bailey, Founding President of UTRGV. It offers opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to serve as interns in the Texas Legislature during regular legislative sessions.

Undergraduate students receive six (6) credit hours for participating in the VLIP, which provides “real world” experience through assisting legislative staff in administration, engaging in research and writing, and involvement in all facets of the governmental process. Graduate students receive academic credit hours as provided by their academic departments. The length of the internship is for the duration of the 140-day legislative session, and interns are responsible for their academic admissions and enrollment in the courses required for participation. Qualified undergraduate and graduate students interested in the political process and in giving back to the community are encouraged to apply for the internship.

During legislative sessions, VLIP interns will be placed in the offices of members of the Legislature representing the Rio Grande Valley. Interns are exposed to the legislative process of both chambers of the Texas Legislature. Their experiences often serve as the springboard for selecting public service careers. The hope is that many interns will continue to work in public service at the federal, state, and local levels of government.

BE A UTRGV LEGISLATIVE INTERN AT THE TEXAS CAPITOL!

Live & Work in Austin While Earning College Credit



RIO GRANDE VALLEY LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

SPRING 2023 SESSION PROGRAM INFORMATION

THE PROGRAM

The VLIP is a program of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley made possible with funding approved by Dr. Guy Bailey, Founding President of UTRGV, to provide undergraduate and graduate students with the opportunity to serve as interns in the Texas Legislature during regular legislative sessions.

ACADEMIC CREDIT

Interns must be enrolled in The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and receive credit for their internship experience. *Interns are responsible for their academic admissions and enrollment in the necessary courses.* Undergraduate interns may earn six (6) hours of Political Science academic credit by fulfilling requirements of their internship experience. Graduate students receive academic credit hours as specified by their academic department.

PROGRAM DETAILS

The 88th Texas Legislature convenes January 10, 2023, and the session will adjourn on May 29, 2023; interns are required to attend orientation training prior to the beginning of the session. For the session, interns will receive up to \$8,000 to support their internship. Interns are responsible for housing, transportation, and other expenses.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Interns will be assigned to work in the offices of members of the Texas Legislature representing the Rio Grande Valley. The position requires the ability to perform and manage a number of diverse activities, including writing a variety of documents, analyzing proposals, performing research, and meeting with stakeholders. Integrity, good judgment, independent thinking, a high degree of ingenuity, resourcefulness, and professionalism are critical to the successful management of an intern's responsibilities.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC - RELATED ISSUES

Because it is not possible to predict what the state of the COVID-19 Pandemic will be during the 88th Legislative Session, interns should expect the format of their internship to be unlike a traditional experience, with host offices likely to implement options for VLIP interns as follows:

- One that places VLIPers in Austin with office hours at the Capitol with near normal conditions (although social distancing, face masks, and other CDC-recommended mitigation protocols could be in place);
- One that places VLIPers in Austin with limited hours at the Capitol, perhaps rotating schedules with other staff and otherwise performing duties remotely from their Austin residence; or
- Keeping VLIPers in the RGV for the majority of the Session with limited time in Austin to work from the Capitol, making for a scenario where interns would do a significant amount of their work from the RGV.

Protocols to Follow as Needed – Instruction and guidance based on University and government protocols will be established as needed prior to deployment of interns to Austin. Interns can

expect the protocols to reflect those used in the past that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has in place to protect individuals from COVID-19, as needed. Additionally, interns will be expected to obey the safety protocols established by UTRGV, the Texas House of Representatives, the Senate of Texas, and the State Preservation Board.

Flu Vaccination - Students participating in the Valley Legislative Internship Program will be required to receive their flu vaccinations prior to beginning their internship, or provide an exemption.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, undergraduate students must:

- Be enrolled at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
- Have completed at least 60 undergraduate hours, including 12 hours in POLS/GOVT courses from an accredited college or university
- Possess a 3.0 G.P.A. in POLS/GOVT courses and a 2.5 cumulative G.P.A.
Eligible graduate students must be currently enrolled in a degree program at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, have a minimum 3.0 GPA, and enroll in the appropriate course(s) in their academic departments.
- Demonstrate exceptional skills in writing, composition, and computer literacy.

THE APPLICATION

Completed applications should be accompanied by:

- One writing sample of no more than five (5) pages.
- Two letters of recommendation electronically submitted to Jack Kaufold, collector of applications at the Career Center.
- A resume.
- One wallet-size photo submitted electronically.
- Graduate students must submit a letter from their academic department Chair specifying that they will receive academic credit applicable to their degree upon successful completion of the internship.
- FERPA Consent to Release Student Information Form (attached at the end of application).

DEADLINE

The deadline for submitting the Application for the Spring 2023 legislative session is Friday, November 18, 2022.

Completed applications must be submitted to Jack Kaufold, Internship Coordinator, Career Center, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley at jack.kaufold@utrgv.edu.

Representatives of the UTRGV Office of Governmental Relations and the Political Science Department will review the applications, conduct interviews, and select the interns.

REQUIREMENTS OF INTERNS

The following conditions must exist to meet the qualifications for the VLIP:

1. Before being approved to start his or her experience, students must:
 - Complete and submit an official application
 - Submit a writing sample of no more than five (5) pages
 - Two letters of recommendation submitted electronically to Jack Kaufold, Career Center
 - Provide an unofficial transcript
 - Submit a resume
 - Provide a wallet-size photo (electronic copy)
 - **Undergraduate students** must have completed sixty (60) hours of post-secondary education, including 12 hours of Political Science/Government courses with a 3.0 G.P.A. by the end of the Fall 2020 semester.
 - **Graduate students** must submit verification of a cumulative 3.0 G.P.A. in graduate studies and a letter from their academic department Chair specifying that they will receive academic credit applicable to their degree program upon successful completion
 - Complete FERPA Consent to Release Student Information Form (attached)
 - Used for Satisfactorily passing Criminal Background, Academic Disciplinary Record, and Good Academic Standing checks which will be performed for all students being considered for the program)
 - A check of each applicant's social media pages will also be performed and may lead to additional scrutiny.
 - Prior to departing to Austin for the internship, students will provide proof of health insurance for the duration of the 88th Legislative Session.
 - Provide proof of Flu vaccination or exemption
2. The internship must cover the duration of the legislative session (January 10, 2023, to May 29, 2023) in order for the intern to receive the semester credit hours for which he/she is enrolled.
3. The intern must report daily to his/her assigned office in a timely manner and carry out his/her responsibilities according to instruction provided by the assigned supervisor(s).
4. The intern must perform other assigned projects germane to his/her experiential learning, including writing reports, conducting research, assisting with program development and logistical planning, and attending lectures and symposiums.
5. During the internship, the intern must be available for at least one on-site evaluation.
6. The intern must dress according to assigned office policy for the duration of the internship.
7. The intern's conduct must be exemplary. Unprofessional behavior will be reason for dismissal.
8. The intern must sign and date the VLIP Agreement provided by UTRGV.
9. Interns will not be allowed to leave the program early. Interns who fail to keep their commitment to the program may face sanctions ranging from loss of academic credit to liability for the full sum of financial assistance.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

2022 APPLICATION

(Please Type)

Date _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Date of Birth: _____ Last 4 Digits of SSN: _____ DL# _____

Address (Current): _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Address (Permanent): _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

University E-Mail: _____

Student ID: _____

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Name of Health Insurance Carrier (including Medicaid): _____
If selected, you will be asked to show proof of insurance.

Emergency Contact: _____
(Name) (Address)

(Phone) (Relationship)

Current Major: _____

For Undergraduates:

Political Science/Government Courses Completed:

G.P.A. in POLS/GOVT Courses: _____

Cumulative G.P.A.: _____

Minor(s): _____

For graduate students:

Current Cumulative G.P.A.: _____

Undergraduate degree and Major: _____

Undergraduate G.P.A.: _____

Current Enrollment Status: [] Full Time [] Part Time Projected Graduation Date: _____

Classification: [] Senior [] Junior [] Graduate

Indicate Financial Aid (if any): [] Pell Grant [] Student Loan [] Scholarship [] Work-Study

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. How would you describe your level of political interest? (Check one and explain using the space below.)
 Very High High Moderate

2. Have you ever worked in a political campaign or been involved in any other governmental or political activity? If yes, please explain in the space below:

3. How would The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Legislative Internship complement your current academic interests and your future career goals?

4. Do you have particular skills which you have developed/mastered that will be beneficial to a legislative office, such as word processing, research, developing data bases, written and oral communication, non-English language proficiency, etc.?

5. Please explain why you are interested in The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Legislative Internship. (Attach additional sheets.)

6. What course work have you completed that you think is relevant to a legislative internship?
7. Have you ever been convicted of a felony? If so, please explain. **(NOTE: Criminal background checks will be performed for all students being considered for the program prior to the start of the program.)**
8. If you are assigned to the office of a legislator who identifies with a political party that is not yours, would you be able to perform duties as assigned by your supervisor and conduct yourself in an appropriate manner in a political environment? Please discuss.
9. If I am selected, I authorize release of my official transcript and other necessary supporting documentation.

(signature)

Universities and colleges I have attended:

College or University	Dates Attended	Completed Hours	Graduated (Yes/No)	Degree Received

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

In order to complete the application, please include the following:

- A writing sample of no more than five (5) pages (This may be a current issue essay, report or research paper). It should be typed and properly cited if the sample is a research paper.
- Two letters of recommendation sent electronically to Jack Kaufold, Career Center
- Unofficial transcript
- A resume
- Wallet-size photo (Electronic copy to accompany application)
- Graduate students: Letter from academic department Chair specifying that student will receive academic credit applicable to their degree program upon successful completion of the internship.
- Proof of Flu vaccination or exemption

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Jack Kaufold
Internship Program Manager
Career Center
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
1201 West University Drive
Edinburg, Texas 78539
Phone: (956) 665-2246
E-Mail: jack.kaufold@utrgv.edu

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE MAILED ELECTRONICALLY TO:

Jack Kaufold at jack.kaufold@utrgv.edu.

Deadline for Submitting Application for Spring 2023 Legislative Session:

Friday, November 18, 2022, at 11:59 p.m.