

# **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

## **2020 WASHINGTON SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

### **Sponsored by the Department of Political Science**

This is the twenty sixth year of the Washington Summer Internship Program, which provides technically sophisticated undergraduates the opportunity to apply their scientific and technical training to public policy issues. The core of the program is focused on the summer months, when students selected to participate in the program work in the offices of government agencies, the private sector, and advocacy groups. Complementing the summer internships are a trip to Washington during spring break and academic exercises.

Participating students work a minimum of two months in policy-related internships in the Washington, DC area. In some cases these positions will have salaries paid by the participating internship sponsors. Participants are also eligible for stipends paid by the program. These stipends include summer housing and travel expenses for all participants, plus cash grants, depending on participant need. Participating students are also required to attend a seminar on the policymaking process during the late spring and early fall, for which they will receive 12 units of credit upon completion.

**PREREQUISITES:** All undergraduates who plan on being enrolled at MIT during the fall of 2020 are eligible to apply to participate in the program. A limit of twelve to fifteen students may be chosen to participate this year. Preference will be given to rising seniors and to students with substantial course work in some technical area, beyond the Institute Science Core.

**INTERNSHIP SPONSORS:** Sponsors will include federal government agencies, congressional offices, think tanks, and advocacy groups. Program staff will assist students in identifying relevant internship possibilities and in organizing their job search strategies. To help in this activity, the Program maintains a list of organizations (and contacts) which have expressed an eagerness to work with the MIT Washington Summer Internship Program.

Past summer interns have worked in the White House Office of Science & Technology, the House of Representatives Science Committee, the US Agency for International Development, the US Department of Energy, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, NASA, the American Association for World Health, the Environmental Protection Agency, the American Enterprise Institute, Brookings Institution, the Center for Democracy and Technology, the Congressional Research Service, the Economic Policy Institute, the Urban Institute, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Institutes of Health, the Climate Institute and the MIT Washington Office.

### **For more information contact:**

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## Guidelines for interns and internship sponsors

- The internship will be educationally rewarding and directly related to the application of technical expertise to issues of public policy. Interns will be actively involved in the analysis of one or a series of public policy questions, under the direct supervision of a professional within the sponsor organization. Interns are expected to bring the skills they have learned at MIT to bear on these projects and to be introduced to other analytical tools for completing their work.
- Interns will be exposed as much as possible to the professional analysis of policy in technical areas, and will perform minimal clerical tasks.
- Interns will be expected to have begun acquiring expertise in some technical area, as demonstrated by choice of major (or double major). This is not intended to exclude students who are not majors in the Engineering or Science schools. All participants, however, should expect to pursue an internship where technical issues are central.
- Interns will participate in the seminar on policymaking that will meet before and after the summer internship. The five spring meetings will introduce students to general issues of policymaking at the federal level. The five fall meetings will revolve around readings and speakers in substantive areas of science and technology policy. Credit for the seminar will be given after successful completion of the seminar (including a term paper) and the summer internship.
- Interns will be expected to participate in the spring break trip to Washington, DC. The purpose of that trip will be to allow students to finalize their summer placements and to be introduced to the city and its environs. Travel and expenses will be paid by the program.
- Interns will work full time during the summer, for a minimum of two months. They may work for longer periods, if they so desire. (This will vary by placement.) Interns will also gather periodically with the faculty director for dinner meetings, to discuss how internships are progressing and to hear speakers from the Washington policymaking community.
- The program will work with interns and sponsors to ensure that the internship experience is mutually beneficial. The program staff will work to address any difficulties that may arise in the course of an internship.
- Once the summer is over, interns will write a brief evaluation of their internships. These evaluations will assist the program in making plans for the future, internship sponsors in making their future internships successful, and future program participants in choosing where to pursue placements.