The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

2026 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-eighth annual *Congressional Internship Program* will be held from Friday, August 7 through Friday, December 18, 2026.

This semester-long program begins with a rigorous two-week academic orientation at the Panetta Institute from Friday, August 7, 2026 through Friday, August 21, 2026. 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 two-week academic orientation, on Friday, August 21, 2026, 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 6, 2026. 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 7, 2026, 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 7, 2026 with the submission of both assignments directly to the Panetta Institute for grading by the Institute's professors. The internship ends on Friday, December 18, 2026 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;
- 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:

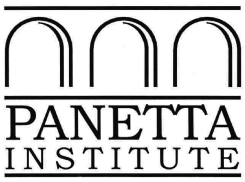
Provide support to congressional office staff that includes, but is not limited to:

- Answer phones
    - Take messages
    - Transfer calls
    - 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



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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
- 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.