Getting a Head Start on Your Career: POL 491: Philadelphia-Area Internship

According to a survey of the SJU Career Development Center (CDC) of 2010 graduates:

**Students who completed at least one internship before graduation earned, on average, $11,000 more than students who did not complete an internship.**

Did you know that you can have an internship while you are studying at SJU and simultaneously earn credit for an upper division Political Science course? POL 491 offers students of different majors this opportunity. The course allows students to intern in the public and private sectors as well as with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Philadelphia area. They work about 10 hours per week (a total of 130 hours), keep a journal, read a book relevant to their internship, and write two papers connecting their internship experience with the scholarly literature.

SJU interns have had a variety of placements, and the Department website lists them (http://www.sju.edu/academics/cas/politicalscience/internships.html). Our students have worked in the law and for the court system (e.g. US District Court, Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office, and some private law firms), in community organizing and outreach (e.g. Campaign for Working Families), for NGOs (e.g. Committee of Seventy, Women’s Campaign International), in politicians’ offices, political campaigns, and political parties (e.g. Office of Senator Casey, Representative Patrick Meehan’s District Office, McCain for President, Obama for President), in public relations, the media, and publishing (e.g. Ceisler Media, *Current History*), and city, state, and federal offices (e.g. Lower Merion Township, US Bureau of State Employment). You can also check out the Facebook group, *Saint Joseph's University: Philadelphia Internship* for more information.

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Life After College part two:  
Check out what these SJU grads did

Michael Davin ’11  
B.A. Political Science

Michael, who recently graduated in May, is currently a graduate student at Villanova University. He is working towards a Master of Arts degree in Political science while interning at Egan-Young Attorneys at Law. As an important part of this firm, he is in charge of paper keeping for the firm’s political action committee, Citizens Against Fraud. Among his other responsibilities, he blogs for and updates the website, organizes case files within the office, and conducts legal research for active cases.

Robert Bernardo ’11  
B.A. Political Science

Robert learned much after interning for Congressman Robert E. Andrews, the Philadelphia District Attorney’s office, and Ackerman-Senterfitt. He graduated in the spring of 2011, and now attends Rutgers University’s School of Law in Camden, NJ.

Frederick Roth ’11  
B.A. Political Science

Frederick Roth, a 2011 Political Science graduate, works in the United States Air Force. He is part of the PALACE Acquire internship (PAQ), a three-year program designed for exceptional graduates who wish to take on a management role in the USAF civil service. According to Roth, his coursework as an undergraduate was invaluable. An understanding of strategy making (from Dr. Joes’ War and Peace class), international relations theories, and American governmental structures and relationships are used in practice on a daily basis. After completing his internship, Roth will enter the USAF civil service at the management level.
Meet the wonderful new Administrative Assistant for the Political Science Dept: Terese Fasy

We sat down with the new Administrative Assistant for the Political Science Department to find out how she’s managing two departments!

**When did you start working at St. Joes?**
In August, 2005, I was hired as a part-time office assistant in the Mathematics & Computer Science Department.

**Name your favorite part of the job.**
I truly enjoy the students and the experiences I’ve had working with both domestic and international students. I keep in touch with many students who have graduated.

**How is it managing two departments?**
I am constantly busy, which makes the day go quickly.

The two departments operate differently, so I am still in the process of learning Political Science procedures. It is interesting because I am meeting new people and acquiring new skills.

The two most challenging aspects are keeping the departments separate and managing the numerous events for both departments, many of which coincide. I am unable to give some tasks my undivided attention, and sometimes this is frustrating.

The Political Science work-study students were extremely helpful at the end of August and the beginning of September, because they are familiar with the department. Also, Marge is an invaluable resource when I have any questions. At one point, I called her so much I think she considered changing her number!

**How do you find interacting with both students and staff?**
I enjoy the collegial rapport I have with the students and faculty in the Computer Science and Mathematics Departments and I look forward to building a similar rapport within the Political Science Department.

**What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**
I enjoy doing many things, but lately I really enjoy spending time with my two-month-old granddaughter! I get to see her often and every time I see her I note the changes in her. I love to watch her facial expressions, especially her smile. It's amazing how fast she is growing!

**What should people know about you?**
One of my favorite quotes is “*You can only be young once, but you can be immature forever.*” I believe you are as young or old as you feel, although, sometimes my mental age lags behind my chronological age. I recently discovered this at my niece's wedding. I was a dancing, happy fool all night and limped for a week. But, it was worth it and I can't wait for my cousin's wedding later this month!

“After six years, it is still a pleasure coming to work every day!”
The end of the semester is such a busy time with preregistration, papers, final projects and presentations, and final exams. In all this busy-ness, you should remember some important advice: a) keep up with your work; b) do a little at a time; and c) talk to faculty. When I was little, my father used to tell me “slow and steady wins the race.” That slogan has helped me throughout my career and it can aid you, too. Remember that from the beginning of the semester, you should be spending 2-3 hours outside of class for every hour in class. If you maintain that time commitment – which is equivalent to that of a full-time job, then the work at the end of the semester won’t take you by surprise. If you haven’t yet given your classes that concentration, start now and see how quickly you can catch up.

Following directly from that first admonition is the advice that you should work on assignments a little at a time. Doing your best job on a paper or in preparing for a test is impossible in one night. You always want to have time to let ideas germinate, to get any help from faculty if you need it, to have outside readers give you feedback to which you can react (for papers), and to work with a study group (for tests). So start early and make progress over the course of several days, at least. Your time all told will likely be less this way, the quality of your product will be better, and you’ll be happier because you will be prepared, you’ll learn more, and you’ll earn a higher grade. This is a win-win approach, right?

Finally, you can always benefit from speaking with your instructor, whether you’re preparing for an exam, writing an essay, wanting to talk about the course, or want advice about careers or other issues. Remember, faculty love their subjects (that’s why they became scholars) and teaching (that’s why they’re at SJU). They are experts on the course material as well as on what they want for an assignment. So, talking to them will enhance your understanding of the course and your overall educational experience. Especially important is to talk to faculty when something has gone or is going wrong. Most people are very understanding of difficulties, particularly if they find out about problems early and you handle your situation maturely.

Again, best of luck with the end of the semester and happy holidays thereafter!

Best,

Dr. B

Congratulations, Dr. Rodio!

The Department sends out its heartfelt congratulations and warmest wishes to Dr. Emily Rodio, lecturer in Political Science since the Spring of 2008. She and her husband Douglas became the proud parents of twins on October 1, 2011. Cameron Drew (boy) weighed in at 5 lbs 10 oz, and Anderson (Andie) Hope (girl) tipped the scale at 5 lbs 6 oz. The family is doing well, and everyone in the Department can’t wait to meet the babies and looks forward to seeing Dr. Rodio back in the classroom soon.
Philadelphia Area Internship (contd. from page 1)

To take this class, students should typically be in their junior or senior years, and while the course is open to all majors, POL and IR majors should have completed their research course (POL 201, POL 231 or IRT 250) before taking this class. In addition, prior to pre-registering for the course, having an idea of the internships that are interesting and available is important. The Department receives requests throughout the year for interns, as does the Career Development Center. So, please read the e-mails we send out about internships, look at our internship list, check the CDC for ideas, and search the web for organizations and positions that you might find interesting that we haven’t had experience with yet. The CDC web-site and office are also good places to go for help in preparing a resume and cover letter. You’ll need these materials to land your position.

As you are working on locating an internship and just after the pre-registration time when you select POL 491, you should be in touch with Dr. Susan Liebell. She is the Department coordinator for internships, and she grades and administers the course. Dr. Liebell takes a hands-on approach to helping students find an excellent internship and making sure that they have a great experience during the semester. She will want to see a draft of your resume and cover letter and will give you feedback on them. Then, she’ll encourage you to send your materials out to multiple interesting offices so that you can find a placement. Students who seek an internship for second semester must be diligent as the first semester ends. They will also be in touch with Dr. Liebell over the semester break to report on their progress in landing a job. Those who want an internship in the fall will be in contact with Dr. Liebell over the summer. Remember: the good internships are snapped up early, and it can very hard to find something just before the semester begins, so give yourself the goal of having your position all set at least 3 weeks before the start of classes.

Most students find that the Philadelphia internship is a remarkable experience. Chris Conway, ’13, said, “During my time in the Philadelphia Area Internship, I spent 15 weeks working with a center city municipal law firm. I learned a great deal about the legal process, office professionalism, and Philadelphia housing law. I would highly recommend as much internship experience as possible to any undergrad student.” POL major Jocelyn Voorhees ’12 also extols POL 491. “My internships at the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia and the Project for Nuclear Awareness have been extremely enlightening experiences. I learned what it's like to work in a professional environment while broadening my knowledge of international and domestic politics. My resume is filled thanks to my internships, and I feel much more confident entering the workforce with experience in interviewing and working with professionals.”

Lauren Stram ’12 explains, “Through my internship I was able to confirm my law school aspirations as well as make invaluable connections. After the course concluded I chose to continue my internship because I enjoyed it so much. I am currently completing my third semester with the Homicide Unit.” Finally, with the perspective of a graduate, Alyssa Ryan, ’11 counsels, “The Philadelphia Internship course is an excellent opportunity to explore potential career fields while still being a full time student, and I encourage all students to strongly consider it. After interning with the Philadelphia Department of Intellectual Disability Services (IDS) during the summer of 2009, I decided to take the course that fall in order to continue my work experience. Having the opportunity to work part-time during the fall semester helped me to not only secure a position for the rest of my undergraduate career, but also provided me with a full-time position after graduation. The internship experience greatly influenced my time at Saint Joe’s and allowed me to get hands-on experience in a field I did not previously consider. Overall, my internship with IDS proved to be an invaluable steppingstone for my working career.”

So, start thinking and planning: when and how can you fit the Philadelphia-Area Internship into your four years at SJU? Many students combine this experience with a semester in Washington or a semester abroad. It’s not hard to do, and the Department will support you in all these efforts. Talk to your advisor about taking POL 491 and contact Dr. Liebell. You’ll be on your way to ensuring a better starting salary for your first post-college job. Good luck and happy interning in the Philadelphia area!
Political Science Happenings!

Be sure to check the SJU Political Science Facebook page for upcoming events and interesting stories about students and faculty members!!

Some of the events of 2011:

October Events continued on the next page…
Constitution Day

On Thursday, October 27, the Department helped the University celebrate Constitution Day. In honor of that great document, Dr. Susan Liebell planned a re-enactment of the May 12-14 1869 meeting of the Equal Rights Association in New York City. At the time, the organization was considering how to react to the 15th Amendment, which for the first time would put the word “sex” in the Constitution and would define voting as an exclusively male right. Prior to this time, men and women of the Association had been united in seeking the abolition of slavery and full citizenship for women and former slaves. In the aftermath of the Civil War, however, the Republican Party, hoping to dominate the South with the votes of black men, proposed the 15th Amendment, as a way of keeping Southern white women disenfranchised (along with their Northern and Western sisters). Many women’s rights activists were appalled and felt betrayed, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton (played by Dr. Liebell). She wondered why white women, many of whom were well educated should have to wait to be full citizens while former slaves and immigrant men were granted the suffrage. Prominent abolitionists, in particular, Frederick Douglas (portrayed by Dennis Feldman, Political Science, 2012) argued that the post-Civil War era was the “Negro’s hour,” the time to give African American men the vote. Perhaps not surprisingly, not all black women agreed with this call, as Sojourner Truth (Margaret Durkin, English and Political Science, 2014), a former slave, explained that slave women had been subjugated both by their masters and by men and had the same needs and ability to protect and exercise their rights at the ballot box. Lucy Stone (Dr. Baglione) argued in favor of suffrage for all – African Americans, immigrants, and white women – based on the principle that government should be founded on the consent of the governed.

To get the audience into the spirit, the Department bought straw hats for the women and fake mustaches for the men. The participants asked audience members to be part of the fun, to ask questions, react to the speeches, and enjoy themselves. In all, the 60+ people present certainly did that, reacting strongly to some of the blatantly (and historically appropriate, though unfortunate) nativist, classist, and sexist comments offered. Gia Montemuro, a junior major, said "I found the whole event to be greatly entertaining-- the actors were enthusiastic and were true to the period. The debate gave everyone a glimpse into the complexities of passing the 15th Amendment. Plus, an unexpected speech from Dr. Lee totally made the day, as did the mustaches and bonnets."

After the presentation, the audience and speakers enjoyed a celebratory lunch funded by the Provost’s Office and Dr. Brice Wachterhauser. The refreshments gave those present the time to discuss what they had witnessed and to enjoy more of their time together. As Dennis Feldman said, "It is always a pleasure to participate in an event that is both uniquely entertaining and informative. The passing of the 15th Amendment yielded unprecedented implications for society, and the theatrical presentation was effective in emphasizing the essential role of women and African Americans (or Black--whichever you prefer). As a student of political science, understanding the context attached to the 15th Amendment is vital to the discipline. Constitution Day's inviting atmosphere affords to the opportunity to understand history while having fun."

If you have ideas for next year’s celebration or would like to be involved in 2012, please contact Dr. Liebell at sliebell@sju.edu.
November 2011

Retrospective on the Fall of the USSR

November was a busy month for the Department. On the tenth, it was the co-sponsor along with History, International Relations, and the English Department of an event commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the USSR’s collapse. Dr. Melissa Chakars of History hosted, and a panel of SJU experts, including Dr. Lisa Baglione of Political Science, Dr. Chakars, and Dr. Mike Lyons, English, gave students insight into this world-changing event. Dr. Baglione provided students with long and short term causes of the collapse, stressing that while the economic system had major flaws that were causing wide-ranging problems the fall in 1991 was not foreordained but resulted from decisions that Soviet leaders made and the poorly conceived reform program. Dr. Chakars examined how people are living today and whether they consider their conditions to have improved. She focused specifically on women from Buratia, a region in Eastern Siberia. Dr. Chakars findings were interesting because this sample of respondents (mostly middle-aged and well educated) were ambivalent about the changes, when we might have expected everyone to view the end of the Soviet Union positively. Many valued the opportunities that the USSR provided for education and cultural development and bemoan the financial restrictions on these activities today. Others have benefitted from more freedom, particularly the political and spiritual openness. Lastly, Dr. Lyons who was a journalist in the Baltics as the USSR was imploding detailed the influence of the media on political change, even back in the ancient internet days of 1991. Today, we are comfortable giving Twitter and Facebook credit for bringing about the collapse of Mubarak’s regime in Egypt, and Dr. Lyons showed that internet pioneers were reporting and broadcasting information about the August 1991 Russian coup which helped get the word out to the West and within the USSR itself. During the Q&A students and staff asked great questions, and the more than forty people in attendance came away with more perspective on this.

Visits from Prominent Alumnae

On November 17, 2011, the Department hosted two events with two amazing alumnae and had great turnouts again – another 40 plus students each time! Dr. Mary Malone, ’95, International Relations and Spanish, now an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of New Hampshire shared her research on Central America in a free period talk, “Does Dirty Harry Have the Answer? Citizen Reactions to Crime and Justice in Central America.” Students, faculty and staff were impressed by Dr. Malone’s understanding of the complexity of problems involved in rebuilding Central American societies after civil war and her knowledge of the details of the politics of this region. Special thanks to the Latin American Studies and International Relations Programs, as well as the Thomas Family Fund for making this event possible. Dr. Malone later spoke to the members of the IR Senior Capstone seminar, sharing her insights about the differences in the challenges that El Salvador and Guatemala have in creating peace after civil war. She also answered questions about and counseled students on post-graduate options.

Our second guest that day who spent the late afternoon with us, Ms. Katie McGinty, graduated a decade earlier. A Chemistry major who took some Politics courses and then chose to go to law school, Ms. McGinty became an aide to President Bill Clinton and then the chief of the PA Department of Environmental Protection. Today, she is the Executive Vice President and Managing Director of Strategic Growth for Weston Solutions. Ms. McGinty visited the class of her former deputy, Mr. Joe Powers. In the course, State and Local Government, Ms. McGinty discussed the complexities of developing the Marcellus shale in PA, noting that some individuals and communities are enthusiastic about the economic opportunities that the extraction of this resource brings, while others are experiencing or worrying about the negative impacts that follow from “fracking” (splitting the rock and getting the useable fuel out). The class and a number of guests enjoyed Ms. McGinty’s common-sense approach to this public policy controversy, as well as her command of the politics and the science. Right after class, Ms. McGinty was the guest of honor at a “Meet-and-Greet” which gave other students a chance to chat with her and get her advice about how to be a success after graduation. Students, faculty, and administrators were so glad to have the opportunity to speak with Ms. McGinty and hear her advice.

December 2011: Don’t miss our annual Holiday Luncheon, 12/8 11:30-1:30!