

Public Policy Scholars Program

Washington, D.C. | Overview & Eligibility

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in applying to the Public Policy Scholars Program (PPSP) in Washington, D.C. This is a new System-wide program offered through Texas A&M University's Public Policy Internship Program, in partnership with the Bush School of Government & Public Service and the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) Office of Academic Affairs.

Should you be accepted into the Scholars Program, you will have the unique experience of combining academics with policy knowledge and professional work experience, all while representing the Texas A&M University System and your home institution in our nation's capital. For the purpose of your application and your potential acceptance into the Public Policy Scholars Program, your home institution is the TAMUS school in which you are currently enrolled as a degree-seeking undergraduate student.

Program Eligibility

Applicants must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for this program. All criteria will be verified with the applicant's home institution.

- Must be a U.S. citizen and at least 18-years-old. Permanent residents are not eligible for this program.
- Must be classified as a degree-seeking undergraduate student at a school within the Texas A&M University System. Students cannot participate in the program post-graduation.
- Must have a cumulative college GPR of at least 3.0. First-semester freshmen are not eligible to apply.
- Must be in good standing with their home institution, pursuant to the home institution's academic & student conduct rules.
- Must obtain and carry valid health insurance for the duration of the internship semester.
- Must be able to attend all program trainings and pre-departure events, which will be administered virtually.

Program Logistics for the Public Policy Scholars Program

The following logistics should be taken into consideration when applying to the Scholars Program. Students must be aware of and agree to the following guidelines:

- This is an academic program consisting of full-time in-person coursework, as well as a part-time internship in Washington, D.C. Students will enroll in 6-12 hours of credit, which will be taught in-person at Texas A&M University's D.C. teaching site. Students will also intern part-time (15-20 hours per week) with a hosting office.
- Before submitting your application, you are highly encouraged to meet with your academic advisor at your home institution to discuss how PPSP could impact your degree plan and graduation.
- If you are selected into the Public Policy Scholars Program, your financial aid will be administered by your home institution. You are highly encouraged to discuss your eligibility for financial aid and scholarships with your home institution prior to applying to PPSP.
- All application information will be verified with your home institution prior to you being offered a PPSP interview.

Program Contact

Should you have any questions while completing the application, you may direct questions to:

Erin Fisk - Program Manager
Policy Internship Programs
Texas A&M University
erinSfisk@tamu.edu | 979-845-3712

Application instructions begin on the next page.

Completed application packets are due by 5pm on Tuesday, September 8.

Application Guidelines

- **Items 1-5 of the application checklist below should be submitted in one (1) email to policyscholars@ag.tamu.edu** by the application deadline. Submission instructions for items 6 & 7 may be found further down in the application instructions.
- This application is your first impression to the selection committee. Make sure it represents you well!
- Complete the application (item 1) electronically and save it as a PDF. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.
- Items 2-4 of the application checklist below must be submitted via PDF file or Microsoft Word document. Google Docs and links will not be accepted for application materials.
- You are **highly encouraged** to meet with your academic advisor at your home institution to discuss how participating in the Public Policy Scholars Program could impact your degree plan **before** submitting your application.
- **Note:** Program staff reserves the right to make initial selections and reject applications based on submitted application materials to determine interview eligibility. You are expected to follow all of the application & formatting instructions that are listed in this document.

Application Checklist

1. Application
2. Cover letter
3. Professional resumé
4. Policy essay
5. Screenshot of current semester's class schedule
6. Minimum of one (1) letter of recommendation (*max of 3*)
7. Official transcript from your home institution (*and/or transfer if applicable*)

Application materials should be submitted via email to policyscholars@ag.tamu.edu. Items 1-5 of the application checklist are to be sent in one (1) email. See the following pages for submission instructions pertaining to letters of recommendation and official transcripts.

You will be contacted once your completed application packet has been received.

Completed application packets are due by 5pm on Tuesday, September 8.

Cover Letter

Submit a one-page cover letter addressed to the "Public Policy Scholars Program Selection Committee" to support your application and introduce yourself. It should explain your interest in this program; your educational, personal, and career goals; what skills/leadership experience you can bring as an intern; and any other relevant information. The cover letter must be submitted via a PDF file or Microsoft Word document. Google Docs and links will not be accepted. The cover letter must be between $\frac{3}{4}$ and 1 page in length, single-spaced, contain font sizes no smaller than 11-point, and be formatted with 0.5-1.0" margins. Be sure to use a correct business letter format. For assistance, visit the Career Center at your home institution for feedback on your cover letter.

Professional Resumé

Submit a professional resumé (1 page max) outlining your job experience, leadership or organizational involvement, awards/honors/special recognition, and other information you feel is relevant. Remember to list any extracurricular involvement at your home institution. Do not include references or high school information. The resumé must be submitted via a PDF file or Microsoft Word document. Google Docs and links will not be accepted. We highly recommend visiting the career center at your home institution for feedback on your resumé.

Policy Issue Essay / Writing Sample

Respond to the following in a **third-person informative essay** that is 800-1000 words. The issue essay must be double-spaced with the font no smaller than 11 point. Margins should be 0.5"-1.0". Include your first and last name at the top of each page. You must include in-text citations and a reference/citations page. The issue essay must be submitted via a PDF file or Microsoft Word document. Google Docs and files will not be accepted. This must be a carefully researched and supported persuasive essay, not a mere "opinion" paper. Research and citations of facts are required, including in-text citations, and must be cited using APA, APSA, or MLA format.

TOPIC:

RESEARCH AND DISCUSS ONE PUBLIC POLICY ISSUE CONCERNING THE UNITED STATES.

The essay component of your application is an essential part of your application. The issue essay will be sent to potential placement sites. Potential supervisors will rely heavily on your essay to assess your writing and communication skills and to determine whether they feel you will be a good match with their office/organization. PPSP encourages you to choose an essay topic that is closely related to the area of public policy in which you are interested. We highly encourage you to enlist the assistance of your professors or others to proofread your application and provide feedback. Do not use artificial intelligence tools including, but not limited to, ChatGPT to write your essay.

WRITE ABOUT WHAT YOU KNOW or WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT. This essay is a key factor in the questions for your interview, so write about something that interests you. DO NOT choose something because it "sounds good." Take time to write a clear, thoughtful essay about your policy interests so that you present yourself in the best possible manner. Your essay will be evaluated on content, style, writing conventions, and general mastery of the English language.

Review your essay! Use the writing support resources at your home institution for feedback and suggestions on your essay. You are expected to maintain academic integrity with your essay; suspected plagiarism will be reported to your home institution.

Professional/Academic Letter(s) of Recommendation

Submit a minimum of one (1) and no more than three (3) letters of recommendation to support your application, addressed to the "Public Policy Scholars Program Selection Committee." Letters of recommendation will only be accepted via the following manners:

- **Email:** The letter must be sent directly by the recommender to policyscholars@ag.tamu.edu. Recommendation letters submitted by the student will not be accepted.

Letters must be signed by the recommender, submitted by the recommender, and contain the recommender's contact information. **All letters must be received by the application deadline.** Letters should be from professors, academic or organizational advisors, employers, or others who can discuss your professional or academic qualifications in-depth. Transfer students can obtain a university faculty/staff letter from their previous institution. Letters from personal/familial references, other students, or friends will not be accepted. Each recommender should be made aware that letters will be shared with potential site supervisors. **Letters will not be accepted from current or former elected officials to ensure the integrity of the selection process.**

Official Transcript

Submit an official transcript directly from the Office of the Registrar for your home institution. Unofficial transcripts, including those sent by the student, will not be accepted. Transcripts must be received by the application deadline and must be sent directly from the Office of the Registrar via one of the following manners:

1. **Email (preferred):** The official transcript may be emailed directly to the Public Policy Scholars Program (policyscholars@ag.tamu.edu).
2. **Postal mail:** The official transcript may be mailed to the address listed below.

Transfer students in their first semester at their home institution must have their official transcripts submitted from their previous institution(s) via either of the manners listed above.

Public Policy Scholars Program
600 John Kimbrough Blvd., Suite 515
2402 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-2402

Class Schedule

Provide a calendar/block view copy of your class schedule for the current semester. This should be submitted as a PDF and emailed to policyscholars@ag.tamu.edu.

Public Policy Scholars Program Application Spring 2027

Biographical Information

Legal First Name:

Middle Name:

Legal Last Name:

Preferred Name:

Student University ID Number:

Date of Birth:

Age:

Home Institution Email:

Primary Phone Number:

Current Address:

Permanent Address:

Academic Information

Home Institution:

Classification

Grade Point Ratio (GPR)

exactly as it appears on transcript

Home Institution Hours:

Transfer Hours:

Cumulative Hours:

Academic Major 1:

Academic Minor:

Academic Major 2:

Expected
Graduation Month:

Expected
Graduation Year:

Language(s):

Program Semester:

Internship Placement Information

List at least four public policy issues of interest and/or departments, agencies, organizations, or offices where you would like to intern. Please list them in priority order. For a list of potential hosting offices, visit our sister program, the Public Policy Internship Program, at <https://ppip.tamu.edu/dc/index.html>.

1.

2.

3.

4.

At the current time, have you applied for and/or been accepted to an internship in Washington, D.C.?

Yes

No

If yes, please specify where you have applied and the status of your application.

Congressional Representative & District Number

This information is based on your permanent home address using the "Find Your Representative" link at <http://www.house.gov>.

U.S. Representative Name:

District Number:

Conduct and/or Criminal History

Please note – many offices in Washington, D.C. require a background check prior to employment. While individual offices may not accept applicants due to conduct or criminal history, the Public Policy Scholars Program will not necessarily exclude your application due to your responses below.

Conduct History: At the discretion of the program, applicants must be in good standing with their home institution, including the student conduct office. The student must not be in violation of the Academic Integrity or Student Conduct Rules.

Have you ever been involved in or found responsible for violating any academic integrity and/or student conduct rules at your home institution or any other institution of higher education that you have attended?

Yes

No

Criminal History: The following questions include felonies, misdemeanors, and ANY alcohol or drug violations (i.e. DWI/DUI, MIP, etc.) received even if they have been expunged from your record. (Exclude minor traffic offenses with fines less than \$300 unless related to drugs or alcohol.)

Have you been charged or been convicted of any criminal offenses, either felony or misdemeanor?

Yes

No

Have you been imprisoned, been on probation, or been on parole?

Yes

No

If you answered yes to any of the above questions within this section, provide the details of your offense(s)/violation(s) in the box below. Include dates and sanctions. If you need more space, submit a separate statement with your application.

Program Agreement & Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Release (FERPA)

Initial: _____ I understand that this application form, plus the supporting documents that I provide, become the property of the Policy Internship Programs at Texas A&M University and that these documents will be sent to potential internship supervisors during the placement process. I will not request the materials to be returned or transferred to other institutions or potential employers.

Initial: _____ I further understand, if selected for the Public Policy Scholars Program, each appropriate internship site will review my materials, conduct interviews if needed, and choose whether or not to offer an actual internship placement. I understand the number of internships offered by each site is dependent on its respective applicant pool, the availability of staff, and the amount of resources during that time, all of which vary from year to year. I understand that the Public Policy Scholars Program, Texas A&M University, and my home institution do not guarantee internship placement.

Initial: _____ The Public Policy Scholars Program is an academic program that requires additional participation beyond this application, including, but not limited to: revision and review of application materials, completion of materials in addition to the original application, attendance at socials and special programs, adherence to the program's code of conduct and the Texas A&M University student rules, my home institution's student rules, completion of intern training and the program coursework, and other requirements as outlined by the program. I understand that failure to comply with program requirements may result in removal from the program and may require repayment of program funding.

Initial: _____ I authorize the Public Policy Scholars Program and its designees to release information and provide an evaluation about any and all information from my educational records at Texas A&M University and my home institution (including information pertaining to my education at other institutions I have previously attended) which is part of my educational record. This also includes the Public Policy Scholars Program application as deemed necessary to provide reference to all prospective employers considering me for internships through the program, as well as the faculty member from whom I will be taking classes in Washington, D.C.

I understand further that:

- I have the right not to consent to the release of my educational records.
- This consent shall remain in effect until revoked by me, in writing, and delivered to the Public Policy Scholars Program staff to whom this release is granted, but that such revocation shall not affect disclosure previously made by the program prior to receipt of any such written revocation.
- All materials submitted for this application are expected to be produced by me as the applicant. I have not had another individual or entity produce any portion of my application materials. This includes using artificial intelligence tools such as, but not limited to, ChatGPT. I understand that if I am suspected of using unauthorized collaborations or artificial intelligence tools for this application, I will be referred to the conduct/academic honor office at my home institution.

I certify that the information on this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Student ID Number:

Date:

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Voluntary Disclosure

We track the number of our applicants by gender, veteran status, etc. for internal purposes. For this reason, we invite you to share this information below. This section is voluntary; you are not required to provide this information. This page is kept separately from your application, is not provided to the interview committee, and is not used for intern selections. Your application for this program will be considered in the same manner whether or not you provide this information. When used, this information is kept anonymous.

Have you previously applied to, but were denied from, the Public Policy Scholars Program at Texas A&M University?

No

Yes

Are you a first-generation college student?

No

Yes

Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?

No

Yes

Do you require any accommodations to fully participate in this program's interview process?

No

Yes - Mobility Accommodations

Yes - Hearing Accommodations

Yes - Visual Accommodations

Biological Sex*:

**The Washington, D.C. program is a residential program; intern housing is provided to our program participants. The Public Policy Scholars Program follows the Texas A&M University Department of Residence Life policy of assigning roommates in shared bedrooms based on biological sex.*

Intentionally Left Blank. End of Application.