



GRADUATE PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP

Policy Manual



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Revised and Released December 2023

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Graduate Public Service Internship for Graduate Students

General Policy Statement

The Graduate Public Service Internship (GPSI) program was established around 1973 as an opportunity for graduate level students to earn applied experiential learning in the public sector. Over the course of the last 50 years, local and state government and nonprofit organizations have been committed in partnership with UIS to serve as internship placements with supervisors acting as mentors. The program has graduated thousands of interns with many success stories of lengthy public service careers following.

The GPSI program is housed in the Center for State Policy and Leadership (CSPL). In general, objectives of the program are:

- Recruit exceptional academic graduate students to graduate study with special interest in applying their area of study to the public sector
- Recruit government and nonprofit placements for internship and mentorship with a supervised assignment
- Provide ongoing professional development opportunities
- Prepare interns for future career in public service
- Build capacity in Illinois government and nonprofit sector and sustain public service workforce development

The GPSI interns will:

- Acquire valuable knowledge of the public service and apply their area of study throughout the completion of their graduate degree
- Be provided with financial assistance (tuition waiver, stipend, and professional development funding) to assist graduate students and ensure successful completion of their graduate program
- Gain work-related skills necessary for the real-world experience following graduation
- Build graduate student resumes with a two-year (over 530 hours) completion of an on-the-job experiential internship in public service

Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for a GPSI internship, a student must:

- Have an earned baccalaureate degree by August 16
- Be admitted to UIS as a graduate student and enrolled in a graduate degree program
- Have at least one year remaining (two semesters of core classes) in graduate program
- Have had a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.5 and maintain a graduate GPA of 3.0
- Be online or on-ground student
- Possess an F-1 visa or other appropriate work authorization if an international student
- Demonstrate a strong academic and work experience background

Application Process

Applications shall be submitted no later than March 31 for Fall placement and October 1 for Spring placement. A completed application involves:

- Full or conditional admittance to a UIS graduate program following graduate application to UIS
- GPSI application
- Current resume
- Three letters of reference dated in the last 18 months

Types of GPSI Placements

Placements are in the following types of agencies:

- Municipal government
- Local (county) government
- State government
- Federal government
- Nonprofit agencies
- UIS
- Other public entity

Interview and Selection Process

1. Intern requests: Government and nonprofit agencies interested in a GPSI shall submit the intern request form. This form requests the following information: internship description (tasks, responsibilities, expectations), learning objectives, experience level (degree, skills, etc.), and the location/modality of the internship (in-person, remote, hybrid). The form is distributed to contacts prior to each application deadline.
2. Application materials and interview requests: after applicants are reviewed and considered eligible, their applications will be organized and shared with placement in accordance with the intern request form. Agencies will then submit interview requests via the interview request form. GPSI program communicates interview requests to applicants, and applicants have the ability to accept or decline the interviews.
3. Interviews: GPSI program communicates all accepted interviews to agencies, along with applicant contact information. Agencies contact candidates and conduct all interviews during the designated interview week. Following interviews, agencies submit a ranking of the candidates.
4. Matching: GPSI program collects all the ranks from agencies. Offers are sent to candidates in rank order. Candidates may accept or decline offers. If the number one ranked candidate declines, the internship placement will be offered to the number two ranked candidate. The process continues until all placements are filled.
5. Contracts: Once a match is final, a contract is generated with the agency for all interns being placed during the respective round. The contract will be a multi-year agreement for the duration of the placement (the duration to complete the graduate program).

University of Illinois Nondiscriminatory Statement

The commitment of the University of Illinois to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity requires that decisions involving students and employees be based on individual merit and be free from invidious discrimination in all its forms.

The University of Illinois will not engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection status, genetic information, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran and will comply with all federal and state nondiscriminations, equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, orders and regulations. This nondiscrimination policy applies to admissions, employment, access to and treatment in the University programs and activities.

University complaint and grievance procedures provide employees and students with the means for the resolution of complaints that allege a violation of this Statement. For assistance, please contact the Associate Vice Chancellor for Access and Equal Opportunity (Title IX, ADA, and 504 Coordinator), HRB 52, One University Plaza, MS HRB 52, Springfield, IL 62703-5407, 217-206-6222, titleix@uis.edu.

Terms and Conditions of Internship

Notice of Appointment

Each newly appointed GPSI will receive an offer letter specifying the placement title and benefits (tuition, credit hours, stipend, professional development, fees) requiring intern signature to accept the internship per the terms of the policy manual.

Agency Contract

A contract will be executed between UIS and the agency. The contract provides for the terms and conditions of the GPSI internship.

Verification of Employment

Newly hired GPSI interns must complete an I-9 form before their first day of employment, or by August 16. An intern's appointment cannot be processed until the form has been completed. GPSI interns must report to the GPSI office to complete the I-9 form.

International students must have an F-1 visa to fulfil their internship appointment. Once international students arrive, they shall retrieve a letter verifying their internship at the Office of International Student Services to take to the local Social Security Administration (SSA) for their Social Security Number (SSN).

Orientation and Annual Mandatory Ethics Training

At the start of each academic year with new incoming GPSI interns, the GPSI program will conduct a mandatory supervisor orientation and mandatory GPSI intern orientation. The orientations are also open to current supervisors and interns. The sessions will be recorded.

UIS requires all employees to complete the annual ethics training. As a GPSI, you are considered a UIS employee and must comply with the ethics training mandate per the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act. According to the University's Ethics Officer, failure to complete annual ethics training will result in the statutorily required reporting of your name to the Executive Inspector General. The penalties of noncompliance will be determined by the Illinois Executive Ethics Commission, based on authority granted within the law in addition to any internal disciplinary action imposed by the University. The Executive Ethics Commission has the authority to impose a fine of up to \$5,000 for noncompliance with the Act, which includes failure to complete the ethics training. The annual ethics training is typically completed in the fall and will be appropriately communicated and tracked via the GPSI program.

GPSI Seminar

The GPSI Seminar is currently under review and is not required for enrollment.

Work Schedule, Job Duties and Professional Workplace Behavior

An intern is responsible for connecting with the assigned supervisor to determine the work schedule prior to the start of the internship. A minimum of 20 work hours per week is required from August 16 – May 15, and full-time hours are required from May 16 - August 15 (full-time will be defined as FTE at placement). Additionally, the intern shall retrieve the placement job description and understand the job duties, along with general understanding of the workplace expectations.

Interns are encouraged to:

- Email supervisor to schedule an initial meeting.
- Ask supervisor for clarification and guidance about specific assignments, projects, task deadlines, scheduled breaks, office routines, and daily duties. Duties need to be based on the internship experience form developed by the agency for the assigned internship.
- Ask specific questions. GPSI supervisors prefer that interns ask for clarification and guidance if tasks and responsibilities are not clear.
- Maintain an open line of communication with the supervisor.
- Discuss professionalism and expectations of worksite, like:
 - Professional attire
 - Punctuality
 - Internet and agency telephone usage
 - Respect for co-workers and office problems
 - Academic work at internship
 - Work breaks

Satisfactory Academic Performance and Course Load

A minimum of a 3.0 GPA shall be maintained to continue with the GPSI program. Cumulative grades below a 3.00 will result in the student being placed on academic probation.

If the intern's UIS cumulative GPA is less than 3.0, UIS will place the intern on academic probation. If a graduate student on probation earns a term GPA of at least 3.0 (even if their cumulative GPA is below 3.0), they will remain on probation until their cumulative GPA rises above a 3.0. If, however, a graduate student on probation earns a term GPA below a 3.0 in the subsequent semester, they will be placed on academic suspension. Interns who fail to raise their cumulative GPA to a 3.0 or above in the next semester risk losing their GPSI internship.

The minimum course load for a GPSI internship is eight (8) credit hours in the fall and spring semesters. The only exception is the last semester prior to graduation. During any semester, except for their final semester, if the GPSI is unable to enroll in at least eight (8) hours due to a scheduling issue with their graduate degree program, the intern may apply for a waiver of the minimum course load. To do so, the "Waiver of the GPSI Internship Minimum Course Load Policy" form (see Appendix A: Links to Forms).

GPSIs are NOT allowed to drop a class during a semester that reduces their total hours enrolled to less than eight (8) hours or to drop any classes in their final semester. Interns that drop below eight (8) semester hours (or drop any class in their final semester) will be required to submit a waiver to the GPSI office with an explanation for the course withdrawal. Failure to submit the waiver to the GPSI office will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from the internship.

Furthermore, should a GPSI withdraw from a course for any reason, after Week 5 of the semester, which reduces their total hours enrolled to less than eight (8) hours, the withdrawal will result in a reduction to the tuition waiver equal to the number of credit hours associated with the dropped course(s).

If, at any time, your academic course load is less than six (6) semester hours for the fall or spring terms or three (3) credit hours for the summer term, both FICA (Medicare) and Old Age Survivor Disability Insurance (OASDI–Social Security) taxes will be deducted from your paycheck at the rate of 1.45% of gross pay for FICA and 6.2% of gross pay for OASDI. Foreign national students who are nonresident aliens (NRA) in F1 status are exempt from this withholding during the summer semester. If you have questions, please contact the UIS Payroll Office (217) 206-7211.

Satisfactory Placement Performance

GPSI interns will be evaluated twice per year – once at the mid-year point in December and annually in July. While constant mentorship and feedback is encouraged, this gives the GPSI supervisor an opportunity to discuss strengths and areas of improvement, along with progress on objectives, with an intern. Should an intern not be performing at the level warranted of the placement, the supervisor may place the intern on a corrective action plan. The supervisor shall consult with the GPSI team.

Resignation

If a GPSI intern needs to resign, the intern shall work with his/her supervisor to communicate the decision and agree on a last day. There should be a minimum of a two-week notification, unless special circumstances exist. A letter shall be drafted and signed by the intern and supervisor.

Termination

Should an agency and supervisor need to terminate an intern, the agency and supervisor needs to:

- Email the assigned GPSI team member.
- Discuss the situation and ensure termination is the only option.
- Follow-up to inform intern.
- Take necessary actions determined by agency, like collect laptop, retrieve badge, remove access to systems, etc.

The GPSI program will then remove the intern from its payroll system and start a reimbursement process to the agency.

Renewal

GPSI interns are covered under a contract executed between their assigned agency and UIS. The term of the contract is for the duration of their graduate program. Should an intern need an extension, the GPSI program will work with the agency to extend, pending the circumstances are supported and approved.

Other Employment

GPSI interns understand that their first priority is their studies and their internship.

International students may not work over 20 hours during the fall and spring semesters. They may work over full-time hours in the summer semester.

Domestic students may work over 20 hours during the fall and spring semesters, along with the summer semester.

Benefits

Stipend

During the fall and spring semesters (August 16 through May 15), hours worked equal 20 per week with a monthly stipend of \$1,200.00. During the summer semester (May 15 through August 15), full-time hours are worked, which may be 37.5 or 40 hours depending on placement. The stipend during the full-time hour's timeframe is \$2,400.00. Pay day is on the 16th of each month.

New incoming interns will receive their first check on September 16th, provided all new hire paperwork has been completed.

If the 16th of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, the stipend is deposited on the Friday before the weekend or holiday.

Banked Hours

GPSI interns may bank hours. Banked hours are hours worked above the weekly minimum expected working hours (20 or 37.5/40) and shall only be earned with supervisor approval. Earned banked hours can be used towards future scheduled work as leave time. Limitations do exist:

- International students with an F-1 visa cannot bank hours during the fall and spring semesters except for during breaks (winter break and spring break). Domestic students may bank hours at any time. All students may bank up to 2.5 hours each week during summer as well.
- GPSI Interns cannot bank hours in excess of 75 hours at any given time.
- Banked hours are non-compensatory.

Timekeeping

GPSI interns are required to report their time on a quarterly basis. There are a few guidelines to follow:

1. In order to stay in compliance with Fair Labor Safety Act, all interns will be required to submit a quarterly report of all hours worked, including personal and sick leave used, and banked hours earned or used.
2. Tracking of all hours, including leave balances and banked hours will be the full responsibility of the intern and the supervisor. The GPSI office will not track leave balances for interns or supervisors.
3. To help with this tracking, a Timekeeping Tracker excel sheet shall be used and will serve the dual purpose of reporting hours each quarter and tracking leave balances.
4. Submission will occur at the end of the quarter via a link from Smartsheet after signed and approved by your supervisor.

Professional Development

GPSI interns are allotted \$300 (\$600 for DPA Fellowship) for professional development each year of their internship in accordance with their contract. Professional development funds may be used in a variety of ways that broadens the intern's professional growth and aligns with their academic major and placement. Examples of professional development are:

- Conference registration fees and accommodations (travel, hotel, per diem)
- Membership to professional organizations
- Subscription fees for professional journals, newsletters, publications,
- Professional certification examinations
- Books (not course-related textbooks)
- Software applications

Request for reimbursement must be submitted no later than June 15 of each year.

Leave

GPSI interns are eligible for parental leave, jury duty, military leave, bereavement leave, and holidays along with their personal and sick leave. Beyond what is outlined in this policy manual, more information may be retrieved from the System Human Resources (HR) Services website found at <https://www.hr.uillinois.edu/cms/One.aspx?portalId=4292&pageId=5618>.

It is imperative that an intern communicates with a supervisor in advance of being absent from the workplace for use of sick or personal time and any other circumstance whereby an intern cannot report to work per the agreed schedule. An intern must have the benefit time or banked hours to cover the absence.

Sick and Personal Leave

An intern is entitled to five (5) hours of sick leave and five (5) hours of personal leave per contract month. This is non-compensatory time. The hours are granted up front for the duration of the contract year.

If you use sick hours for three (3) consecutive days, a doctor's note may be required. This request would be at the discretion of the placement supervisor. Extended leaves need to be discussed with the supervisor and approved.

Parental Leave

Eligible interns are entitled to receive up to six (6) weeks of paid parental leave immediately following the birth of a child, or upon the initial placement or the legal adoption of a child under 18 years of age. Parental leave will be counted as part of the twelve-week entitlement accorded by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for FMLA-eligible individuals and may be used in conjunction with other paid or unpaid leaves for which the individual is eligible.

Jury Duty

Interns are eligible for approved leave with pay for the duration of jury duty and may retain funds paid to them in compensation for such duty. Jury Duty leave is arranged between the intern and the GPSI supervisor. Interns do not have to use banked hours or make up hours missed for jury duty.

Military Leave

A leave of absence shall be granted to an eligible intern who is active member of any reserve component of the United States Armed Forces or Illinois State Militia in accordance with State and Federal Law. More information may be retrieved from the System Human Resources (HR) Services website found at .

Bereavement Leave

Interns are eligible for up to five (5) days of paid leave for a bereavement situation involving immediate family members and one (1) day of paid leave for a relative other than an immediate family member. More information may be retrieved from the System Human Resources (HR) Services website found at

Coverage Responsibility

If a GPSI intern must be absent from work, it is the intern's responsibility to request the time off and communicate appropriately with the placement supervisor. The intern shall request personal time off ahead of time and secure the absence. Work task responsibilities and deadlines shall be completed and covered when absent.

Holidays

GPSI interns shall follow the holiday schedule and days in accordance with their placement agency. If the placement agency observes a holiday, then the intern is granted the holiday as a day off. Interns whose normal work schedule coincides with a state holiday are not required to report to work nor are they required to make up the hours – it is viewed as a holiday. Please note, however, if you are scheduled to work less than 7.5 hours on the state holiday you can only count the hours scheduled to work towards your weekly total. For example, if Monday is a state holiday and you normally work 4 hours on Mondays then you only count 4 hours towards your weekly requirement – not 7.5 for the full day if you were not scheduled to work the full day.

A winter break will be granted annually between December 25 and January 1 per contract.

Course Load and Tuition Waivers

The minimum required course load is eight (8) semester hours during each fall and spring semesters. The only exception is during the intern's final semester. Interns are not allowed to drop a course during the semester to reduce their semester hours. If an intern withdraws from a course after week 5, reduction in tuition waiver will be applied.

During any semester, except for an intern's final semester, if an intern is unable to meet the minimum semester hour requirement or needs to drop a course, an intern may complete and submit a request for waiver of the minimum course load requirement.

In-state GPSI interns are eligible to receive a tuition waiver for up to 24 semester hours (prorated based on the length of the current contract term). The tuition waiver is for the current graduate tuition rate per hour. Out-of-state and international GPSI interns are responsible for the difference in tuition between the in-state rate and out-of-state rate. The GPSI waiver does not cover any differential tuition rates. If you are enrolled in an online-only program, your tuition will be covered at the online base rate if you give the GPSI office timely notice. If, at any time, you switch from an on-ground to an online only program, inform the GPSI office immediately. It may or not be feasible to adjust your contract hour coverage depending on the date of notification. GPSIs are not required to register for classes in the summer term; however, domestic students who take fewer than three hours during the summer term will be required to pay FICA and Old Age Survivor Disability Insurance (OASDI–Social Security) taxes. This policy does not apply to most international students. (International students should check with the UIS payroll office regarding FICA and OASDI taxes.)

- GPSIs must be enrolled as full-time graduate students, taking a minimum of eight (8) semester hours in the fall and spring terms. In rare cases, enrollment exceptions will be granted on an individual basis, as described in the earlier section on Minimum Course Load.
- If your placement begins after the 30th calendar day of the semester, your tuition waiver will be pro-rated based on the start date.
- The tuition waiver is restricted to courses taken at the University of Illinois Springfield.
- The tuition waiver **cannot** be used for classes taken on an audit basis, unless the audited class is required for the completion of the master's closure requirement.
- The tuition waiver cannot be used for classes taken for personal enrichment or for classes taken at the 100 and 200 levels. The tuition waiver is restricted to 300 (prerequisites only), 400 and 500 level courses. If a student's Notice of Graduate Admission indicates a prerequisite course at the 100 or 200 level, GPSI will verify with the program.
- If, for any reason, you drop a course(s) for which tuition has been waived you will be held responsible for the tuition charges based on the drop date.

- If you are terminated or resign, you will be held responsible for the tuition charges from the termination/resignation date to the end of the academic term. If you moved tuition waiver hours from a future semester and are terminated or resign, you will be responsible for reimbursing those tuition charges. If your permanent residence is located outside of Illinois, the pro-rated tuition charges will be assessed at the out-of- state rate.
- Tuition charges for enrollment exceeding your GPSI waiver are your responsibility. For non-residents, the tuition for the additional hours will be charged at the resident rate based on the availability of the Provost's waiver policy for interns.
- A list of GPSIs is submitted to the Office of Financial Assistance prior to the start of the term authorizing the award of the GPSI tuition waiver. The tuition waiver total will be credited to your UIS student account after the 10th day of the semester.
- Intern contracts include a \$650 fee waiver in the fall and spring terms that is automatically applied towards mandatory student fees. There is no student fee waiver for the summer term.
- The tuition waiver does not cover late fees or textbooks.

Taxability of Stipends, Tuition and Fee Waivers

GPSI stipends are subject to federal and state taxes. Current law exempts GPSI interns from having to pay taxes on tuition and service fee waivers associated with the internship.

Effective January 1, 2023, UIS adopted an Educational Assistant Plan, complying with Internal Revenue Code 127, which excludes from taxable income \$5,250 per calendar year in tuition and service fee waivers associated with GPSI.

GPSI interns receive waivers associated with GPSI placements will receive information from the UIS Payroll Office to assist in determining what portion of the waiver should be considered taxable income and whether or not it will be necessary to withhold additional taxes from these assistants' paychecks. Please contact the UIS Payroll Office at paying@uillinois.edu with any questions.

Workers' Compensation

The University of Illinois operates as a self-insured employer for workers' compensation claims. The program is administered by The Office of Workers' Compensation and Claims Management located at 100 Trade Centre Drive, Suite 103, Champaign, Illinois 61820 (217) 333-1080. It is the University's policy to pay benefits in accordance with the Workers' Compensation Act.

As a GPSI you are a university employee. In the event of an injury or illness arising out of and in the course and scope of employment duties, while engaged in work at the placement agency, you may be eligible for Workers' 9 Compensation benefits. It is your responsibility to first report the injury to your GPSI supervisor – then to contact the Office of Graduate Intern Programs – even though you may consider the injury insignificant. The form required to report an employee injury is the First Report of Injury/Illness form to be completed within 24 hours of incident by employee. The form is available from the UIS Office of Human Resources website at <http://www.uis.edu/humanresources/benefits/workerscomp/>.

Performance Evaluation

Mid-year and End-of-Year Evaluation

Evaluations will be completed electronically between intern and supervisor with an automated copy to the Office of Graduate Intern Programs. Mid-year evaluations will be conducted in December and end-of-year will be completed in July. If an intern graduates in May, an end-of-year is not required.

Best practice is for a supervisor to conduct an objective-setting meeting with the intern at the start of the intern's placement. Utilizing the job description, explicit objectives shall be crafted and delivered. The mid-year evaluation will measure progress on the objectives. Both the mid-year and end-of year evaluations will give opportunity to update objectives and/or provide others for the next evaluation time period.

Consult and Coaching

Supervisors and interns are strongly encouraged to work together and problem-solve through issues identified. Supervisors act not only as supervisors but also as mentors and coaches. Supervisors are expected to work with interns to resolve any problems. Interns are also expected to meet with Supervisors to resolve matters. Informal conferences lead to improved working relationships and ultimately excellent experiential learning. If the issue cannot be resolved, the CSPL Office of Graduate Intern Programs may act as an intermediary to assist. Sometimes problems may result in ending the internship.

Appendix A: Other Information and Resources

UIS Student Handbook <https://www.uis.edu/student-affairs/student-handbook>

Appendix B: Links to Forms

Professional Development Reimbursement Request Form
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e4063a6b0d234ceaae347b37cd8f7482>

Appendix C: Example Forms

Sample Resignation Letter

<DATE SUBMITTING>

Dear GPSI Program,

I am resigning my GPSI internship at the Illinois Department of Public Health effective close of business on INSERT DATE.

(If you wish to include additional information about your internship placement and/or supervisor, you should add a paragraph here).

Sincerely,

Alice Jones

Alice Jones (NOTE: Must be signed by GPSI intern)

Robert Smith

Robert Smith, Supervisor (NOTE: Must be signed by GPSI supervisor)