



2013

Public Post-Secondary Experiential Internship: A qualitative evaluation of Wildcat Interest Group's Student Internship Program at the University of Kentucky, and its benchmark competitors

Nolan Jackson

University of Kentucky, nolanmjackson@gmail.com

Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://uknowledge.uky.edu/honprog>

 Part of the [Other Education Commons](#), and the [Other Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Jackson, Nolan, "Public Post-Secondary Experiential Internship: A qualitative evaluation of Wildcat Interest Group's Student Internship Program at the University of Kentucky, and its benchmark competitors" (2013). *Lewis Honors College Capstone Collection*. 6. <https://uknowledge.uky.edu/honprog/6>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Lewis Honors College at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lewis Honors College Capstone Collection by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

Public Post-Secondary Experiential Internship:
A qualitative evaluation of Wildcat Interest Group's Student Internship Program at
the University of Kentucky, and its benchmark competitors

Under the advisement of Dr. William Swinford, Ph.D.

To fulfill the requirements of The Honors Program at the University of Kentucky

Nolan M. Jackson

December 3, 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Preface	4
II. Implementing “Wildcats in Washington”	9
III. Identifying Student-Sponsored Experiential Internship Programs	20
IV. Evaluating the Uniqueness of “Wildcats in Washington”	26
V. Projecting Expansion of the Student Internship Program	32
VI. Afterward	33
VII. Appendices	35

Public Post-Secondary Experiential Internship:

A qualitative evaluation of Wildcat Interest Group’s Student Internship Program at the University of Kentucky, and its benchmark competitors

By Nolan M. Jackson
Honors Program of the University of Kentucky
Copyright © December 2012

Overview

This thesis will identify the early motivation for a program conceived by the Student Government Association at the University of Kentucky to penetrate civic apathy and enhance the politically engaged. This qualitative assessment of “Wildcats in Washington” of the Student Internship Program will detail the conception and implementation of the student-facilitated, student-sponsored experiential internship program reserved for the students of the University of Kentucky.

Additionally, this thesis will measure the uniqueness of the University Student Government’s governmental relations and internship initiative against similar efforts at institutions’ in three measurable populations.

Finally, this thesis will briefly address “Wildcats in Washington’s” current status, as of publication, and future expansion.

In addition to satisfying the requirements of the Honors Program at the University of Kentucky, this thesis will serve as a transitional document for successive Directors of Wildcat Interest Group of the University’s Student Government.

I. Preface

The Advantages of Internship

Many have documented the benefits of experiential internship education; their studies clearly corroborate the academic enhancement workplace education provides. Robert Carini *et al* measure a positive relationship between active learning and grade point average, concluding that institutions that perform best in engagement-to-learning provide and emphasize “enriching experiential education” (Carini, Kuh, Klein, 2006)¹. Additionally, whether part or full-time internship, cooperative study, or service learning, post-secondary outreach offices recognize experiential education’s correlation to applicant competitiveness and job placement [Liam McAllister, *Worcester Business Journal*]². Finally, Janet Eyler of Vanderbilt University notes, “far beyond building the kind of social skills, work ethic, and practical expertise that are important in professionally oriented programs...experiential education can also lead to...a deeper understanding of [academic] subject matter; the capacity of thinking and application of knowledge in complex or ambiguous situations; [and] the ability to engage in lifelong learning” (Eyler, 2009)³. She explains, “Since the 1980s, there has been renewed interest in the civic role of colleges and universities and a call for increased civic literacy for students” (2009) and suggests a structured experiential program can fill the civic void.

Experiential education identifies skills necessary to navigate the intricacies within a workplace and accomplish that profession’s expected assignments. It undoubtedly

¹ Robert M. Carini *et al.*, “Student Engagement and Student Learning: Testing the Linkages,” *Research in Higher Education*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Feb., 2006), pp. 1-32

² Liam McAllister, “Internships Become Part of the College Experience,” *Worcester Business Journal*, (Aug. 20, 2012). <http://www.wbjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20120820/PRINTEDITION/308169982/0/FROTPAGE>

³ “The Power of Experiential Education,” Janet Eyler. http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/le-fa09/documents/LEFall09_Eyler.pdf

develops communicative prowess and introduces daily regimen. But experiential education also grows certain strategies necessary for civic engagement, chiefly analytical application of theory to real-world experiences.

Questions

If post-secondary institutions have taken interest in improving civic literacy, as Eyler concludes, and experiential education demonstrates civic enrichment, then how can institutions more actively sponsor experiential education? What might that sponsorship look like? Additionally, why should colleges and universities invest in the civic engagement of their students, and who owns the obligation to invest?

Because it is charged with advocacy and student awareness, in 2011, the Student Government Association (SGA) at the University of Kentucky – the official representative of 29,000 affiliated students – introduced a Student Internship Program “Wildcats in Washington” to combat political non-participation and promote citizenship. This thesis will address the questions above by 1) detailing the original “Wildcats in Washington” proposal; 2) measuring if there exist student-sponsored experiential internship programs at other post-secondary institutions in three unique populations; 3) comparing those programs, if applicable, to Kentucky’s “Wildcats in Washington”; and 4) offering the projected growth and future goals of “Wildcats in Washington.”

Inspiration

One’s undergraduate tenure clearly transforms. Major study grows expertise and projects profession, and student organizations and social engagement encourage experience. From the total undergraduate experience, one develops interests and ideals, and stitches a more relevant moral fiber. For most, activism increases – personal,

philanthropic, and political. Given the intimacy and fragility of development, it becomes the duty of an institution to provide responsible platforms for growth.

Micah Fielden, 2011 University of Kentucky Student Government President embraced that duty, recognizing an absent civic engagement medium. “I observed...a reactive relationship” (Fielden, 2012), Fielden writes, alluding to the University of Kentucky Student Government Association’s tendency to address issues and student concerns when prompted post-decision. Prior to 2011, Student Government maintained an insignificant, “little more than de facto” (Fielden, 2012) governmental relations effort. As an elected institution, Student Government theoretically addressed governmental matters, but Fielden contends its actual external governmental and bureaucratic involvement came only “when student voices were requested.” “Never did we consider proactively working with government to talk about student issues” (Fielden, 2012).

Student-focused issues grew, requiring consideration of more proactive governmental engagement. The Lexington-Fayette County Urban Government amended its campus-area residential policy, limiting the number of non-sibling students in rental houses in the neighborhoods near the University. Additionally, the Kentucky state legislature cut public university appropriations, indirectly raising tuition and fees for students. Students loudly voiced opposition, petitioned neighborhood associations, penned letters to the *Lexington Herald-Leader* and *Kentucky Kernel* editors, and prompted their Student Government.

“[The Student Government Vice President Nikki Hurt] and I looked back to the Constitution and the definition of Student Government...and determined that a basic tenant and founding principle of SGA is representation” (Fielden, 2012). “It became

pretty clear that we had to form a body that would allow students to channel their frustrations or motivation in a useful way” (Fielden, 2012).

Inspired by the Bulldog Interest Group (BIG) at Mississippi State University, a student-populated lobbying organization, and experiences as an America Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) student lobbyist, Fielden proposed Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) to address the legislative and civic needs of the students of the University of Kentucky. Fielden and Hurt shared a commitment to invest in and enhance governmental relations – why [Wildcat Interest Group] became “one of our primary programs” for 2011 (Fielden, 2012). Of course Student Government intended Wildcat Interest Group to lobby legislators and promote overall awareness and engagement, but Fielden and his executive team also envisioned it as a tool to translate awareness to participation.

Early re-development

Annually the Student Government administration-elect visits Washington, D.C., to establish professional relationships with and detail its governing agenda to federal legislators. Fielden and Matt Doane, appointed to serve as the first Wildcat Interest Group Director, used the excursion to announce Student Government’s newly conceived lobbying division to legislators. Fielden and Doane remember the initiative was well received, but talk of University of Kentucky student engagement led to conversation in one congressional office that questioned the participation of University of Kentucky students. “[A] staffer asked why few University of Kentucky students intern on Capitol Hill” (Fielden, 2012). Perhaps congressional offices neglected internship outreach efforts to University students, believing the size of the state’s flagship institution would automatically produce applicants. Perhaps the University poorly advertised congressional

internship opportunities to students. Perhaps years of so few interns from the University, most of whom had graduated and left Lexington, limited word-of-mouth publicity to current students. “We didn’t really have an answer,” Fielden explains (Fielden, 2012).

The staffer praised the performance of University students who had interned during her tenure and suggested the state’s largest school should annually send the largest intern delegation to Capitol Hill. Fielden and Doane accepted the charge, recognizing an opportunity to use an infant Student Government program with a loosely defined mission to increase University of Kentucky student presence in Washington, D.C. Fielden was not aware of any institution’s Student Government providing internships to students or efforts to assist securing the positions. He knew, though, increasing student participation in government would surely promote awareness and engagement, develop professional skills, and allow students enriching opportunities to live and work in the nation’s capital.

Simply promoting those opportunities to students could have accomplished Fielden’s goal. Instead, he and Doane tasked Wildcat Interest Group, a first-year initiative for governmental relations, with not only lobbying elected officials but also providing and subsidizing experiential internships in Kentucky’ congressional offices in Washington, D.C., for summer 2012.

II. Implementing “Wildcats in Washington”

In May of 2011, Micah Fielden, Nikki Hurt, and Matt Doane asked me to serve as Wildcat Interest Group Associate Director. Their reasoning: as 1) a rising-junior, I would enjoy a year to apprentice under the Director and the next year to manage and oversee Wildcat Interest Group; 2) the son of a state legislator and political operative, I had advantageous relationships with those whom Student Government intended to lobby, and name recognition that could penetrate lines of communication within legislative offices to schedule meetings with congressmen to propose a student internship program.

Initially, I accepted the position expecting to develop governmental relations for students. Politically active and inspired, I echoed the Fielden administration’s platform to engage young people and lobby for them. I did not, though, make the administration’s summer trip to Washington, D.C., thus did not learn of an intended student internship program until Fielden and Doane outlined their vision at the executive branch retreat in Baghdad, Kentucky, in August of 2011. To reflect our institution’s mascot and area of internship, they aptly named the effort “Wildcats in Washington.”

Had I known the administration’s goal when I accepted the offer, I would have tempered expectations. Then, I believed the innovation and potential promise of Wildcat Interest Group-provided internships excited Fielden and Doane to a point that they disregarded possible failure, that their attraction to “what if” shadowed consideration of “what if we cannot.” Soliciting a congressional internship for University students implies the position is held solely for that institution’s students, neglecting an entire congressional district or state’s applicants. Congressional office space and assignments limit the total number of summer interns. Additionally, as Wildcat Interest Group had no

private fundraising engine, Student Government's general funds would be used to subsidize the internship's stipend, as Fielden desired. Subsidization required using student fees from all students to support a program for which not all students would be eligible – a political and philosophical dilemma. When packaged together, the hurdles proved daunting for an ambitious, infant initiative.

The retreat required each officer outline his goals for the academic year, what efforts those goals required, and potential obstacles. During those plenary sessions, I voiced some of my concerns about the initiative's feasibility, but I too found myself attracted to the first-of-its-kind (as I was aware) effort. I recognized that infancy allowed Doane and me to develop the program we wanted, as long as it represented an effort to place students in Kentucky's congressional offices. We hoped for a scheme that would entice congressional offices but required their minimal effort and obligation, so as to secure their endorsements.

Proposal Development

I interned in a Kentucky Congressional District office the semester before my hiring and understood the intricacies of congressional internship application – requirements, deadlines, notification. Using that experience, Matt Doane and I drafted a timeline to announce and implement whatever “Wildcats in Washington” we could build. The “Wildcats in Washington” timeline, though, became increasingly obtrusive. *Conceived in May, detailed in August, and planned for the following June* would typically grant almost one year's planning, implementation, and promotion. When organizing a federal internship program, however, one must accommodate contractual negotiations during legislative sessions that busy congressional staffers, and application

deadlines that allow for interview, selection, and notification. Additionally, those selected for internship must enjoy time to secure transportation to Washington, D.C., and summer housing.

In the three months following that retreat, Matt Doane and I outlined a formal “Wildcats in Washington” proposal. It represented Student Government’s efforts to secure internship positions in the offices of Kentucky’s congressmen for summer 2012, reserved specifically for University of Kentucky students returning to the University in Fall 2012. Integral, though, to a program that provided congressional internships was affordability. As the majority of congressional offices do not provide living stipends for their interns, Student Government recognized it could only grow the University’s student presence in Washington if students could afford to participate.

At the University of Kentucky, student fees generate nearly \$500,000 in Student Government funds. For 2011, President Micah Fielden appropriated \$20,00 of those dollars to his governmental relations initiative Wildcat Interest Group and the student internships it desired. Matt Doane and I directed \$9,000 for \$1,5000 stipends to award the six individuals selected to represent the University of Kentucky as “Wildcats in Washington” interns. In addition to experience affordability, we projected a stipend award for selection would attract candidates and ease the promotional burden we faced.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky elects eight congressmen to federal office, but Wildcat Interest Group only budgeted for six student internship stipends. I cannot quite discern “six partner offices.” We had no data to suggest six offices would participate in or even endorse the program. Perhaps I analyzed my relationships with the congressional delegation and reasonably identified six friendly partners, though I doubt it. More likely,

I recognized securing the entire delegation was unlikely, thus eliminated the highly competitive internships of Kentucky's United States Senators and hoped for six congressmen's endorsements. All the while, Matt Doane and I knew if we could attract eight partnerships, Student Government's budget allowed for an additional \$3,000 incursion.

The formal proposal took shape:

- The internship would require a topical application sheet and updated resume, and any external application and materials required by each congressional partner office.
- A non-Student Government selection committee populated by University faculty, staff, and a student representative would screen each topical application sheet and resume and award interviews to qualified candidates.
- For each position, the committee would identify a preferred and secondary candidate for selection.
- Matt Doane and I would package the committee's interview notes, topical application sheet, and external congressional application and its required materials for each of the committee's preferred and secondary selections to send to each congressional partner office.
- Then, each office would hire one of the selected candidates for internship for summer 2012.

The formal proposal protected a congressional office's autonomy. Though presented candidates for selection, each office would maintain final selection.

Additionally, Student Government and its selection committee would complete

application collection and interview for partner office. Student Government would provide all original materials to each office to consider during its selection and require only selection in return. Finally, the proposal allowed each partner office to dictate the internship's eligibility requirements – home congressional district, major, state of residence – allowing Kentucky's 5th District Congressman to entertain only the applications of 5th District students attending the University of Kentucky, for example.

Proposal Presentation

The University of Kentucky Alumni Association announced a D.C.-area alumni reception with first-year President Eli Capitulouto for December 7, 2011. The reception headlined an excursion for the President's first meetings with Kentucky's congressmen. Doane and I agreed the University's visit to Washington, D.C. would encourage congressional offices to meet with University students and provide an opportunity to formally present the "Wildcats in Washington" proposal.

We approached the University Alumni Association to detail Student Government's agenda and request speaking time at the reception to announce "Wildcats in Washington." Not only did it allow speaking time, but also the Association generously offered to sponsor our travel arrangements to and stay in the District.

At 4:30 a.m. on Tuesday, December 6, 2011, Matt Doane and I left Lexington, Kentucky, to board Louisville Regional's 6:15 a.m. flight to Washington, D.C.'s Ronald Reagan National Airport.

At 2:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 6th we presented to:

- Kentucky's 6th District Congressman Ben Chandler

Later that afternoon we presented to:

- Minority Leader Senator Mitch McConnell's Chief of Staff Josh Holmes

- 3rd District Congressman John Yarmuth's Chief of Staff Julie Carr

Tuesday evening, Doane and I enjoyed dinner with the D.C.-area Alumni Club's officers to report on that day's presentations and detail our remarks for Wednesday night's reception.

On Wednesday, December 7, we presented to:

- 4th District Congressman's Internship Coordinator Courtney Kowalski
- 2nd District Congressman Brett Guthrie
- 5th District Congressman Harold Roger's Internship Coordinator Chelsea Whalen

That evening, Matt Doane announced "Wildcats in Washington" to area alumni who had gathered at the Marriot Courtyard to greet President Eli Capilouto.

Thursday, December 8, Matt Doane and I presented to:

- 1st District Congressman Ed Whitfield
- Senator Rand Paul's Internship Coordinator Eleanor May

We returned to Lexington, Kentucky, later Thursday afternoon.

Initial Reception

The formal "Wildcats in Washington" proposal attracted overwhelming support. Congressional offices praised an affordable internship experience for students that required little investment or obligation. The offices that did not require legal approval informally agreed to participate. Offices with legal oversight supported the proposal but requested time to approve participation.

What a congressional staff vocally supports to two college students and later officially endorses, though, required apprehension. Matt and I believed much of the initial support but understood the politics that might prevent any office from officially favoring the University of Kentucky. Area alumni, though, expressed immediate support; many provided business cards for local agencies and bureaucracies requesting internship

partnerships when “Wildcats in Washington” expanded, one of Fielden’s initial goals (Fielden, 2012).

In the days after the trip, Doane and I met with the University Legal Office to outline an official Memorandum of Understanding for potential partner offices. Having presented the proposal, next steps required finalization for announcement. During one proposal presentation, an office suggested an “out”: a reservation expiration date that would allow partner offices to reject both of the Student Government selected candidates and open the reserved position to general congressional office applicants. In order to appease that office and further attract potential partners, Doane and I asked for the provision’s inclusion in each Memorandum of Understanding.

In addition to the Memorandum of Understanding, Doane and I drafted a Student Contract for the selected interns. The contract detailed Student Government’s expectations of those selected and what each intern could expect of Student Government. The contract also allowed Student Government to withhold the student’s stipend should he or she violate the expectations of the agreement.

Finalization⁴

On Monday, January 23, 2012, the University of Kentucky’s Student Government announced the first two partners of Wildcat Interest Group’s “Wildcats in Washington” and their internship application deadlines:

- Senator Mitch McConnell (February 12, 2012)
- 4th District Congressman Geoff Davis (March 1, 2012)

⁴ It should be noted here that Matt Doane resigned his Directorship in the weeks before the Spring 2012 semester. I assumed Wildcat Interest Group Director.

One week later, on January 30, partnerships expanded to the offices of Senator Rand Paul and 2nd, 5th, and 6th District Congressmen Brett Guthrie, Harold Rogers, and Ben Chandler, respectively. Those applications also closed March 1, 2012.

Promotion

Post-announcement, the executive branch mobilized to promote the internships and their rapidly approaching application deadlines. Executive staff and legislative branch senators enacted social media campaigns to publicize the partnerships on timelines and news feeds – the most effective way to reach the electronically engaged student population. Because Student Government enjoys all-campus email privileges, I generated a press release to send to the University’s 29,000 students. Those messages appeared in every student and employee’s inbox within minutes, effectively crisscrossing campus. I completed interviews for the University Alumni Association’s national magazine, University’s daily newsletter UKNow, and campus newspaper *The Kentucky Kernel*. Student Government presented to appropriate classes, faculty, and departments, specifically Political Science. We met with interested student organizations and asked leadership to announce to their members. The application link and eligibility requirements ran on the homepage of Student Government’s homepage for weeks. Additionally, I directed congressional offices to encourage interested University students to apply through “Wildcats in Washington” instead of an office’s general application process.

Candidate Selection

The February 12 deadline allowed just three weeks promotion after announcement. Still, Senator McConnell’s party leadership and stature attracted the

second-most applicants. In the days between announcement and closure, I approached and sat a non-Student Government Selection Committee:

Victor Hazard, University Dean of Students
Dr. Robert Mock, University Vice President of Student Affairs
Dr. Daniel Morey, University Political Science Associate Professor
Benjamin Smith, University political science senior
Dr. William Swinford, Chief of Staff to University President Eli Capilouto
Dr. Patricia Whitlow, University Director of External Scholarships

Dr. Patricia Whitlow questioned candidates about “their academic and work experience, [the] role of the office to which they [were] applying, leadership skills, [and] future career plans” (Whitlow, 2012). In written interviews, Associate Professor Morey described his interview approach and rubric for candidate:

“I asked questions about how candidates would handle certain situations if they were to arise, especially if they disagreed with the member they were working for on an important issue. I also asked specific questions about the policy positions of the member the student wanted to intern with while in D.C...”

“...I assessed if the candidate was well prepared, well dressed, specific and direct in answers, and clear in speech...I then weighted each of these in forming my evaluation with direct answers and clear speech being more important in the final evaluation, but with the dress and prepared playing an important role” (Morey, 2012).

I set Senator McConnell’s candidate interviews for February 13, one day after his application’s deadline. The committee interviewed three candidates, preferring Jonathon Nunley to its secondary selection. That evening, I notified all three candidates of their status, collected the committee’s interview notes and sealed all materials with individual

applications and resumes to send to Amanda Hendricks, Internship Coordinator for Minority Leader Mitch McConnell.

On March 5 and 6, the selection committee interviewed candidates for five remaining “Wildcats in Washington” partnerships. I set all of an office’s candidates on one day, so I could notify each candidate of his or her status and prepare materials for mail that evening.

In a message notifying the candidate of his or her preferred or secondary selection, Student Government included a disclaimer warning selection did not guarantee stipend award, to accommodate each Memorandum’s clause that allowed a partner office to reject both candidates and open the reservation to the general public.

Overall, six reserved, congressional internship opportunities of a first-year program attracted over twenty competitive applicants. Each partner office retained notification privileges; all six selected the committee’s preferred candidates:

Jonathon Nunley, Office of Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
Adam Meredith, Office of Senator Rand Paul (R-KY)
Pooja Reddy, Office of Congressman Brett Guthrie (KY-2)
Aaron Thompson, Office of Congressman Geoff Davis (KY-4)
Nicolas Wilson, Office of Congressman Harold Rogers (KY-5)
Natalie Waddle, Office of Congressman Ben Chandler (KY-6)

In the months after University students elected the 2012 Student Government administration, I organized the annual excursion to Washington, D.C., this time not only to detail the governing agenda to Kentucky’s congressmen, but also to thank “Wildcats in Washington” partner offices and discuss the performance of Student Government’s six interns. The July 2012 trip also included a private reception in Baltimore, Maryland – generously sponsored by alumna Heather Hanks – for Washington-area University alumni to meet the “Wildcats in Washington” interns. That evening, I announced the

Student Internship Endowment to provide a platform to which interest University alumni could donate and sponsor future internships for the students of the University of Kentucky. Donations accepted that evening and the funds from an underutilized Student Government account quickly grew the endowment to \$18,000. The Endowment accomplished a goal to financially stabilize “Wildcats in Washington” and eventually move from stipends afforded by student fees to those afforded by the interest generated from alumni donations.

By August 2012, all six “Wildcats in Washington” interns had completed their summer internships in Kentucky’s congressional offices, marking the end of the first year of the Student Internship Program.

III. Identifying Student-Sponsored Experiential Internship Programs

Approach

That organized student-facilitated lobbying efforts and student-sponsored internship programs like “Wildcats in Washington” seem unique, I moved to test the innovation and uniqueness of the initiative in which I have invested nearly two years of my undergraduate tenure. I drafted a survey to provide to Student Government/Undergraduate Assembly presidents and student governmental relations officers at institutions throughout the United States. I hoped to gather their responses and measure the uniqueness of Wildcat Interest Group and its Student Internship Program, and compare the programs to similar efforts at other schools.

I designed the survey to measure organized student governmental relations initiatives of three, separate populations quantitatively considered by the University of Kentucky: 1) the University of Kentucky’s “Top 20 benchmark institutions,” as defined by the Kentucky General Assembly in 1997⁵; 2) peers of the National Collegiate Athletic Association’s Southeastern Conference; 3) fellow public, post-secondary institutions in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The collected results populate this results portion of the thesis.

Experiment

First, I identified three unique populations the University of Kentucky regularly considers as competition:

- 1) “Top 20” benchmark institutions, as defined by the Kentucky General Assembly

⁵ “Top 20 Business Plan Benchmark Institutions,” Office of Institutional Effectiveness, University of Kentucky.
<http://www.uky.edu/IRPE/benchmarking/top20institutions.html>
<http://www.uky.edu/Top20/>

- Georgia Institute of Technology
 - Ohio State University
 - Pennsylvania State University
 - Rutgers University – New Brunswick
 - Texas A&M University
 - The University of Texas – Austin
 - University of California – Berkley
 - University of California – Davis
 - University of California – Los Angeles
 - University of California – San Diego
 - University of Florida
 - University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign
 - University of Maryland – College Park
 - University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
 - University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
 - University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
 - University of Pittsburgh – Pittsburgh Campus
 - University of Virginia
 - University of Washington
 - University of Wisconsin – Madison
- 2) Southeastern Conference-member institutions
- Auburn University
 - Mississippi State University
 - Louisiana State University
 - Texas A&M University
 - University of Alabama
 - University of Arkansas
 - University of Florida
 - University of Georgia
 - University of Kentucky
 - University of Mississippi
 - University of Missouri
 - University of Tennessee
 - University of South Carolina
 - Vanderbilt University
- 3) Public, post-secondary institutions in the Commonwealth of Kentucky
- Eastern Kentucky University
 - Kentucky State University
 - Morehead State University
 - Murray State University
 - University of Kentucky
 - University of Louisville
 - Western Kentucky University

I accessed the websites of the student government-like organization at each institution to collect the organization president's contact information.

I then designed a brief survey to measure three distinct qualitative areas: 1) an institution's Student Government-sponsored governmental relations efforts; 2) an institution's Student-Government sponsored experiential internship opportunities; 3) an institution's familiarity with the University of Kentucky's Wildcat Interest Group and Student Internship Program "Wildcats in Washington. The questions included:

To evaluate the governmental relations services provided by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA). Please include appropriate links to web pages or media coverage that corroborate your answers.

- 1. Please detail any governmental relations services provided by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA) and the history of those services.*
- 2. If your institution's Student Government Association does provide governmental relations services, please describe his/her duties, if he/she is elected or appointed, and the requirements necessary to hold the position.*
- 3. Please describe any event(s), governmental in nature, (rallies, voter registration drives, political debates, etc.) hosted or sponsored by your institution's Student Government Association since July 2011.*

To categorize and assess experiential opportunities facilitated or sponsored by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA)

- 4. Does your institution's Student Government Association currently offer experiential internship opportunities to students? If yes, please describe those*

- opportunities and how long they have existed, how students are selected, and if students receive financial sponsorship.*
5. *If you do not have one currently, are you aware of a congressional internship program formerly sponsored by the Student Government Association at your institution? Are you aware of a congressional internship program currently or formerly sponsored by another institution's Student Government Association, excluding the University of Kentucky? If yes to either or both, please explain.*
- To measure the reach of the University of Kentucky Student Government Association's governmental relations division Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) and experiential Student Internship Program*
6. *Were you, before this survey, familiar with Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) at the University of Kentucky? If yes, please list the media through which you became familiar with WIG.*
 7. *Were you, before this survey, familiar with "Wildcats in Washington" of the Student Internship Program at the University of Kentucky? If yes, please list the media through which you became familiar with "Wildcats in Washington."*
 8. *Do you expect Student Government Association or any other student organization or University entity at your institution to adopt programs similar to Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) or "Wildcats in Washington?" If yes, please describe your expectations for similar programs at your institution. If no, is it appropriate to sponsor programs like "Wildcats in Washington?"*

9. *If yes above, would your institution's Student Government Association consult the University of Kentucky during establishment and implementation of programs similar to Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) and "Wildcats in Washington?"*

I packaged the three-page survey with the following introduction:

In July 2011, the University of Kentucky Student Government Association established Wildcat Interest Group (WIG), a governmental relations division to promote civic engagement on campus and lobby for University students locally and federally. In an effort to enhance awareness and develop students professionally, WIG negotiated six experiential internships in the federal offices of Kentucky's congressmen for summer 2012. Those internships - together branded "Wildcats in Washington" of the Student Internship Program - were reserved specifically for University students and awarded through an application and interview process facilitated by UK Student Government.

This brief, 15-minute survey will measure your institution's Student Government Association and any initiatives to develop governmental relations or encourage experiential internship in government. Answers to the following questions and the data collected here will be used in an Honors Program thesis, to be published by Nolan Jackson, Director of Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) at the University of Kentucky, to evaluate the establishment, implementation, and prospective expansion of the University of Kentucky Student Government's Student Internship Program. The thesis will also serve as transitional material to be consulted by

individuals who succeed Jackson in his position.

When answering, please include all relevant and appropriate links to web pages, resources, and media coverage that corroborate your answers. An institution's answers will not be specifically attributed to that institution in the published thesis. In appreciation for participation, non-institution-specific answers can be provided to respondents who complete this survey.

Upon completion, please send a courtesy email to Nolan Jackson (nolan.jackson@uky.edu) to identify the respondent, and his/her position and institution.

Disclaimer: This survey has been submitted to your institution's Student Government Association (Body) President. If inappropriate, please forward to a more appropriate officer.

Thank you for your participation!

(Jackson, 2012)

Using the collected email addresses, I personalized a message detailing this thesis project to each organization's president and included the online survey link to solicit his or her participation. Because the University of Florida and Texas A&M University are members of the Southeastern Conference and "Top 20 Benchmark" institutions, and I did not measure the University of Kentucky, a public post-secondary institution in Kentucky and member of the NCAA's Southeastern Conference, the participant list included thirty-seven measurable subjects.

IV. Evaluating the Uniqueness of “Wildcats in Washington”

Results⁶

Governmental Relations services

Seven institution’s student governments, or 18.9% of measurable subjects, returned the survey. All seven, or 100%, of those respondents identified governmental relations services provided by their institution’s student government.

Institution A’s governmental relations services included Vice Presidents of Legislative and Community relations, appointed by the President and confirmed by an elected Senate, to manage statewide and federal student lobbying, and facilitate voter registration efforts.

Institution B’s Student Government includes an External Affairs Agency managed by a Director appointed by the organization’s president and approved by the University’s Student Senate. The Agency Director oversees yearlong voter registration drives and coordinates local, state, and federal lobbying efforts with professional lobbyists hired by the University’s Student Government. As the institution’s home state enjoys electoral “battleground” status, the interviewee notes hosting political and media pundits, elected officials, and candidates on campus during the 2012 campaign season.

Institution C’s governmental relations include organized trips for students to visiting Washington, D.C., and the institution’s state capitol. Most recently, the institution’s Student Government facilitated voter registration drives.

Institution D’s Student Government includes a Political (Legislative) Affairs Counsel populated through an application and interview process. The Counsel organizes

⁶ Appendix “Institution Survey Results”

political events on campus, including an elected officials' panel "Capital on the Plains," attends local city council meetings, and works with the institution's professional policy affairs director and employed lobbyists.

Institution E's Student Government includes a staff member appointed by an elected president to host voter registration drives. Most recently, the institution's Student Government participated in a "Rally for Higher Education" march on the state's capitol.

Institution F's governmental relations include a Vice President of External Affairs appointed by the Student Government's elected president to facilitate voter registration and refer students to legal counsel.

Institution G's Student Government includes no appointed governmental relations officer. The organization recently sponsored voter registration efforts and participated in a "Rally for Higher Education" march on the state's capitol. The institution's Student Government recently sponsored two political pundits for a campus-wide speaker series.

Experiential Internship opportunities

Institution A's Student Government does not sponsor experiential internship opportunities, though the institution does organize congressional internship opportunities in a non-student government department. At the time of survey, it was not aware of any former or current student-sponsored experiential internship programs at the home institution or any other.

Institution B's student government does not sponsor experiential internship opportunities, though it does connect interested students with city council committees that include student representatives. Non-student government departments at the Institution provide the majority of experiential internships for students. At the time of

survey, it was not aware of any former or current student-sponsored experiential internship programs at the institution or any other.

Institution C did not complete this portion of the survey.

Institution D referenced an initiative sponsored by the institution to connect students with federal congressmen and Washington, D.C. organizations. The program's website links to congressional and D.C.-area internship applications, details their requirements, and list deadlines. The program, not sponsored by the Institution's Student Government, does not include reserved placement, simply publicizes potential opportunities for students. At the time of survey, the Institution was not aware of any other student-sponsored experiential internship programs.

Institution E's Political Science Department offers experiential internship opportunities for students. At the time of survey, the Institution's Student Government was not aware of any former or current student-sponsored experiential internship programs at the home institution or any other.

Institution F's Office of Governmental and Community Relations sponsors a Federal D.C. Internship Program for students⁷. Not sponsored by the institution's Student Government, the Program awards internships to students selected from an application process.

Institution G's Student Government does not sponsor experiential internship opportunities and, at the time of survey, was not aware of any former or current student-sponsored experiential internship programs at the institution or any other.

⁷ Office of Governmental and Community Relations, Georgia Institute of Technology.
<http://www.gov.gatech.edu/federal/DCinternship.html>

Wildcat Interest Group familiarity

At the time of survey, Institution A – a new member of the Southeastern Conference – was not familiar with the University of Kentucky’s Wildcat Interest Group or Student Internship Program.

At the time of survey, Institution B was familiar with Wildcat Interest Group and “Wildcats In Washington,” having learned of the programs at the 2012 Southeastern Conference Exchange in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

At the time of survey, Institution C was not familiar with Wildcat Interest Group or “Wildcats in Washington.”

At the time of survey, Institution D was not familiar with Wildcat Interest Group or “Wildcats in Washington.”

At the time of survey, Institution E was familiar with Wildcat Interest Group and “Wildcats in Washington,” having heard of the programs at a Kentucky Board of Student Body Presidents’ (BSBP) quarterly meeting.

At the time of survey, Institution F was not familiar with Wildcat Interest Group or “Wildcats in Washington.”

At the time of survey, Institution G, a member of Kentucky’s Board of Student Body Presidents, was familiar with Wildcat Interest Group and “Wildcats in Washington.”

Analysis

Of the seven respondents, two are public post-secondary institutions in Kentucky, two are members of the NCAA’s Southeastern Conference and “Top 20” benchmark institutions, two are members of the NCAA’s Southeastern Conference, and one is a

“Top 20” benchmark institution. Their results illustrate limited governmental relations and the uniqueness of the University of Kentucky’s “Wildcats in Washington” congressional internship program.

Four of the institution’s governmental relations do not extend beyond voter registration efforts or participation in daylong higher education rallies. The other three institutions describe engagement with local, state or federal officials and lobbying efforts that coincide with University employees or hired professionals, but the extent of that engagement and what it produces are unknown.

Of the seven respondents, no institution’s Student Government offers or subsidizes experiential internship opportunity in any field. At the time of interview, no respondent was aware of any student-sponsored effort, current or former, at his or her institution or any other. Though five of the respondents referenced experiential internships sponsored by departments within their institutions, only one mentioned stipends awarded to selected students.

That the University of Kentucky’s Student Government includes a division dedicated to governmental relations is on par with measured “Top 20” benchmark institutions and colleagues in the Southeastern Conference. But that its Wildcat Interest Group facilitates an application process for reserved congressional internships in Washington, D.C., and subsidizes those opportunities are truly unique – efforts not mirrored by any measured institution. Additionally, no measured institution could identify a similar effort at any other institution.

The University of Kentucky and its Student Government should proudly promote its governmental relations efforts and charter internship program. Though some measured

colleagues of the Southeastern Conference and other public post-secondary institutions of Kentucky are familiar with Wildcat Interest Group and “Wildcats in Washington,” Student Government officials should continue engagement of other institutions in this thesis’s three populations to extend measurement for more accurate uniqueness data.

V.
Projecting Expansion of the Student Internship Program

For spring and summer 2013, Wildcat Interest Group extended its Student Internship Program to constitutional offices in Frankfort's State Capitol building. Wildcat Interest Group designed the extension to accommodate students outside of the University of Kentucky's Political Science Department, across all majors. The positions in the offices of Kentucky's Attorney General, Auditor of Public Accounts, Commissioner of Agriculture, and Secretary of State allow students interested in accounting, agriculture, communications, finance, law, and marketing to enjoy experiential internship and earn academic credit during their semester or summer's work.

The three spring 2013 semester internships include a \$400 travel stipend and require two days' work each week throughout the academic semester. The summer position in the Office of the Attorney General includes a \$2,200 stipend and requires three days' work each week from late May to early August.

In December of 2012, Wildcat Interest Group will visit Washington, D.C., to negotiate "Wildcats in Washington" partnerships for summer 2013. It hopes to retain its six original partnerships and add a seventh partner office, of Kentucky's eight elected congressmen.

Any "Wildcats in Washington" partnerships for summer 2013 will include a \$1,500 stipend afforded by Wildcat Interest Group's student fees appropriations. Student Government hopes to grow its Student Internship Endowment to fully support future experiential opportunities sponsored by Student Government.

I will officially resign Directorship of Wildcat Interest Group on December 31, 2012.

VI. Afterward

It should be noted that not all institutions' student governments enjoy the appropriations the University of Kentucky's Student Government Association enjoys. Smaller regional institutions' student governments among Kentucky's public, post-secondaries necessarily limit programming based on their budgets. The University of Kentucky Student Government's colleagues in the Southeastern Conference and "Top 20" benchmark competitors may de-emphasize governmental relations or have infant initiatives. Still, all of this thesis's measured institutions include official student representatives – governments and assemblies.

Like the University of Kentucky's Student Government, an official representative of elected officers, or those appointed by those elected, holds a charge to support its constituents, the institution's students. When those constituents voice concerns and demonstrate need, it becomes the duty of those elected to improve their constituents' experiences. The Student Government Association at the University of Kentucky contends, because data suggests experiential internship benefits those who intern and enhances civic engagement, and post-secondary institutions have recommitted to experiential education, responsibility to grow civic awareness through government relations and experiential education fall on student governments, as entities of collegiate institutions.

Budgets may limit an institution's opportunities, but they should not limit efforts, for voter registration and outreach come free of charge; a phone call to a legislator or invitation to engage the student body requires no cash advance. For student governments that enjoy excess appropriations, there comes a duty to ensure promoted experiential

education is affordable, for what good is offered internship if students cannot afford to enjoy it? As Daniel Morey explains, “the cost of [internship] is too prohibitive. This is especially true for internships that take the student away from [the home institution]” (Morey, 2012).

For institutions, investment produces gains. If awarded appropriately, internships allow qualified students to excel in work environments, growing the reputation of the institution and its student body. Additionally, congressional internship fosters a relationship between those elected and their constituents, and engages a historically apathetic voter block to develop overall awareness thus encourage participation.

To commit to governmental relations and sponsor experiential education in government, yes, an institution will incur costs, as evidenced by the University of Kentucky’s Student Government. But enriching the experiences of students and enjoying a highly-unique student program far outweigh expenditures.

VII. Appendices

1. Interview with Micah Fielden (September 2012)
2. “Wildcats in Washington” Program Proposal (December 2011)
3. Interview with Dr. Daniel Morey (November 2012)
4. Interview with Dr. Patricia Whitlow (November 2012)
5. Survey for Measurement, Nolan Jackson (October 2012)
6. Results, Survey for Measurement, Nolan Jackson (December 2012)
7. HON 395 Independent Project Proposal (June 2012)

Interview with Micah Fielden
Conducted via email by Nolan M. Jackson, University of Kentucky
September 30, 2012

--

For Micah Fielden
Student Government President (2011-2012)
University of Kentucky

1. Please describe your service on Student Government during 2011-2012.
 - a. I served as the Student Body President and Board of Trustees representative for students.
2. Prior to Wildcat Interest Group (WIG), describe Student Government's role in governmental relations, as you are aware.
 - a. Prior to WIG SGA had little more than de facto involvement with government. By its nature SG was an elected representative meaning interaction occurred when student voices were requested.
 - b. Most serious involvement with government matters came through voter drives and some programs that made students aware of local issues. What I observed in past governmental relations was a reactive relationship. For example, LFUCG changed housing policy so SGA reacted by showing the unhappiness of students. Never did we consider pro-actively working with the government to talk about student issues that were very important.
3. Describe the initial conception of Wildcat Interest Group?
 - a. Nikki and I looked back to the Constitution and the definition of Student Government. We determined that a basic tenant and founding principle of SGA is representation. Students aren't only affected by school officials in fact in many ways we are more affected by policies created by state and national representatives. From PELL grants to housing a simple change in government policy can make an impact that is far greater than a local school policy. From this realization it became pretty clear that we had to form a body that would allow students to channel their frustrations or motivation in a useful way. Often times students have emotions but no tangible plan to capture this emotion and turn it into an end product. By creating WIG we were laying the groundwork that would allow students to invest their energy and time in a much more organized way.
4. What inspired Wildcat Interest Group (conventions, sister-programs, previous administrations, etc.)?
 - a. BIG – The Bulldog Interest Group from Mississippi State University. After speaking with Thomas Sellers and Rhett Hobart we learned from their BIG and learned of the general concept. While significant WIG is more active and encompassing than BIG.

- b. AIPAC – the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. AIPAC is arguably one of the most accomplished lobbying organization in American Politics. As a student lobbyist and pro-Israel activist I worked with AIPAC in Washington D.C. on multiple separate occasions and came to learn how their internal structure operated. Their strength came from a broad base of support that operated with select individuals to serve as rallying points. This support came from these lay leaders across the country. Much in a similar way the University population can serve as a microcosm of their exact system. Over time WIG will develop into a highly effective student lobbying organization.
- 5. Describe the need for Wildcat Interest Group at the University of Kentucky?
 - a. Similar to above – students need to be represented. With annually increasing college tuition many of our students rely on pell grants and federal aid to attend school. If we did not actively work to support these programs as student leaders we were not effectively and accurately representing our constituents. This is one of many instances where I realized personal opinions do sometimes have to be ignored to so that you can actually represent your constituents. But now is not a time to go into my personal beliefs of the Department of Education!
- 6. What personally motivated you to enhance governmental relations within Student Government?
 - a. Duty - I felt that it was a fundamental part of our duty as student representatives and to fail to be active with government relations would mean we failed to do our duty. This was a team effort, I can't emphasize how important it was to have the VP's support. This was important to Nikki to otherwise it would not have been one of our primary programs.
- 7. What were your overall goals for Wildcat Interest Group during and after its first year as a program?
 - a. The primary goal was to establish the groundwork for a lobbying organization. It takes 4 years for a program to become a permanent fixture of a college campus. In one college generation students will enter as freshman and know of WIG as an instrumental part of representation and interaction with government officials. The goal was to be our lobbying wing of SG. From the Rally for Higher Ed to Wildcats in Washington WIG must work to make the student presence something that is permanent and the student voice must always be heard and considered.
- 8. Describe the conception of "Wildcats in Washington."
 - a. Through Wildcats in Washington SGA was able to make it possible for more UK Students to live and work in D.C. This allows for a better presence and also helps subsidize an extraordinarily expensive endeavor so that more students may have access to previously unobtainable endeavors.

9. Prior to “Wildcats in Washington,” describe Student Government’s role in providing student internships, as you are aware.
 - a. As I am aware SGA had very little to no involvement in helping provide student internships. It may have occurred in the past but I am not aware of any direct or indirect means of doing so being coordinated by SG.
10. What inspired “Wildcats in Washington,” (conventions, sister-programs, previous administrations, etc.)?
 - a. This idea was suggested by the WIG director and deputy director and was adopted.
11. Describe the need for student internship programs at the University of Kentucky, specifically “Wildcats In Washington”?
 - a. We need to have our students interactive with elected officials but in all reality it is rare that these internships will lead to extensive contact with elected officials. What this does do is place our ambassadors in these offices. Over time politicians start to see the involvement of UKSGA but more importantly our students will get to know other staffers in D.C. and Frankfort. These interactions and acquaintances will allow us to expand UK’s student network into something that can be mobilized for government relations, student involvement, charity, etc.
12. What personally motivated you to sponsor student internships within Student Government?
 - a. I wanted to make it possible for students to move to D.C. regardless of their personal finances. Money should not be something that keeps students from achieving their dreams or participating in one part of the democratic process,
13. What were your overall goals for “Wildcats in Washington” during and after its first year as a program?
 - a. Year one, achieve internship positions for UK students in Kentucky offices. Long term the organization should expand it’s internship offers to other government programs. From the White House to the Department of State WIW should turn into a system that can get UK students into guaranteed internship positions and where positions cannot be guaranteed WIW should use political contacts and relationships with officials to springboard UK applicants into competitive positions.

“Wildcats in Washington” Program Proposal
Wildcat Interest Group, Student Government Association
Presented by Matthew D. Doane, Nolan M. Jackson, University of Kentucky
December 6, 2012

--



Student Government Association
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky

Tuesday, December 6th, 2011

In order to encourage civic engagement and political awareness, and combat social apathy, the Student Government at the University of Kentucky and its governmental relations arm, Wildcat Interest Group (WIG), formally propose an initiative to establish “Wildcats in Washington,” a cultural and professional enrichment opportunity for students at the University of Kentucky.

Inspired by student internship opportunities in both houses of Congress, executive agencies, non-governmental organizations, and media conglomerates, “Wildcats in Washington” represents Student Government’s efforts to secure Washington, D.C., unpaid, summer positions for interested and qualified undergraduate students.

Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) hopes to promote one, summer internship per Kentucky congressman, a position reserved specifically for a University of Kentucky student. Each internship will be awarded after a comprehensive application and interview process.

The application would combine questions and criteria required by Student Government and the University of Kentucky with questions and criteria already required by each Congressman’s office internship application.

Although unpaid, each summer position would include a limited living stipend and reduced housing and travel costs, sponsored by Student Government and generous UK alumni. Student Government will work with area housing providers

to ensure each intern lives comfortably for the summer at reduced or no cost to the student.

Wildcat Interest Group is prepared to work jointly with each Congressman's district office to review applications, interview applicants, and select summer interns. Please note that each position will be limited to those students hailing from a Congressman's home district. The internship reservation would hold until an agreed upon date to ensure that each position can be filled by the Congressman's district office if no UK student applies through Student Government.

This initiative is based on Student Government's beliefs that Congressional participation breeds encouraging civic engagement and interest, that many of those eager, qualified students who deeply desire an opportunity to live in Washington and work within the halls of Congress cannot afford it, that it is the responsibility of the government to attract and engage the governed.

cc:

Congressman Ed Whitfield (KY-1)

Congressman Brett Guthrie (KY-2)

Congressman John Yarmuth (KY-3)

Congressman Geoff Davis (KY-4)

Congressman Harold Rogers (KY-5)

Congressman Ben Chandler (KY-6)

Senator Mitch McConnell (KY)

Senator Rand Paul (KY)

Micah Fielden, Student Government President, University of Kentucky

Nikki Hurt, Student Government Vice-President

Matt Doane, Director, Wildcat Interest Group

Nolan Jackson, Associate Director, Wildcat Interest Group

Todd Cox, Student Government Advisor

Interview with Dr. Patricia Whitlow, Ph.D.
Conducted via email by Nolan M. Jackson, University of Kentucky
November 28, 2012

--

For Dr. Patricia Whitlow:

1. What is your name and position at the time of candidate interview (February-March 2012)?

Director of External Scholarships

2. Please describe your involvement in Student Government's Student Internship Program, specifically "Wildcats in Washington."

I participated as part of the faculty/staff interview committee.

3. What approach did you employ when interviewing candidates?

We reviewed the documents provided – brief application and resume - and asked the candidate question about their academic and work experience, role of the office to which they are applying, leadership skills, future career plans, etc.

4. Please describe your rubric for measuring candidates.

We did not have a specific rubric but the committee members are all experienced in working with and evaluating students.

5. Do you see a need for student-sponsored experiential internship opportunities at the University of Kentucky?

Yes, opportunities that help students develop their leadership skills, enhance their academic achievements, practice networking skills, etc. are useful. Having an opportunity sponsored by SGA is tangible evidence of their support of student engagement and success.

6. Specifically, what goals does "Wildcats in Washington" achieve?

See above.

It also creates an ongoing connection between UK students and the elected Congressional and Senate representatives and increasing participation by students in government activity is an important goal.

7. Please evaluate the organization and effectiveness of the candidate selection process.

The process is relatively new and so has room for growth and improvement. Nolan Jackson is to be complimented for his hard work on this laudable program. The recruitment could be much stronger as the initial set of candidates was sparse and some individuals were not sufficiently qualified. I was concerned at the low gpas of many of the candidates and found the criteria for application were not made clear to the review committee.

Feel free to provide any additional, appropriate insight, criticism, explanation, etc.

Interview with Dr. Daniel Morey, Ph.D.
Conducted via email by Nolan M. Jackson, University of Kentucky
November 28, 2012

--

Nolan,

I have completed the answers below. I tried to be as specific as I could to give you some usable material. Let me know if anything is unclear.

And thank you. Mom and baby are doing great – which makes my life a lot easier!

Dan

1. What is your name and current position?

Daniel S. Morey, Associate Professor – Internship Director and Placement Director
Department of Political Science

2. Please describe your involvement in Student Government's Student Internship Program, specifically "Wildcats in Washington."

When applicable – screening applicants to determine the short list to interview. Conducting group interviews with select applicants and ranking them based on the committee's evaluation of each student's potential to meet the demands of the internship position. This process was repeated for each member of the Kentucky legislative delegation that accepted an intern.

3. What approach did you employ when interviewing candidates?

I used a combination of behavioral interviewing and testing the candidates policy knowledge. I asked question about how candidates would handle certain situations if they were to arise, especially if they disagreed with the member they were working for on an important issue. I also asked specific questions about the policy positions of the member the student wanted to intern with while in D.C. I have listed some example questions below.

- “If you disagree with your boss on an important policy issue, for example abortion policy, how would you handle this disagreement and would it keep you from being able to perform your assigned duties as an intern?”
- "Describe a situation where your initial approach failed and you had to try something different to meet your result."
- "Give an example of when you were able to learn something complex in a relatively short period of time."
- What is Sen. McConnell's stance on Health Care Reform?
- What is Sen. McConnell's stance on economic growth?

4. Please describe your rubric for measuring candidates.

I had four areas that I used to measure candidates. I assessed if the candidate was well prepared, well dressed, specific and direct in answers, and clear in speech. Some of these are dichotomous in nature, either a candidate dressed appropriately or they did not. Specific and direct answers and clear speech were scored more on a sliding scale. However, I did make every effort to make these measurements as objective as I could. I then weighted each of these in forming my evaluation with direct answers and clear speech being more important in the final evaluation (but with the dress and prepared playing an important role).

5. Do you see a need for student-sponsored experiential internship opportunities at the University of Kentucky?

Yes. Students need and want opportunities for experiential learning; however, for most students the cost of such activities is too prohibitive. This is especially true for internships that take the student away from Lexington. We have excellent students here at the University of Kentucky, we need to get them more exposure on the national or international stage. This helps the students and it helps the reputation of the university. This is one of those cases where a little invest can go a long way.

6. Specifically, what goals does "Wildcats in Washington" achieve?

There are two interrelated goals Wildcats in Washington achieves. First, it allows students to develop skills necessary to translate their education here at the University of Kentucky into marketable job skills. Classroom learning is important and takes students a long ways; however, they do have to translate what they learn into the skills employers desire. Internships provide this bridge. I think this is especially true for students around their junior year, they learn what the real world is like and what they want to do. Then they can return to school and sharpen those skills. Second, Wildcats gets students out of Lexington and into the heart of the American political process. Local internship are great and do a lot of good but interning in D.C. takes the experience – and thus the value – to a whole new level.

7. Please evaluate the organization and effectiveness of the candidate selection process.

For the first time operating this program I thought things went really well. I am sure with more experience the system will be streamlined, deadlines established and advertised further in advance, and material provided to evaluators earlier. But for everyone learning the system, things went pretty smooth.

Feel free to provide any additional, appropriate insight, criticism, explanation, etc.

Survey For Measurement
Provided by Nolan M. Jackson, University of Kentucky
October 3, 2012

--

In July 2011, the University of Kentucky Student Government Association established Wildcat Interest Group (WIG), a governmental relations division to promote civic engagement on campus and lobby for University students locally and federally. In an effort to enhance awareness and develop students professionally, WIG negotiated six experiential internships in the federal offices of Kentucky's congressmen for summer 2012. Those internships - together branded "Wildcats in Washington" of the Student Internship Program - were reserved specifically for University students and awarded through an application and interview process facilitated by UK Student Government.

This brief, 15-minute survey will measure your institution's Student Government Association and any initiatives to develop governmental relations or encourage experiential internship in government. Answers to the following questions and the data collected here will be used in an Honors Program thesis, to be published by Nolan Jackson, Director of Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) at the University of Kentucky, to evaluate the establishment, implementation, and prospective expansion of the University of Kentucky Student Government's Student Internship Program. The thesis will also serve as transitional material to be consulted by individuals who succeed Jackson in his position.

When answering, please include all relevant and appropriate links to web pages, resources, and media coverage that corroborate your answers. An institution's answers will not be specifically attributed to that institution in the published thesis. In appreciation for participation, non-institution-specific answers can be provided to respondents who complete this survey.

Upon completion, please send a courtesy email to Nolan Jackson (nolan.jackson@uky.edu) to identify the respondent, and his/her position and institution. Disclaimer: This survey has been submitted to your institution's Student Government Association (Body) President. If inappropriate, please forward to a more appropriate officer.

Thank you for your participation!

To evaluate the governmental relations services provided by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA). Please include appropriate links to web pages or media coverage that corroborate your answers.

1. Please detail any governmental relations services provided by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA) and the history of those services.
2. If your institution's Student Government Association does provide governmental relations services, please describe his/her duties, if he/she is elected or appointed, and the requirements necessary to hold the position.
3. Please describe any event(s), governmental in nature, (rallies, voter registration drives, political debates, etc.) hosted or sponsored by your institution's Student Government Association since July 2011.

To categorize and assess experiential opportunities facilitated or sponsored by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA)

4. Does your institution's Student Government Association currently offer experiential internship opportunities to students? If yes, please describe those opportunities and how long they have existed, how students are selected, and if students receive financial sponsorship.
5. If you do not have one currently, are you aware of a congressional internship program formerly sponsored by the Student Government Association at your institution? Are you aware of a congressional internship program currently or formerly sponsored by another institution's Student Government Association, excluding the University of Kentucky? If yes to either or both, please explain.

To measure the reach of the University of Kentucky Student Government Association's governmental relations division Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) and experiential Student Internship Program

6. Were you, before this survey, familiar with Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) at the University of Kentucky? If yes, please list the media through which you became familiar with WIG.
7. Were you, before this survey, familiar with "Wildcats in Washington" of the Student Internship Program at the University of Kentucky? If yes, please list the media through which you became familiar with "Wildcats in Washington."
8. Do you expect Student Government Association or any other student organization or University entity at your institution to adopt programs similar to Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) or "Wildcats in Washington?" If yes, please describe your expectations for similar programs at your institution. If no, is it appropriate to sponsor programs like "Wildcats in Washington?"
9. If yes above, would your institution's Student Government Association consult the University of Kentucky during establishment and implementation of programs similar to Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) and "Wildcats in Washington?"

Results, Survey for Measurement
Provided by Institutions to Measure
Collected by Nolan M. Jackson, University of Kentucky
December 1, 2012

--

To evaluate the governmental relations services provided by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA). Please include appropriate links to web pages or media coverage that corroborate your answers.

1. Please detail any governmental relations services provided by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA) and the history of those services.
 - a. Institution – Higher education rally and voter registration drives are our only form of governmental relations.
 - b. Institution – Lawyer referral service for students (immigration, civil suits, etc.) - Voter registration facilitation
 - c. Institution – Participated in Rally for Higher Education; Funded students to lobby in Frankfort
 - d. Institution - Auburn University's Student Government Association gives provision for a Political Affairs Counsel within SGA Cabinet. Historically, the Political Affairs Counsel has been known as "Legislative Affairs."
 - e. Institution - Please visit: asg.uark.edu for all information concerning our services to the University of Arkansas campus.
 - f. Institution - The External Affairs Agency has been historically known as Lobby Director, but the duties were expanded within the last 10 years to include more services.
 - g. Institution - Legislative Relations: responsible for all state and federal lobbying efforts. Now organizing a conference wide "SEC in D.C." joint lobbying trip. Community Relations: a more recent undertaking by SGA, Community Relations has focused on voter registration and city government; Community Relations has focused on voter registration and city government
2. If your institution's Student Government Association does provide governmental relations services, please describe his/her duties, if he/she is elected or appointed, and the requirements necessary to hold the position.
 - a. Institution – *No answer*
 - b. Institution - We simply have a Vice President of External Affairs, who is a student appointed by the President; there are no professional services provided other than the general ones above

- c. Institution - Typically there is a staff member who is appointed along with the President who is elected
 - d. Institution - SGA Political Affairs Counsel is selected by SGA Executive Counsel via an application/interview process. Political Affairs positions include:
 Assistant Vice President of Political Affairs: -Serves as the line of communication between SGA Exec and the Political Affairs Counsel -Assists in the Lobby Board selection process -Works with university advocacy & publicity
 Director of Political Affairs: -Serves as director of SGA Lobby Board - Coordinates SGA Political Affairs sponsored events with the Higher Education Partnership and Auburn University Governmental Affairs -Personally works heavily with state legislators and has personal relationships in the state capital (This is vital in order to coordinate events on campus) Asst/Director of Political Affairs: -Same as director Director of City Relations: -Attends city counsel meetings -Local government correspondent -Also participates in Lobby Board selection process SGA Political Affairs Counsel is responsible for interviewing and appointing a student comprised think tank/committee of 15-20 students, colloquially named, "Lobby Board." REQUIREMENTS: 2.5 GPA Previous experience politically is preferred (internships, campaigns, Political Science majors.)
 - e. Institution - We have a state and national representative that develops and organizes trips for our students to take part in throughout the year including trips to Washington D.C. and our state capitol in Little Rock, AR.
 - f. Institution - The agency director is appointed by the Student Body President and approved by the Student Senate. They serve for one year. The duties include lobbying services directly to local, state, and federal officials, but also communicating with our state and federal lobbyists that are hired by student government. There are no statutory requirements per say, but the position is usually held by a junior or senior. The agency also oversees Chomp the Vote, SG's voter registration wing, and Nightlife NaviGators, which oversees SNAP, the Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol, and many vice-chairs and directors.
 - g. Institution - The Vice President of Legislative Relations and Vice President of Community Relations are appointed by the Student Body President, who is the chief elected representative, and confirmed by Senate, who are also elected to their positions. The VP's are responsible for weekly meetings with the Executive Vice President, who oversees as policy issues, and is also responsible for holding meetings with their teams. Each VP manages a small team. VP of LR manages about a 30 member team and VP of CR manages about a 10 member team.
3. Please describe any event(s), governmental in nature, (rallies, voter registration drives, political debates, etc.) hosted or sponsored by your institution's Student Government Association since July 2011.

- a. Institution – This past year we have hosted 2 week long voter registration drives, as well as a political debate with 2 nationally acclaimed individuals, James Carville and Mary Matalin. We have also taken part in the Rally for Higher Education in Frankfort every year.
- b. Institution – Voter registration drive for national election - National debate-watching "parties" - Georgia Day at the Capitol at the State Legislature (supportive and ceremonial up to this point, may be lobbying in the future) - Resolutions passed in the Undergraduate House of Representative and Graduate Student Senate in support of ad-hoc initiatives (e.g. sequestration concerns cutting funding, saving a state-sponsored scholarship, etc.) - Student body president advocacy on committees/boards/press for student concerns
- c. Institution – We had a voter registration drive Have had guest speakers (legislators) on campus Participated in rally
- d. Institution – EVENTS: LOBBY DAYS: SGA Political Affairs Counsel and Lobby Board works closely with Alabama's Higher Education Partnership and AU Governmental Affairs. These offices help to coordinate days for involved students to have "Lobby Days" at the State House in Montgomery, AL. There, the students get to personally interact with state legislators, and at times, lobby for University interests. "CAPITAL ON THE PLAINS: Annually, SGA sponsors a legislative panel named "Capital on The Plains." This event consists of five state legislators on a panel, moderated by the SGA president. Each legislator is asked questions pertaining to higher education, the economy, and any other pertinent issues that directly affect university/student affairs. HIGHER EDUCATION DAY: -Lobby Board and Political Affairs counsel coordinates this event with the Higher Ed Partnership. (See below link.) <http://www.higheredpartners.org/>
- e. Institution – We just recently hosted a voter registration drive and the turn out was great. We hand out ASG promotional items and get everyone excited about voting. We held a showing of the Presidential Debate where our President Tori Pohlner emceed it and the turn out was adequate as well.
- f. Institution – We have year-long voter registration efforts, and since UF is a stomping ground for political activity, we host tons of events, and try to attend or co-sponsor many events that occur on campus. This political season, we have hosted on campus Herman Cain, Josh Romney, Jason Alexander, Michelle Obama, Ted Deutch, Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, Charlie Black, and Mayor Craig Lowe, to name a few.
- g. Institution – Voter registration drive. Pushed for a vote against a city proposition that would have pushed voting to the summer when students weren't present. We won the vote and voting remains in November so that students have a voice.

To categorize and assess experiential opportunities facilitated or sponsored by your institution's Student Government Association (SGA)

4. Does your institution's Student Government Association currently offer experiential internship opportunities to students? If yes, please describe those opportunities and how long they have existed, how students are selected, and if students receive financial sponsorship.
- a. Institution – No
 - b. Institution – Yes! Internship opportunities facilitated by the Institute for federal and state level intern positions. Scholarships are not given, but rather stipends. These programs have existed for a few years.
 - c. Institution – No, but our political science department does.
 - d. Institution – Auburn on the Hill (not SGA sponsored)
<http://www.auburn.edu/projects/washington/> Contact Information
 Meaghan Weir 303 Martin Hall (334) 844-3867 meaghan@auburn.edu
 - e. Institution – *No answer*
 - f. Institution – No, but we are working on connecting students to the city commission's many committees, which allow students to serve for one year on policy-making boards. We also hope to institute a database of students that local politicians can use as a resource to find volunteers for political campaigns. The department of Political Science and others offer the majority of internships, as does the Bob Graham Center for Public Service.
 - g. Institution – no
5. If you do not have one currently, are you aware of a congressional internship program formerly sponsored by the Student Government Association at your institution? Are you aware of a congressional internship program currently or formerly sponsored by another institution's Student Government Association, excluding the University of Kentucky? If yes to either or both, please explain.
- a. Institution – No. we are currently working on a similar group at Murray hoping to kick it off next spring.
 - b. Institution – *No answer*
 - c. Institution – No
 - d. Institution – Auburn on the Hill (not SGA sponsored)
<http://www.auburn.edu/projects/washington/>
 - e. Institution – *No answer*
 - f. Institution – No we are not

- g. Institution – No. Our congressional internship programs are run and organized outside of SGA.

To measure the reach of the University of Kentucky Student Government Association's governmental relations division Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) and experiential Student Internship Program

- 6. Were you, before this survey, familiar with Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) at the University of Kentucky? If yes, please list the media through which you became familiar with WIG.
 - a. Institution – Yes. Through interactions with the UK SGA Presidents I became familiar with WIG.
 - b. Institution – No.
 - c. Institution – Yes because someone menti
 - d. Institution – No.
 - e. Institution – No.
 - f. Institution – Yes. I learned about WIG at the SEC Exchange last year in Arkansas.
 - g. Institution – No.
- 7. Were you, before this survey, familiar with "Wildcats in Washington" of the Student Internship Program at the University of Kentucky? If yes, please list the media through which you became familiar with "Wildcats in Washington."
 - a. Institution – Yes. Through interactions with the UK SGA Presidents I became familiar with Wildcats in Washington.
 - b. Institution – No.
 - c. Institution – Someone mentioned it at a BSBP meeting
 - d. Institution – No
 - e. Institution – No
 - f. Institution – Yes we heard about it at the SEC Exchange in Arkansas.
 - g. Institution – No
- 8. Do you expect Student Government Association or any other student organization or University entity at your institution to adopt programs similar to Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) or "Wildcats in Washington?" If yes, please describe your expectations for similar programs at your institution. If no, is it appropriate to sponsor programs like "Wildcats in Washington?"

- a. Institution – Yes. We intend to start similar groups at Murray and offer sponsorship for interns with governmental entities.
 - b. Institution – I am not familiar with the program, so I do not know.
 - c. Institution – *No answer*
 - d. Institution – Yes. There are plans within SGA to streamline internship opportunities in the State House and at the Federal level. Internships with state senators and representatives will be included. The University of Alabama and Troy University are currently formulating a Lobby Board model similar to the structure that Auburn University Student Government Association utilizes. AU SGA Director of Political Affairs provides a steady stream of data, contacts, and advice to the external affairs bodies at these universities.
 - e. Institution – Yes, I feel as if our campus would sponsor or adopt a program similar to WIG or Wildcats in Washington
 - f. Institution – The External Affairs agency has tried to adopt some aspects of the WIG model. We also have a grassroots student advocacy organization called Gators 4 Higher Ed that does many of the duties that an organization like the WIG would do.
 - g. Institution – Ours is not student run but many students have had incredible experiences interning in Washington through our program, which is called Public Policy Internship Program.
9. If yes above, would your institution's Student Government Association consult the University of Kentucky during establishment and implementation of programs similar to Wildcat Interest Group (WIG) and "Wildcats in Washington?"
- a. Institution – Yes.
 - b. Institution – Per more information, we may, though our programs have served us quite well and fielded student interest very well to this point.
 - c. Institution – Very possible
 - d. Institution – Yes
 - e. Institution – We could possibly consult Kentucky during the establishment if and when we started the program and were wanting it to be ran similarly.
 - f. Institution – Absolutely, and I have consulted Nolan on his best practices.
 - g. Institution – *No answer*

*All answers taken exactly as provided.

HON 395 Independent Project Proposal
Drafted by Nolan M. Jackson, University of Kentucky
June 12, 2012

--

Nolan Jackson

For University of Kentucky Honors Program
cc: Meg Marquis, Senior Academic Coordinator
cc: Bill Swinford, Independent Project Advisor
HON 395 Academic Proposal
Tuesday, June 12, 2012

To the Independent Project Reviewing Members of the Honors Program:

In December of 2011, a colleague and I represented the University's Student Government as Directors of its Wildcat Interest Group (WIG), an organizational governmental relations division, in Washington, D.C. The excursion's mission: to propose a cooperative congressional internship program for University students. Two days of Hill negotiations founded "Wildcats in Washington" (WIW), the University's first congressional experiential opportunities sponsored by Student Government and agreed to by Kentucky's federal legislators.

Though in its first year, WIG – inspired by a similar Kentucky public university's counterpart – tackled the ambitious tasks of solidifying a reputable internship program with commitments from six of Kentucky's eight congressmen, attracting student applicants, interviewing candidates, and filling the positions, and all in three-months time. Now, in the early days of summer 2012 and less than six months after inauguration, WIW approaches its first active summer, sponsoring six University students for four-to-six week experiential internships in the congressional halls of our nation's capital.

To satisfy the curricula of the University of Kentucky Honors Program, I propose this independent project: an original document detailing the foundation of the University Student Government Association's "Wildcats in Washington" Congressional Internship Program, supplemented with first-hand testimony of the conversations with active members of Congress and their staffs that secured the internship positions, first-year missteps along the way, and events and initiatives relevant to the stabilization of the program, and explanation of Student Government's goals to grow and financially support future internship endeavors under the "Wildcats in Washington" umbrella.

My executive position as sole Director of Wildcat Interest Group for 2012-2013 preserves the project's independence, not to mention the personal correspondence with congressional offices, application collection, and event planning done by me in the early weeks of Spring 2012 after WIG's co-director resigned his duties.

Project advisor Bill Swinford – University administrator and original member of the impartial "Wildcats in Washington" selection committee – will assess my independent project and assign an overall letter grade for three-credit-hour HON 395 based on the following criteria:

- 1) Regular (every other week) meetings to discuss the independent project and progress in writing an original paper.
- 2) A written, detailed outline for the original paper submitted no later than September 1, 2012.
- 3) A completed full draft of the original paper, no more than 30, double-spaced pages in length, to include pieces such as background information, a review of any relevant essays, articles, etc. on the topic, an analysis of the strengths and challenges of the approach taken to implementation, a reflection on my personal experience and the experience of other participants, specific direction for future effort in this area, and any other important sections, submitted no later than later than Monday, November 26, 2012.

Dr. Swinford's assessment will include a written review of the paper outline and written evaluation of the project paper provided by **December 12, 2012** by **1:00 p.m.**

A political science major and student who benefited from the exceptional,

rewarding responsibilities congressional internship provides, I recognize the importance of documenting the foundation of a unique program “Wildcats in Washington,” so as to provide a transitional how-to handbook of reference for those that direct WIG after me, ensuring future students enjoy affordable, unrivaled experiential internship opportunities. Additionally, such a program encourages active use of University resources and civic engagement. Any project that achieves those initiatives seems worthy of thorough research and publication.

For your consideration,

Nolan Jackson

University of Kentucky

Candidate for Graduation, Spring 2013

* * *

“Is it not our responsibility, regardless of the academic field in which we have been trained, to make every effort to produce a more decent and educated electorate, a more humble and sincere political leadership, a morally alert and concerned citizenry?”

Robert Corrigan, President,
San Francisco State
University, August 2004

“How and what do we do in higher education to return to our public purpose and civic mission?...Higher education [can] provide students with the opportunities to become civically engaged. We know from our experience that concentration on a concrete problem leads students to political engagement. We know that connecting studies with problem-solving service in the community deepens, complicates, and challenges students’ learning. It turns them into knowledge producers, not just knowledge consumers. They become citizen scholars who renew our democratic society.”

Toni Murdock, President,
Antioch University–Seattle,
May 2004

For my family, and advisors and colleagues at the University of Kentucky.

Public Post-Secondary Experiential Internship:

A qualitative evaluation of Wildcat Interest Group’s Student Internship Program at the University of Kentucky, and its benchmark competitors

By Nolan M. Jackson
Honors Program of the University of Kentucky
Copyright © December 2012