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## U.S. Foreign Service Internship

An international affairs experiential learning program.

**Background:** Established in 2014, the U.S. Foreign Service Internship Program (USFSIP) is an opportunity for select students to participate in a paid, two-summer experience that exposes them to U.S. diplomacy and the Department of State. The Foreign Service Act of 1980 mandated that the Department provide internships for underrepresented groups. This program was designed to provide those opportunities.

**Overview:** The USFSIP consists of participation for two consecutive summers. In the first, participants come to Washington for instruction on U.S. diplomatic history, professional writing, current issues and career skills as well as online training and field trips to other foreign affairs agencies. Following the classroom period, they work on policy desks in regional and functional bureaus. The second summer is a ten week assignment to a U.S. embassy overseas. In the intervening year, USFSIP interns must maintain their academic standing and take the written FS Officer Test to gain a better understanding of the FS assessment process.

**Benefits:** Students are paid for their time (as a GS-4 equivalent). The Department provides travel costs and housing assistance. Students also may receive additional training through the Foreign Service Institute and further mentoring from experienced State Department personnel.

**Eligibility:** Students must be U.S. citizens, enrolled in a degree program and have a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or above. They must be rising juniors or seniors when they start the program, i.e. in their sophomore or junior year when applying. Students submit an online application that includes a statement of interest, several short essays, current academic transcripts, two references, and a copy of their FAFSA Student Aid Report. They must receive a security clearance in order to participate and remain in good academic standing to continue.



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**Recruiting:** We have mobilized Diplomats-in-Residence (DIRs) to serve as talent-scouts across the country. In line with the legislation's original intent and our current needs, we have asked them to focus State's limited recruiting resources on building up a diverse and talented applicant pool for this and other student programs. The USFSIP selection committee takes the DIR recommendations into account. This approach is like alumni interviewers for college: not a requirement for selection but a helpful network for in-person assessments. In addition, an announcement of this opening is on the [www.careers.state.gov](http://www.careers.state.gov) website at the appropriate time.

**Selection:** The merit-based selection criteria are based on the range of skills needed for success in the Foreign Service. These skills are tied to dimensions sought in Foreign Service candidates: Cultural Adaptability; Information Integration and Analysis; Initiative and Leadership; Judgment; Oral Communication; Written Communication; Planning and Organizing; Working with Others. In addition, the selection committee considers financial need and other adverse circumstances.

The USFSIP is not an employment program leading to a Federal appointment or conversion to a career position.



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