

What You Should Expect as an Intern in the *Public Service Internship Program*

While each program has different expectations and serves different students and stakeholders, the Internship Program of the Institute for Public Service provides opportunities for students to gain valuable experience and contacts with employers and connects local governments and industries with outstanding young professionals emerging from colleges and universities. Both students and the employers benefit from participation in this internship.

Some interns participate as a requirement for class credit, and others are interested simply for the experience and exposure with local governments, associations and agencies of the state. The internships are located but application is not limited to universities or students in Tennessee.

All interns should expect a number of very positive benefits:

- An internship should give you an opportunity to experience public service at the local government level, and at IPS we try to structure this in a manner that makes this possible. Your faculty advisor is involved and available to you for guidance, but IPS agencies will also assign a local government consultant to assist and to introduce you to the professional staff and elected members of local governments and agencies.
- Interns are generally assigned to a particular project. Consultants supervise the interns, approve timesheets for UT, and work with the government's staff to give the government and the student a worthwhile experience.
- Students should always help out on a variety of tasks as necessary, as most professional staff do, but generally should not be assigned to lengthy receptionist or clerical duties.
- You should have an opportunity to participate in policy discussions and to observe meetings of elected and appointed members of the local government or agency.
- Meetings are often an important part of public service, and these will allow you, as an intern, to observe and even participate in discussions about services, projects, and programs that are important to the people of that community and of this state.
- Local government service should be inspirational for the residents and staff, and an internship at the local government level should be an inspiring experience for you as well. Public service is interesting, important, and often difficult, and your faculty advisor, consultant/mentor, and the agency contact should help you to participate in local government discussions, and help you with the perspective to properly understand and improve the processes and projects required in effective public service.

On behalf of the staff and leadership of your graduate or undergraduate program, staff and leadership of the Institute for Public Service, and the local governments and agencies served by the IPS public service internship program, we hope that your experience is worthwhile, beneficial, and inspirational.