



VIRTUAL SCIENCE POLICY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Fall 2010 Application

Final Application Due Date: September 20, 2010.

Phone Interview Schedule: September 20 – 24, 2010, 11 AM – 1 PM. 1 PM – 4 PM.

Internship Start and End Dates: September 27 – December 10, 2010.

Mission: As a nonprofit organization, SEA promotes evidence-based decision making at all levels of government.

We pursue this mission by encouraging members of the scientific community to become engaged in US politics and the policy-making process.

Internship details:

SEA invites undergraduate and graduate students to take part in the Science Policy Internship Program. During this ten-week course, interns dedicate eight to ten hours each week to studying specific areas of science policy, science communication and the various and often unknown ways that members of the US science communities positively influence public policy.

Interns collaborate in groups to analyze weekly readings, write policy briefs, and develop substantial and persuasive talking points. Intern research teams are led by Science Policy Fellows – postdoctoral scholars and science communicators. Science Policy Fellows help interns to develop confidence within a given research area, encouraging creative problem-solving through lively weekly conference calls, and offering advice to young scientists, engineers and health professionals who are still working to solidify their future goals.

Applicants of all nationalities are considered and accepted for these positions.

Specific internship requirements (per week):

4 hours: for independent research and analysis.

2 hours: for research team conference calls, preparation and participation.

2 hours: Science Policy Virtual Seminars, preparation and participation.

Also: One or Two 2.5-hour pre-determined Civic Engagement Workshops.

*** All work for this internship will be completed virtually. No in-person commitment is required.

Please review the rest of this application, and email it to SEA's Program Director Brie Welzer (Brielle.Welzer@sefora.org) no later than 5 PM on September 20, 2010. Applications will be considered in the order that they are received.

Descriptions of Intern Research Teams for the Fall 2010 Semester

Please number your level of interest from 1 – 5. (1 = of most interest, 5 = of least interest)

- ___ Health Policy Research
- ___ Forensic Science Policy Research
- ___ Personalized Medicine Research
- ___ Water Security Research
- ___ Science Communications Research

Health Policy Research Team, led by Cathy Vrentas, Ph.D. This group will investigate obesity as a public health issue in America, and will consider the potential sources of racial and economic disparities in obesity and health. Interns will review literature that describes proposed interventions like soda taxes, city and employer exercise programs, food policy changes and changes in K-12 school food programs. They will apply this research to their own community through a series of investigations and short assignments that will then be applied to the creation of a final report making policy recommendations for their own community.

Finally, each intern will submit either an op-ed piece or letters to their legislators and/or mayor that communicates these recommendations. Interns with interests in public health, medicine, biology, geography and/or statistics may be particularly interested in this committee, but interns of all backgrounds are welcome.

Forensic Science Action Team, led by Jamie Vernon, Ph.D. This group will focus on policies that can literally be the difference between life and death for thousands of Americans. Specifically, you will analyze policies related to forensic science. According to a 2009 report issued by The National Research Council, the US forensic-science system is under-funded, lacks oversight and is poorly supported by research. Because of these deficiencies in the system, the risk of executing an innocent person is unacceptably high. You will examine the current state of forensic science and suggest policies that will improve the science used by prosecutors in our courts of law. In addition, you will help to create an internet-based **Forensic Science Policy Network** to share our findings with the public.

Personalized Medicine Research Team, led by Mary Cloud Ammons, Ph.D. The recent announcement by the FDA to regulate the sales of personal genetic test kits as medical devices has brought the issue of personalized medicine to the forefront of future medical care; however, the issues of personalized medicine goes well beyond our ability to now test for genetic signatures associated with disease prediction. The focus for this internship group will go beyond the current issue of over-the-counter genetic tests and address how health care in the information age

Water Security Research Team, led by Matt Wenham, Ph.D. In many areas around the world, fresh water is a scarce resource and access to it is a major concern. Uses such as human consumption, agriculture, power generation and environmental management compete for limited supplies, leading to conflicts between communities, industries and sometimes nations. The Water Security group will look at policy issues around the provision of fresh water at the local, national and international level, ranging from local water supply in the US to cross-border water conflicts. We will particularly focus on how scientific research can inform policy decisions to ensure equitable and sustainable access to this vital resource.

Science Communication Team, led by Michele Kadnar, Ph.D. This group will examine the link between science communication and media, politics, and ultimately public opinion. We will examine strategies for communicating science and how they can influence support for a particular policy. Each intern will choose a topic of their own interest to investigate how different communication strategies can affect the public's perception of the scientific message and, ultimately, legislation related to that issue. The variety of topics examined in the group will allow for the comparison of different communication techniques.

Required Information

Name:

Email address:

Home phone/cell phone:

Mailing Address (Street & Apt #, City, State, ZIP):

Permanent Address:

Languages (Check all that apply): Spanish
 Chinese
 Other: _____

Education Information

Current School:

Check one of the following: High School
 College
 Trade School
 Graduate School

Graduation Year:

Academic Concentration(s):

Extracurricular Activities:

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Please answer the below questions with one clear, concise and focused paragraph.

1. Why do you want to be an SEA Virtual Intern?
2. How did you hear about SEA's Virtual Science Policy Internship?
3. How will you prepare to succeed as a participant in *virtual* internship?
4. This internship requires an ability to speak eloquently and impartially about controversial science, engineering and health issues during weekly conference calls. Please describe a previous situation where you accomplished this (subjects can be diverse, or non-science policy).
5. Describe your future goals relevant to this internship.

Additional Requests

6. Write a 5 – 6 sentence biography, written in the third person, which will be listed on your SEA profile page, if you are selected for this position.
7. Attach a headshot of high resolution no smaller than 100 x 100 pixels, and no larger than 120 x 120 pixels – that is appropriate to be posted on SEA's website.
8. Copy and paste a 300-word writing sample into this Word document. The writing should focus on any science, technology, health issues or political analysis. We are most interested in observing the applicant's persuasive writing skills.
9. Please choose two times and days from the options below when you will be available for a phone interview.
 - Sept. 20 Morning.
 - Sept. 20 Afternoon.
 - Sept. 21 Morning.
 - Sept. 21 Afternoon.
 - Sept. 22 Morning
 - Sept. 22 Afternoon
 - Sept. 23 Morning
 - Sept. 23 Afternoon.
10. Please identify the most convenient phone number to reach you at during these times.

Thank you for your interest in SEA's Fall 2010 Science Policy Virtual Internship Program. We will be in touch with you immediately after reviewing your information, and look forward to learning more about your interests during the phone interview sessions.