



West Virginia Legislature

Judith A. Herndon Fellowship Program

Application Packet – 2027 Regular Session

Legislative Internship Committee
<https://www.wvlegislature.gov/educational/internship.cfm>

Judith A. Herndon Legislative Fellows Program

Goals of the Program

The Judith A. Herndon Legislative Fellows Program is an internship sponsored by the West Virginia Legislature. The primary goal of the Fellows Program is to instruct selected full-time undergraduate students from institutions of higher learning in West Virginia in theory and operation of legislatures and legislative bodies in their multidimensional aspects and roles. While the general theoretical background encompasses the American legislative process in general, practical application focuses on the process as exemplified by the West Virginia Legislature.

The Fellows Program was established as a pilot project by the Joint Committee on Government and Finance in May 1980. It was established as a permanent legislative program by House Concurrent Resolution No. 35 in April 1981. In accordance with the guidelines established by the Joint Committee on Government and Finance and implemented by the Program Committee, the Fellows develop a wide range of skills and knowledge regarding the legislative process. Although the program of individual Fellows will vary, basically the student is introduced to and develops an understanding of the politics of legislation, legislative research and research materials, bill drafting, the role and function of legislative committees, constitutional restraints on the legislature, legislative rules, constituent services, and executive and legislative liaison and relationships. The Fellows also develop a broad understanding of the budgetary process with emphasis upon the legislative role in budget enactment as well as the oversight functions pertaining to the operation of the executive branch.

Program Administration

Coordination of the Fellows Program is vested by the Joint Committee on Government and Finance in the Legislative Intern Committee. The Program Director is responsible for academic guidance and supervision and for the administration of the program. This person is nominated by the Intern Committee and is appointed by the President and the Speaker. They serve at the pleasure of the Intern Committee.

Student Selection

To be eligible for the Fellows Program a student must have completed a minimum of 60 undergraduate semester hours or the equivalent with an academic grade point average sufficient to admit him or her to the degree program of his or her choice. At the time of making application the student must be enrolled at their home institution on a full-time basis and must be in good academic standing. Students on academic or social probation are ineligible to apply for the Herndon Fellowship. Similarly, no student may serve as a Fellow if he or she is subsequently placed on academic or social probation for the period which would include the Fellowship. In addition, each applicant is required to have taken at least one college course in political science unless, in the judgment of the Program Committee, the student's record displays an active and sustained interest in public affairs or in the political process.

Each four-year college and university in the State, both public and private, has been requested to participate in the Fellows Program. Each institution designates a faculty liaison, responsible for publicizing the program, collecting applications, and nominating candidates to the Program Committee.

From the applications received from the participating institutions, the Intern Committee selects the most outstanding applicants for an interview. The Fellows are selected from this group of interviewees.

Assignment of Fellows

All Committee Chairs may express an interest in supervising a Fellow. From the list of interested committees, assignments are made by the Intern Committee.

At the Conclusion of the Legislative Session, Fellows are assigned to various Legislative, Executive, and Judicial positions for the duration of their 16-week program (typically three to four weeks).

Orientation

During the first week in January, the Fellows are given an orientation to state government in general and to the legislature in particular. In addition to formal sessions conducted by the Program Director, the Fellows may meet with guest speakers who may consist of the Governor, heads of major executive departments, and with key legislative staff and support people. Each Fellow receives 12 semester hours of academic credit. At the end of the program the Program Director recommends a letter grade for the credit hours as follows:

Internship: six hours

Seminar in Legislative Behavior: three hours

Readings and Research: three hours

The grade for the six hours of intern credit is based on observations made by the Program Director and from evaluations made by the legislative supervisor. The seminar grade and the readings and research grades are based on weekly meetings of the Fellows with the Program Director and on formal papers presented at the end of the program. A formal evaluation and copies of the papers written by each Fellow are forwarded to the student's faculty liaison.

Available Positions

Up to ten Herndon Fellowship positions may be filled each year.

Length of Program

The Herndon program runs from January to mid-April.

Stipend

Each Herndon Fellow receives a stipend of \$1,300, paid bi-weekly (\$5,200 total).

Daily Schedule

Student interns are required to keep daily schedules per the instruction of the legislative leader and/or supervisor to whom they are assigned. Please note: Historically, during the first several weeks of the session, typical days run from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. However, during the mid-to-latter weeks of the session, interns may be required to report to the Capitol early in the mornings, to stay late into the evenings and/or to work weekends. The pace increases dramatically as the session nears completion. While certain absences may be unavoidable and therefore are excused, frequent missed work hours may result in removal from the internship program.

Accommodations and Transportation

Housing, meals and daily transportation to and from the State Capitol are the responsibilities of the student interns.

Please note: Furnished and unfurnished apartments are typically available for short-term rental in the "Historic East End" of Charleston, located within walking distance of the Capitol. The committee can provide a list of other legislative interns who are seeking roommates to share housing during their stay in Charleston. (In past years, many legislative interns have roomed together and successfully reduced their living expenses.)

Charleston offers frequent bus service for those without personal vehicles who choose to live outside walking distance of the Capitol. In addition, many past interns have formed informal carpool systems. For those not within walking distance, parking permits are available to interns during the 60-day legislative session.

As for food, the Capitol maintains a cafeteria (open for breakfast and lunch) and a few vending machines.

Application Deadline for 2027 Program

November 1, 2026, is the deadline for submitting Judith Herndon Fellowship applications. Students should check with the faculty liaison at their home institution about whether to submit the application through the liaison or directly to the legislative coordinators, Casey Long and Brittany Carowick. Applicants should also ensure that the recommendation letters from their listed references reach the liaison by that date.

**ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE
November 1, 2026**

Late or incomplete applications will NOT be considered

The Legislature's Intern Committee will interview applicants at the State Capitol in Charleston, West Virginia after this date. Applicants selected for interviews will be notified of the specific time and location of this interview. Virtual options may be available upon request.

Mail Completed Application to:

Casey Long
West Virginia State Senate
Legislative Internship Committee
1900 Kanawha Blvd. E.
Building 1, Room 227-M
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Applicants may also email all documents to intern@wvlegislature.gov.
Please place "Herndon Fellowship" in the subject line.

**Application
Judith A. Herndon Legislative Fellows**

1. Name:

(LAST)

(FIRST)

(MIDDLE)

2. Campus Address

Street Address:

Apt/Suite:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Home Phone:

Cellphone:

Email:

3. Permanent Address

Street Address:

Apt/Suite:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

4. Age:

5. College or University:

Credit hours to be completed by the end of current semester:

Major:

Minor:

Present Cumulative Grade Point Average:

Expected Date of Graduation:

6. Name at least one course in political science that you have taken at the college level

7. Academic Honors

8. Extracurricular Activities

9. Work Experience (Dates, Employes, Responsibilities)

10. Please check up to three committees that would be of most interest to you as an intern:

Agriculture

Health and Human Resources

Banking and Insurance

Judiciary

Economic Development

Military

Education

Natural Resources

Energy, Industry and Mining

Pensions

Finance

Transportation and Infrastructure

Government Organization

Workforce

Select Committee on Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health

Other

11. Please attach a typewritten personal statement describing your qualifications, career goals, interests in state government, and reasons for applying to the Herndon Legislative Fellows Program.

12. Have you ever been charged with a felony? YES ___ NO ___

13. May we conduct a background check on you? YES ___ NO ___

14. List the faculty members who have been requested to send letters of recommendation on your behalf:

Name

Address

Telephone

15. Emergency Contact

Name

Address

Phone Number (Home)

Phone Number (Cell)

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Judith A. Herndon Legislative Fellows Program

Letter of Recommendation

(Print) Student's Last Name _____

First _____

Middle _____

The above-named student is an applicant for the Herndon Legislative Fellows program. If accepted into this program, the student will spend the entire forthcoming legislative session in Charleston in a work/study environment.

1. How well and in what capacity have you know this student?

2. Please compare this student with others you have known in terms of the following criteria (Top 5%, Top 10%, Top 25%, Top 50%, Lower 50%, No basis for Judgement):

Dependability _____

Motivation _____

Ability to work with others _____

Native intellectual ability _____

Breadth of general knowledge _____

Ability in oral expression _____

Ability in written expression _____

Emotional maturity _____

3. Would you recommend this student without reservation for placement in a legislative internship? If not, please explain.

Name (Please Print) _____ Date _____

Position or Title _____ College/University _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Note: You may submit your letter of recommendation directly to the Legislature's Intern Committee at intern@wvlegislature.gov, or you may give it to the student to include in their application packet.

Judith A. Herndon Legislative Fellows Program

Letter of Recommendation

(Print) Student's Last Name _____

First _____

Middle _____

The above-named student is an applicant for the Herndon Legislative Fellows program. If accepted into this program, the student will spend the entire forthcoming legislative session in Charleston in a work/study environment.

1. How well and in what capacity have you know this student?

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Dependability _____

Motivation _____

Ability to work with others _____

Native intellectual ability _____

Breadth of general knowledge _____

Ability in oral expression _____

Ability in written expression _____

Emotional maturity _____

3. Would you recommend this student without reservation for placement in a legislative internship? If not, please explain.

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Position or Title _____ College/University _____

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Signature _____

Note: You may submit your letter of recommendation directly to the Legislature's Intern Committee at intern@wvlegislature.gov, or you may give it to the student to include in their application packet.

Judith A. Herndon Legislative Fellows Program

Letter of Recommendation

(Print) Student's Last Name _____

First _____

Middle _____

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1. How well and in what capacity have you know this student?

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Application Check List

On the list below, please place a check mark next to each document that you have obtained. Each document must be submitted with your completed application to be considered for the program. Please include this check list with your other application materials.

- Completed application form
 - Typewritten personal statement (item 11 on the application form)
 - Three letters of recommendation (may include professors or work supervisors)
 - Name of Recommendation 1: _____
 - Name of Recommendation 2: _____
 - Name of Recommendation 3: _____
 - Up-to-date copies of your complete college transcripts
 - Resume (optional)
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Judith A. Herndon Legislative Fellows Program Letter of Recommendation Student Waiver
(To be completed by student applicant)

I waive my right to see these letters of recommendation

I do not waive my right to see these letters of recommendation

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Return To _____ (Faculty Representative)

Please Note: check with the faculty liaison at your home institution about whether to submit the application through the liaison or directly to the legislative coordinators.

