



## **MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

The following information can also be found on the Legislative Assembly home page at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature> with a link to the Internship Program.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The Manitoba Legislative Internship Program was established in 1985 by the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. It is intended to serve three broad purposes.

The program provides graduates of Manitoba's universities or graduates of other universities who are permanent residents of Manitoba with an opportunity to experience firsthand the legislative process within the Manitoba Legislature. In addition to being directly involved with the legislative process, the Interns participate in a series of seminars dealing with all aspects of the governmental process.

The program also provides MLAs of the recognized political parties represented in the Assembly with competent and educated assistance in policy research and constituency work. It enables them to delegate some constituency and other matters to Interns and frees them to deal more effectively with the specialized and complicated legislative issues.

The long-term goal of the program is to develop a group of young Manitobans who understand the cabinet-parliamentary system and the role of elected representatives within it. A knowledge of, and an appreciation for, the role of the Legislative body as an institution within our political system among a group of potential leaders will be valuable to society.

### **RECRUITMENT & SELECTION**

Interns are recruited through a competition advertised at Manitoba's universities and at universities elsewhere in Canada. Posters for the program appear in December and application forms can be obtained from the Dean/s of faculty and Politics, Political Sciences/Studies, and other academic department offices of Manitoba universities or from the Academic Director for the program. The deadline for the submission of applications is the **14<sup>th</sup> of February**. Advertising posters and a small supply of application forms are sent to other Canadian Universities.

The selection committee for the Internship Program consists of the Academic Director for the program, an MLA representing each of the recognized political parties in the Assembly, faculty members from Manitoba universities other than the institution represented by the Academic Director, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and a currently serving Legislative Intern. Copies of all applications are sent to every member of the selection committee for examination. At least 12 candidates are selected for an interview, lasting 30-35 minutes, which is usually held in late March or early April. Successful candidates are notified soon after the interviews are completed. Six candidates are chosen annually to serve as Interns.

Applicants should:

1. Have a university degree with academic excellence in any discipline by the time of the start of the internship year;
2. Have facility in written and oral communication in English; knowledge of written and spoken French will be considered a strong asset;
3. Show ability to conduct independent research and write reports. Applicants invited for interview will be asked to do a short written assignment following the interview.
4. Demonstrate evidence of involvement in extracurricular activities.

The choice of Interns is based upon several criteria.

- Personal maturity of the candidate.
- Ability to work well in a group, and willingness to give priority to official responsibilities over personal priorities.
- Evidence of original thinking in problem solving.
- Capacity for independent work and initiative.
- Tact and discretion.
- Commitment to the academic component of the program.

A complete application must include 7 copies (including the original) of each of the following:

-  a completed application form;
-  a statement of motivation of not more than 250 words;
-  three letters of reference from academics,
-  copies of the university transcripts of the applicant; and
-  a one page résumé.

In preparing their applications, candidates should keep the following in mind:

- Academic excellence implies a strong academic record as indicated by transcripts and letters of reference.
- Letters of reference should be obtained from university instructors who can attest to the academic achievement and suitability of the candidate for the Internship.
- In the statement of motivation, candidates should indicate the basis for their interest in the Internship, how their background has prepared them for the program, what they seek to contribute to the program, and what benefits they hope to derive from it.
- It will benefit candidates if they present evidence, through transcripts, letters of reference, and their own statements, of their knowledge and interest in Manitoba.
- Candidates should recognize that the continuing success of the program depends upon their conduct, performance and discretion. The selection committee will be interested in such personal qualities as: maturity, judgement, responsibility, initiative, and respect for confidentiality.

In the case of applicants who are studying out-of-province, the program will arrange for interviews by Skype.

## **TERM OF THE PROGRAM AND STIPENDS**

Successful applicants are engaged on a ten-month contract from the beginning of September to the end of June of the following year.

Each Intern receives an annual stipend paid bi-weekly (\$1,473.93 before deductions).

In addition to the stipend, Interns participate in expenses paid study trips to the House of Commons and to other legislatures as arranged each year. The study trips are part of the internship program.

## **ASSIGNMENT OF INTERNS TO CAUCUSES AND THEIR DUTIES**

Interns are employees of the Legislative Assembly and are assigned to the caucuses of the recognized political parties. The entire term is spent with the caucus to which each Intern is initially assigned.

The Internship is a full-time position on the staff of the Legislative Assembly. On a daily basis, Interns receive direction and assignments from the Research Director for their respective caucuses and from individual MLAs. During their term, Interns should expect to undertake a wide variety of tasks. These may include: long and short-term research projects, preparing questions for Question Period, writing briefing papers on a wide range of issues, handling constituency matters, drafting correspondence, writing speaking notes and greetings, arranging and attending meetings and taking notes of the proceedings, monitoring and clipping newspapers and performing a number of routine clerical tasks. During a legislative session, Interns can expect to be especially busy and to work long hours.

## **THE ACADEMIC COMPONENT**

The academic component of the program consists of five elements:

- 1. Orientation period** - An initial series of seminars with the Academic Director, the Clerk of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, MLAs and senior officials at the beginning of September introduces Interns to the principles and operation of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.
- 2. Seminars** - Scheduled throughout the internship with leading figures within the political system and government, business, community and non-profit sector. Ideally, these seminars will be held weekly or bi-weekly at a regular time.
- 3. Study Trips to Parliament and other Legislatures** – The trips usually take place in late winter or early spring. The purpose of these study trips is to familiarize Interns with the parliamentary process at the federal and provincial level in Canada. An intense program of seminars and meetings is arranged with leading government and political figures, parliamentary and legislative officials, journalists, academics, as well as with Parliamentary or legislative Interns.
- 4. Research Paper** - Each intern is required to write an academic research paper during his/her Internship. The paper will deal with some aspect of Manitoba public policy. Interns' papers will be made available to party caucuses and placed in the Reading Room of the Legislative Library.
- 5. Evaluation** - Each intern is required to submit at the end of the internship period an evaluation identifying the advantages and disadvantages of the program, benefits she/he derived from it, and recommending changes that could improve it.

## **ACADEMIC RECOGNITION**

Individuals who complete the Internship Program may apply to the Department of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba and to the joint Manitoba-Winnipeg MPA program for course credit at the graduate level.

## **FORMER INTERNS**

Graduates of the program have gone on to higher studies in history, law, political science, public administration and economics. Others have pursued careers in law, journalism, the public service, business, and in the service of the Assembly itself. The incumbent Clerk of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly is a former Intern while two currently serving MLAs are former Interns. The Internship offers a unique educational opportunity for young Manitobans and has provided MLAs with competent and educated research assistance. From time to time, events are held to recognize both former and current Interns.