# Domestic Public Sector Studies Programs

The Public Sector Studies Program at Santa Clara University offers an introduction to the areas traditionally known as public policy, public administration, public affairs, and urban planning. It is designed to provide a closer look at the creation, implementation, and analysis of public policies, and the operation of government, public, and nonprofit organizations. The program also provides an excellent foundation for students who want to pursue graduate studies in public policy or public administration and an alternative perspective for students who wish to pursue public law.

## Opportunities for Firsthand Study

Through the Public Sector Studies Program in the Department of Political Science, students have the opportunity to participate in public sector internships, the Washington Semester Program, and the Panetta Institute Congressional Internship program. These programs offer preparation and training for students interested in working at the city, county, state, or federal level of government, in a public agency or nonprofit organization, or considering graduate-level studies in related fields.

## Internships

Perhaps the best way to understand is by doing—students participating in public sector internships not only observe what happens in the “real world,” but they are able to take part as well, gaining invaluable experience and knowledge. Placements in public sector internships have included the San Jose mayor’s and City Council members’ offices, district offices of members of Congress and the California Legislature, government relations departments of high-tech corporations, public law offices including the Santa Clara county public defender and district attorney, political campaigns, and nonprofit organizations. Many students complete their internships with excellent employment prospects.

## The Washington Semester Program

In the Washington Semester Program, students combine coursework taken at American University with hands-on experience via internships. In the past, SCU students have interned at the White House, the Justice Department, the FBI, interest groups, broadcast news stations, various nonprofit organizations, and offices of members of the U.S. House of Representatives. The Washington Semester Program offers students the opportunity to live, study, and work in our nation’s capital for one semester along with students from other U.S. states and from countries abroad. Numerous programs of study are available, including American politics and U.S. foreign policy. Students participating in the Washington Semester Program earn up to 24 quarter credits for one semester of study. Grades and units received at American University will count toward the student’s SCU grade point average and the course requirements for the department and the University, when appropriate.

## The Panetta Institute Congressional Internship Program

The Leon and Sylvia Panetta Institute for Public Policy at California State University, Monterey Bay, founded by Santa Clara political science alumnus Leon Panetta, offers an opportunity for students to gain an inside look at the legislative branch of the U.S. federal government and Washington, D.C., politics. This congressional internship begins with a two-week course at California State University, Monterey Bay, where students work directly with seasoned veterans examining the legislative process and its functions. The remaining two-and-a-half months of the internship are spent in Washington, D.C., working on Capitol Hill in the office of a member of the California congressional delegation. One exceptional Santa Clara University student is chosen each year for this fully subsidized internship.

## Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in one of these public sector studies programs, students must have completed at least 88 quarter units of credit by the date that the program of study begins, must not be on academic or disciplinary probation, and must be in good financial standing with the University. Students must also meet grade point average and other eligibility requirements for the specific program.

For more information about the Public Sector Studies Program, contact the [Political Science Department website](https://www.scu.edu/cas/political-science/).