Department of Government

GUIDE TO LEARNING OUTSIDE THE TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM

INTRODUCTION

Academic coursework is an essential part of a college education. Students learn important facts and theories as well as develop critical thinking skills by taking a variety of courses. Each academic major is built on a set of required and elective courses. Increasingly, however, studies have identified a number of "high impact educational practices" that can occur inside or outside the traditional classroom. These practices often generate the most intellectually significant and personally rewarding experiences for undergraduate students. Many of these practices are already embedded in our traditional courses, such as writing-intensive seminars, group projects, and research papers. But many are not, and this guide is designed to introduce students to important opportunities in the Government Department that lie outside the classroom.

Although students are not required to take advantage of any of these opportunities (and we simply do not have enough opportunities for every Government major), it might be useful to know more about these opportunities before deciding whether or not to pursue them. This guide provides brief summaries for several of these opportunities, with information about the nature of the work, the main benefits, any required or recommended steps that students should take before applying, and whom to contact for more information. While some of these opportunities are appropriate for freshmen and sophomores, others are more likely to be taken by juniors and seniors. Our hope is that this guide will provide students in the Government Department with a better idea of the many ways available to enrich their education, and help them to plan ahead.

This list of opportunities is not exhaustive. Some faculty might be interested in having student research assistants, but are not listed here. The best way to find out is to ask them, in person or by email. (And they might say "no.") You can find individual faculty members here: http://www.wm.edu/as/government/faculty/directory/index.php.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AidData

Bosnia Project

Center for African Development (CAD)

Directed Research (GOVT 394)

Dunn Civil Liberties Project

Honors Thesis (GOVT 495, 496)

Independent Study (GOVT 494)

Individual faculty projects

International Justice Lab (IJL)

Internship (GOVT 498, 499)

Local Government Summer Institute

Political Psychology and International Relations (PPIR) Lab

Project on International Peace and Security (PIPS)

Social Networks and Political Psychology (SNaPP) Lab

Social Science Research Methods Center (SSRMC)

Systematic Text Analysis for International Relations (STAIR) Lab

Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project

WHAT: AidData

AidData is a project housed within the Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations (ITPIR) at William & Mary. AidData is a research and innovation lab based that seeks to improve development outcomes by making development finance data more accessible and actionable. The team focuses on helping to make foreign aid information more accessible and usable to policymakers, civil society organizations, journalists, and researchers; and creating tools that enable users to more effectively target, coordinate, deliver, and evaluate aid.

AidData employs around 120 undergraduate students per semester and also hires students for the summer session. Students can apply to join teams performing data collection tasks (Geocoding, Tracking Under-reported Financial Flows (TUFF), Non-Traditional Donors, Activity Coding, and Survey Practice) and can occasionally apply for spots on the Partnerships & Communications Team, Policy Analysis Team, Data Uptake Team, and Research and Evaluation Unit. Students generally train through an unpaid internship for one semester and then have the opportunity to be considered for paid Research Assistant positions after successful completion of training.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Intern recruitment generally occurs during the first two weeks of each semester (for fall and spring) and shortly after Spring Break (for summer). Keep an eye out for announcements in Student Happenings and from professors.

GOOD REASONS TO JOIN:

Get hands-on research experience in international development.
Have the opportunity to learn new skills through trainings from AidData staff (GIS, R, career development).
Become part of the ITPIR network (could benefit you in the job search later on!).
Meet other students and faculty members interested in international development.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

Interest in international development research.
Willingness and ability to learn complex coding methodologies quickly.
Attention to detail.
10 hours per week to dedicate to Intern/Research Assistant work.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENT:

Takes some courses on international topics and research methods to understand the context of AidData's work.
Talk to current AidData students to learn what they actually do on a day-to-day basis working for AidData.

FOR MORE INFO: http://aiddata.org/short-term-opportunities

WHAT: Bosnia Project

The Bosnia Project is both the oldest international community engagement trip (since 1999) at W&M and the project that provides the longest in-country field service experience – four weeks. The Bosnia Project features collaboration between students from different majors across the College and non-governmental organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina (hereafter, Bosnia). Its mission is to bring together W&M and Bosnian students to foster cross-cultural understanding and leadership, as well as to empower Bosnian youth. Together with University of Sarajevo Education students selected by our local partners, the NGO Creativus, and University of Sarajevo Professor Larisa Kasumagic-Kafedzic, W&M students co-teach free English and cross-cultural skills to approximately 90 Bosnian children a year, over four weeks. The Bosnia Project distinguishes itself by its long-term commitment to its mission, sustained collaboration with local partners, responsiveness to evolving local needs, rigorous project evaluation, and the production of creative short films as a teaching tool.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Students must apply in the fall semester, usually by mid-October.
In the spring, 5-7 project participants take a three-credit interdisciplinary course taught by Professor Paula Pickering with the assistance of one to two teaching assistants from project alumni. This course meets COLL 300 requirements and helps students develop knowledge of the political, social, and cultural dynamics of the region; strategies for student-centered teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) and cross-cultural collaboration; and critical approaches to post-conflict reconstruction, community partnership, and collaborative research overseas.
During the summer, students spend 4 weeks living with Bosnian host families and teaching ESL and inter-cultural communication to youth (ages 8-15) in Sarajevo. This time also includes weekly oral reflections among W&M and Bosnian participants, cross-cultural collaborative research, and Bosnian-guided weekend trips to cultural sites.

GOOD REASONS TO DO THIS:

This is a great opportunity for students interested in making a difference in the world and getting to know another culture in depth and up close. By helping young people develop a positive self-image and respect for differences, the Bosnia Project aims to lay a few blocks in the foundation of a lasting peace.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

No specific requirements, but the selection process is rigorous.

RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS BE:

Inquisitive, creative, responsible, open-minded, and enthusiastic about cultural exchange.
Eager to teach, but also easygoing and capable of adjusting to changing circumstances or evolving expectations (because not everything will go as planned).
Interested or experienced in cultural immersion.

FOR MORE INFO:

https://wmbosniaproject.wordpress.com/
http://www.wm.edu/offices/itpir/bosnia-project/index.php

WHAT: Center for African Development

The Center for African Development (CAD) conducts policy-relevant research on mobile technology and development; governance and state-building; and armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa.

GOOD REASONS TO DO THIS:

CAD provides students with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of African politics, societies, and development through direct interactions with African communities and leaders. W&M students are engaged as research collaborators both in Williamsburg and in Liberia, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

FOR MORE INFO:

http://www.wm.edu/offices/itpir/cad/index.php
Professor Phil Roessler (https://philiproessler.net/)

WHAT: Directed Research (GOVT 394)

Students will work individually or in teams as directed by a Government faculty member. They will develop important research skills that are difficult to acquire in a traditional classroom setting. Examples include coding data, creating and modifying databases, reviewing manuscripts for publication, writing grant proposals, and conducting experiments. Students who enroll in GOVT 394 are often involved with one of the other research projects, labs, or centers described in this guide. Directed Research offers a way to earn course credit for some of those research experiences.

This class offers 1-3 course credits, is graded, and may be repeated for credit. Unlike Independent Study or Internship, which are also variable-credit, Directed Research does not necessarily require a final paper or set of papers. Unlike Independent Study or Internship, students engaged with Directed Research have less control over the topics or research questions being investigated. They usually work on projects that faculty members have picked.

Students may not count more than 6 credits combined for Government 394, 494, 498, and 499 toward the Government major.

Note: GOVT 394 is a recent addition to the Government Department's course offerings, which is one reason why its structure is less defined than Honors Thesis, Independent Study, or Internship courses.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Fall or spring semesters, depending on faculty interest and availability.

GOOD REASONS TO DO THIS:

To acquire analytical skills that are not developed much in traditional courses.

To acquire analytical skills that might be useful when writing an Honors Thesis or Independent Study.

To earn course credit for meaningful research experiences.

IMPORTANT QUALIFICATIONS:

Students must have instructor permission to enroll in GOVT 394.

That instructor must be a tenured or tenure-track member of the Government Department.

Each student must work with the instructor to create a "learning contract" that specifies in advance what the student will do and how the student will benefit from this experience.

That contract must be reviewed by the chair of the Government Department or by his/her designee.

Students may not receive course credit and be paid for the same research experience.

FOR MORE INFO:

Ask your faculty advisor, or poke around the Department. Opportunities to conduct Directed Research do not appear on a regular schedule.

WHAT: Dunn Civil Liberties Project

Timothy P. Dunn and Ellen Stofan established the H. Stewart Dunn Jr. Civil Liberties Project in 2011 to inspire undergraduate and law students at William & Mary to lend their talents to protecting civil liberties afforded U.S. citizens by the Constitution. The Project funds a variety of programs across the campus of William & Mary and in the community, with the goal of enhancing knowledge of civil liberties and encouraging future generations of graduates to devote their time to advancing civil liberties causes. The main programs include:

- Summer internships for undergraduate and law students with organizations that support and protect civil liberties;
- Research projects by undergraduate and graduate students with faculty assistance on topics related to and supporting civil liberties;
- Guest lecturers and speakers on campus or in the community with a particular focus on practitioners and researchers in the field;
- Collaborative teaching of civil rights and liberties between the Law School and undergraduate academic programs;
- Community outreach initiatives that inform the general public about their civil liberties and rights;
- Post-graduate positions with organizations that support and protect civil liberties and rights.

Note: Some parts of the Dunn Civil Liberties Project carry course credit as GOV 494 (Independent Study). Students may not count more than 6 credits combined for Government 394, 494, 498, and 499 toward the Government major.

FOR MORE INFO:

http://law.wm.edu/academics/intellectuallife/researchcenters/dunn-civil-liberties/dunngeninfo/index.php

Professor Christine Nemacheck (http://www.wm.edu/as/government/faculty-directory/nemacheck_c.php)

WHAT: Honors Thesis (GOVT 495-496)

At William & Mary, the Department Honors Program provides qualified students the opportunity to complete a two-semester, six-credit research project under the supervision of a faculty advisor. Each Honors project culminates in a written thesis and oral defense.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

An honors thesis is typically written during the senior year, but some students write a thesis during the spring semester of their junior year and the fall semester of their senior year. Students writing their thesis during the senior year are smart to begin their literature review or data collection in the spring of junior year or the summer before their senior year.

GOOD REASONS TO DO THIS:

Prepare for graduate study in Political Science.
Improve abilities to conduct independent research.
Satisfy one's intellectual curiosity.

BAD REASONS TO DO THIS:

Compensate for an undistinguished academic record.

REQUIREMENTS:

Overall GPA of at least 3.0, or at least 3.3 in junior year.
GPA in Government of at least 3.3 by end of junior year.
Completed GOVT 301 (Research Methods) by end of fall semester, senior year.
1-page description of project.
Sponsorship by a full-time Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor in the Department (or, rarely, a visiting or adjunct professor).
Completed application forms for the Charles Center and the Government Department.

CO-REQS:

Two outside faculty readers, one from Government and one from another department.
Participation in the department's Honors seminar (meets @ once every other week).

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENT:

Feels a deep and genuine commitment to the project.
Has taken 300- AND 400-level Government courses that are relevant to the thesis.
Has taken prior course(s) with the faculty thesis supervisor.
Has taken a second methods course, beyond GOVT 301.
Applies for funding from the Charles Center before starting the thesis.
Presents research in college-wide Honors Colloquium (usually one day in the spring).

FOR MORE INFO:

https://www.wm.edu/as/government/undergraduate/honors/index.php
https://www.wm.edu/as/charlescenter/student-research/honors/grants/index.php

WHAT: Independent Study (GOVT 494)

Independent Study is a graded, 1-3 credit semester-long project on a topic area chosen by a student in conjunction with a faculty advisor in the Department. It may comprise a research project or a set of guided readings around a theme, typically resulting in a series of papers or a single major paper. A 1-credit project will produce at least 10 pages of written work, while a 3-credit project will generate at least 25 pages.

Notes: GOVT 494 cannot be taken pass/fail, and it cannot be used to satisfy the 400-level requirement for majors in Government. It can only be taken twice for credit. Students may not count more than 6 credits combined for Government 394, 494, 498, and 499 toward the Government major.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Students should find a faculty advisor before the end of add/drop and agree on a project, the number of course credits, and the major assignment(s).

Independent study can be taken during the fall or spring semester, or summer sessions.

GOOD REASONS TO DO THIS:

Allows student to pursue in greater detail an interest they developed in previous courses or research experiences, as long as the subject is distinct from an existing Government course.

Helps students develop ideas that might turn into an honors thesis.

Offers a good chance to get faculty feedback on analysis and writing.

BAD REASONS TO DO THIS:

Student wants a few credits without having to attend regular classes and take tests.

Student badly needs a few credits to graduate, or to satisfy the College minimum of 12 credits in a given semester.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

Academic junior or senior (can be Government major or non-major).

Student should have prior coursework relevant to the project. For instance, someone who wanted to study the role of the media in recent U.S. presidential campaigns, but had not taken any courses in American politics, would not be a good candidate for Independent Study.

Faculty advisor must have expertise relevant to the project.

Students must meet regularly during the semester with their faculty advisor.

FOR MORE INFO:

http://www.wm.edu/as/government/undergraduate/independentstudy/index.php

WHAT: International Justice Lab (IJL)

The International Justice Lab (IJL) brings together faculty and students from across the United States to conduct collaborative research on human rights, transitional justice, and international law and courts. IJL aims to produce high-quality social science research that is relevant to policy makers, practitioners, and civil society advocates.

Our research has been published in leading, peer-reviewed social science journals such as the *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Human Rights*, *Human Rights Quarterly*, and *International Journal of Transitional Justice*. Our researchers also write regularly for mainstream outlets like *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, and *The Washington Post*, among others.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Please subscribe to the Global Research Institute digest, where positions will be advertised every summer for the upcoming academic year. Note, IJL pays a competitive rate for student research assistant positions.

GOOD REASONS TO JOIN:

IJL offers students opportunities to engage in research at all stages: theory building, research design, data collection and analysis, fieldwork, and writing. The goal is for students to develop and apply critical skills for academic and non-academic careers.

Research is fun, especially when it's done with others. We connect social scientists from different institutions and research backgrounds to tackle thorny problems that are of interest and relevance to academics, policy makers, and civil society advocates.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

The most important traits the lab looks for in hiring are professionalism, reliability, ability to set and meet deadlines independently, and attention to detail.

We are committed to recruiting and developing the best talent. Towards that end, the lab puts particular emphasis on recruiting an intellectually diverse team including people who have historically been underrepresented in International Relations and academia more generally.

The lab also values recruiting first- and second-year students who may remain in the lab for multiple years (though we still welcome applications from more senior students).

100 hours per semester commitment.

STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT STUDENTS:

Take some courses on international topics and research methods.

Talk to current IJL fellows to learn about the day-to-day of the lab.

FOR MORE INFO: internationaljusticelab.org

WHAT: Internship (GOVT 498, 499)

The Government Department offers two types of Internship courses. The first (GOVT 498) provides a limited number of academic credits on a pass/fail basis. The second type (GOVT 499) is variable-credit but graded, and is combined with a semester spent in the William and Mary in Washington Program or the DC Summer Institute. The supervising faculty member, however, must be a member of the Government Department.

In both GOVT 498 and 499, academic credit is awarded for faculty-supervised research and written work conducted in conjunction with an internship. Simply having an internship is not enough; the internship must include an analytic or research component, and students must submit a paper that includes outside research and scholarly sources. As with Independent Study, a 1-credit project will produce at least 10 pages of written work, while a 3-credit project will generate at least 25 pages.

Notes: GOVT 498 and 499 cannot be used to satisfy the 400-level requirement for majors in Government. Students may not receive more than 6 credits combined toward the Government major for GOVT 394, 494, 498, and 499.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Internship can be taken for credit during the fall or spring semester, or summer sessions. Students who have an internship during the summer often register for the Internship course the following fall semester.

GOOD REASONS TO DO THIS:

To deepen your understanding of political issues encountered during the internship experience.

Offers a good chance to get faculty feedback on analysis and writing.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS:

The internship must be approved in advance by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and by the Government Department. These are two separate steps, and approval by one does not guarantee approval by the other.

The Department will approve an internship for Government credit only if the position is with a political, governmental, advocacy or research organization (not a for-profit corporation, aside from journalistic enterprises, or a law firm); involves at least five weeks of fulltime work (paid or uncompensated); and allows the student opportunities to observe the political/policy process at work.

Even then, credit for work done in conjunction with an internship is still contingent upon the availability of a faculty supervisor in Government. Finding that supervisor is the student's responsibility.

ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENT:

Investigate whether the Charles Center or the Government Department has any monies available for students who accept unpaid or low-paid internships.

FOR MORE INFO:

http://www.wm.edu/as/government/undergraduate/internshipcredit/index.php

WHAT: Local Government Summer Institute

The Institute consists of a two-week intensive introduction to local government management, held in June, followed by an optional six-week summer internship with a local government agency. The two weeks of classes are worth one W&M credit (GOVT 390), and some support for tuition may be available. If students also want to get academic credit for the internship, they will need to follow the Department's guidelines for GOVT 498.

The main objectives of this Institute are to introduce students to the practice of local government, to provide an overview of the variety of functions performed by these governments, and to allow the student to have a substantial experience in addressing one or more local government issues.

Practical considerations: some students might wish to have their intern experience outside of the Williamsburg area. Some have a particular issue area in which they may wish to focus their attention. We will try to work with these preferences, but cannot guarantee that they will be possible. Some local internships might require transportation to the job site. It is important to know whether you have such transportation or will need an assignment either within walking distance of campus or accessible by public transit. Some support for travel costs or expenses may be made available for interns.

Reminder: students may not count more than 6 credits combined for Government 394, 494, 498, and 499 toward the Government major.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

While the Institute and internship take place during the summer, applications are due in the spring – typically by late March or early April.

GOOD REASONS TO DO THIS:

To gain valuable insights into the workings of local government, and explore career opportunities.

REQUIREMENTS:

Open to rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors, regardless of major.

FOR MORE INFO:

http://www.wm.edu/as/government/currentstudents/internshipsandemployment/index.php

WHAT: Political Psychology and International Relations (PPIR) Lab

This Lab, housed in the Social Science Research Methods Center (SSRMC), is premised on an experiential learning model typical of the natural sciences. Focusing on the intersection of psychology and international relations, the lab enables students to apply their classroom knowledge to their own research interests outside the classroom. Through close supervision by Professor Holmes, as well as collaboration with other lab members, students experience all of the core phases of the research process over two consecutive semesters. Students earn course credit (GOVT 394) for their participation in the lab.

Lab members begin by developing their own research questions. Students often enter the lab with an inkling of what they want to study, and the first few weeks of the lab experience are aimed at honing these ideas into executable research projects. Through brainstorming workshops and collaborative processes, students continue to refine their research questions. The next step involves reading existing literature on the subject and crafting conceptual maps, which are critiqued by fellow lab members. Once students have identified where their projects fit into the existing scholarly landscape, they then seek to contribute to it. This takes many different forms, including experiments that make us of the physical lab space, the Omnibus survey project, elite interviews in Richmond/Washington, or careful qualitative case studies, to mention a few.

The lab meets at least weekly in small working groups. Students work closely with other members of their group, reading and critiquing multiple iterations of each other's work. The end deliverable for each member of PPIR is either a paper, ideally a stepping-stone to an honors thesis or published article in a journal such as *Monitor*, or a research design for future work.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Contact Professor Marcus Holmes (mholmes@wm.edu) for application information.

GOOD REASONS TO JOIN:

Develop potential honors thesis topic.
Prepare for graduate study in International Relations.
Develop marketable project to show potential employers.
Develop deep knowledge in a particular topic.
Improve abilities to conduct independent research.
Satisfy one's intellectual curiosity.
Work collaboratively in a lab environment.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

GOVT 204 (Intro to International Politics) or equivalent

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENT:

Feels a deep and genuine commitment to independent research.
Possess an ability to work independently and collaboratively.
Possess desire to help other students develop their own research projects.

FOR MORE INFO: http://ssrmc.wm.edu/research/ppir-lab/

WHAT: Project on International Peace and Security (PIPS)

PIPS is an international security-focused think tank at the College of William and Mary that employs the intelligence and creativity of talented undergraduates to identify emerging international challenges and offer novel solutions to the policy community.

Each academic year, PIPS selects six research fellows (juniors and seniors) and six research interns (freshmen and sophomores). Research fellows—working closely with faculty and members of the international relations community—identify an emerging international security challenge and develop original and carefully researched policy recommendations in the form of a policy white paper. Research interns support the work of the fellows and learn the craft of conducting policy research and writing briefs.

PIPS research fellows present their papers to members of the foreign policy community at an end of the year policy symposium in Washington, D.C. White papers also serve as the basis for future publications and honors theses.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Juniors and seniors apply to be research fellows in August. PIPS research fellows have two academic semesters to complete their white papers. Freshmen and sophomores apply to be research interns in January. PIPS research interns support the work of the fellows during the spring semester. Research fellows and interns have the option of earning three academic credits during the spring semester for their work.

GOOD REASONS TO JOIN:

You want to make a meaningful contribution to foreign policy debates.
You enjoy studying international relations and tackling analytical puzzles.
You want to work as part of a team of like-minded, "international relations" enthusiasts.

BAD REASONS TO JOIN:

You want a "policy-oriented" line on your resume.
You primarily want to improve your employment prospects by forging connections with members of the foreign policy community.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

Research Fellows should be a rising junior or senior; on-campus for the entire academic year; have a cumulative GPA of 3.7 +; and have taken GOVT 204 (Intro to Int'l Politics) or HIST 192 (Global History since 1500) or SOCL 205 (Global Social Problems).
Research Interns should be a freshman or sophomore; on campus for the spring academic semester; and have a cumulative GPA of 3.7+.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENT:

Has strong analytical, research, and writing skills.
Has excellent time management and organizational abilities.
Has taken GOVT 329 (International Security) and GOVT 301 (Research Methods) before becoming a Research Fellow.

FOR MORE INFO: www.wm.edu/pips

WHAT: Social Networks and Political Psychology (SNaPP) Lab

The SNaPP Lab is a collaborative research group, directed by Prof. Jaime Settle but driven by the questions and ideas of the ~15 undergraduates involved in the group. We design and conduct research projects that explore the biological, psychological, and social underpinnings of political behavior. Each year, students simultaneously work on an independent portfolio or research project while contributing to an ongoing project in the lab related to Prof. Settle's active research agenda.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Students of any year can apply to join, but preference is given to sophomores and juniors. Applications to join the SNaPP Lab typically are due in August, and interviews are held the first week of classes. However, in the 2019-2020 period, applications will be open in November 2019 to join for the Spring 2020 semester, and in November 2020 to join in the Spring of 2021. The announcement about applications is sent to the department and SSRMC list serves, is posted on the SNaPP Lab and SSRMC websites, and is linked on the Government Department's Facebook page. The application includes a cover sheet, application letter, a writing sample, and a transcript. Applications are submitted through the Tribe Careers site.

GOOD REASONS TO JOIN:

You have an inkling of an independent research topic related to political behavior.
You want an opportunity to work closely with a faculty member outside of the classroom environment; you have a desire to interact with other students (with varied interests and skill levels) while doing data analysis and research.
You are committed to prioritizing your work in the SNaPP Lab (i.e. regularly attending Wednesday meetings; completing your independent work on time and to the best of your abilities; considering staying on campus for several weeks in the summer)
You want to prepare for graduate study in Political Science or a related discipline

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

Attending Wednesday meetings every week from 6-7 pm, and many weeks from 5-7 pm.
New lab members must sign up for two credits of GOVT 394 (Directed Research).
Returning members can 1) receive up to two credits of GOVT 394; 2) affiliate with the lab while receiving credit for an independent study or honors thesis; or 3) be paid for their research assistance.
In addition to the meeting time on Wednesdays, joining the lab is a 5-10 hour/week commitment, working on shared or independent research projects.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENT:

There is no GPA minimum to apply for a position in the SNaPP Lab. However, in practice, a GPA lower than 3.4 signals that you need to prioritize your classwork, not take on additional research responsibilities.
Take GOVT 301 by the end of their first year in the lab.

FOR MORE INFO: http://snapp-lab.wm.edu/about-us/apply-to-join/

WHAT: Student leadership team of the Social Science Research Methods Center (SSRMC)

The SSRMC provides the infrastructure and training to meaningfully integrate undergraduate students studying social sciences into faculty research. The student leadership team plays a fundamental role executing the daily operations of the center. The SSRMC has four student leadership positions:

- The Student Director oversees the student leadership team and is responsible for supervising daily SSRMC operations and planning SSRMC events
- The Science Writer generates and disseminates information about the SSRMC to the broader public, writing news articles for the website and contributing to the creation of the annual report and grant funding applications
- The Web Developer is responsible for maintaining websites and providing technical support to members of the SSRMC community
- The Omnibus Project Director is responsible for executing the collaborative student subject pool, including compiling the joint research protocol, communicating with researchers about their projects and data, and managing the scheduling of research participants

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Students work as interns during the spring semester and then will hold the paid position for the following academic year. Internship applications open around December 1st and are due when classes begin in the spring semester. Interviews are conducted during the first week of class. The application includes a cover sheet, application letter, a writing sample, and a short application assignment; it is submitted through the Tribe Careers site.

GOOD REASONS TO JOIN:

Get a window into the "behind the scenes" process of research to gain a broader perspective about the variety of methods and theories used by department faculty.
Develop your science communication skills.
Apply what you've learned about research methods to provide a public good for department faculty and students.
Gain professional work experience, which can be applied to future employment in a variety of fields.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

Members of the SSRMC student leadership team should anticipate working 5-15 hours per week, depending on the position and the pace of the semester. Students should be able to demonstrate some combination of these skills: ability to take initiative and be assertive; creativity and desire to innovate; ability to work independently and problem solve; desire to work cooperatively in a team setting; effective oral and written communication; strong organizational and time management skills.

FOR MORE INFO: http://ssrmc.wm.edu/about-us/

WHAT: Systematic Text Analysis for International Relations (STAIR) Lab

The STAIR Lab is a research group directed by Prof. Maurits van der Veen. We work on a range of projects exploring how we can use the information in political texts (speeches, newspaper articles, official documents, academic publications, etc.) to help us better understand international politics. As they start in the lab, students work on a group project aimed at developing research and text analysis skills, while also contributing to an ongoing project in the lab. Once students have the basic skills, they can develop their own independent research projects while continuing to work on ongoing projects.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Students of any year can apply to join, but preference is given to sophomores and juniors. Applications to join the STAIR Lab open a few weeks before the start of each semester and are due around the time classes begin. Interviews are conducted during the first week of class. The announcement about applications is sent to the Government and International Relations mailing lists and is posted on the STAIR Lab website (stair.wm.edu).

GOOD REASONS TO JOIN:

- You are interested in applying data science methods to international relations topics.
- You want an opportunity to work closely with a faculty member outside of the classroom environment on cutting-edge research, while doing collaborative research with other students who share your interests.
- You are serious about doing research and what it requires (some of which you may find boring or less interesting).
- You want to develop skills that prepare you for graduate study in political science or a related discipline.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

- New lab members must sign up for two credits of GOVT 394 (Directed Research). Returning members can continue to receive up to two credits of GOVT 394, or can receive credit for an independent study or honors thesis.
- Attend general lab meetings every week, usually on Monday, plus project meetings usually also once a week.
- In addition to the meetings, joining the lab is a 5-10 hour/week commitment. If you cannot make such a commitment, you should not apply to join.
- There is no minimum GPA requirement. However, in practice, students with a GPA lower than 3.3 need to be able to make a compelling case that joining the lab makes more sense than concentrating on their coursework.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS:

- Take GOVT 301 (Research Methods) by the end of their first year in the lab.
- Learn Python (for example, by taking Computer Science 141/241).

FOR MORE INFO: http://stair.wm.edu/

WHAT: Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) Project

TRIP started in 2003 as an effort to explore and analyze the connections between teaching, research, and policy in international relations. We attempt to understand the relationship between these pillars: Are scholars doing work that is policy relevant? Are policymakers paying attention to recent academic work? How can academic researchers better inform the "real world" of international relations? How can we help bridge the gap between policy and academia?

TRIP collects systematic evidence on IR teaching and research. To date, this project has four major empirical components. First, we explore which variables (such as paradigm, regions, issue area, methodology, etc.) have been employed over time in IR research by coding articles published in the top 12 IR and political science journals from 1980 to 2014. Second, we measure trends in IR research and teaching with results from our extensive Faculty Survey. This survey contains over 100 questions, is translated into 10 different languages, and is administered to faculty in 32 countries in an effort to survey the entire IR discipline. Third, we conduce Snap Polls, which are short surveys of roughly 10 questions designed to measure scholarly opinion and public response to current events. Last, we have initiated a diverse range of pilot data collection efforts by partnering with other scholars and institutions. This includes partnership on our Snap Polls and gathering data on IR-related books.

TRIP is able to map trends in IR scholarship in recent decades all over the world, providing a comprehensive look at the discipline. We describe how research is begin conducted, how IR is being taught, and whether scholars are producing policy relevant work.

HOW/WHEN TO GET INVOLVED:

Students should apply to be a TRIP Research Assistant at the beginning of each semester, with hiring occurring more heavily in the fall semester. For summer positions, applications open mid-Spring. If selected, students will have a 40-hour unpaid training period as an Intern before taking the paid position of Research Assistant.

GOOD REASONS TO JOIN:

You are interested in developing analytical and research skills.

You want to become part of the extensive Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations (ITPIR) network.

You would like to gain experience with coding, research methods, collaborative research, and statistical software/analysis.

TRIP provides opportunities to work directly with Principal Investigators and to conduct or publish individual research using TRIP data.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

Students are expected to dedicate 10 hours per week to Intern/Research Assistant work.

Students should have a background or interest in IR, Political Science, policy relevance, or social science research.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: https://trip.wm.edu/home/index.php. Or, email us at irsurvey@wm.edu.