

# CFS NOTEBOOK

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## REMINDERS

The Fourth in the Series of TOWARD '76 Conferences

PARTNERSHIP WITHIN THE STATES: LOCAL  
SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE FEDERAL SYSTEM

"Partnership Within the States: Local Self-Government in the Federal System," the fourth conference in the TOWARD '76 Series sponsored by the Center for the Study of Federalism, will be held in connection with the meetings of the National Municipal League and the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations in Chicago, Illinois, in November 1975. Co-sponsors of the conference include the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations; the Institute for Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois; and the National Municipal League. The conference will be an examination of the effect on state-local relations of the factors of state constitutions and statutes, as well as the potential effects of political and cultural tradition or urbanization. That this is the centennial year of home rule underlines the importance of the conference. These areas will be discussed and methods for a continuing study will be presented.

November 19-21, 1975

Palmer House Hotel  
Chicago, Illinois

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Applications should be sent to Daniel J. Elazar, Center for the Study of Federalism, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19122. (Please see CSF NOTEBOOK, vol. V, no. 2 for details.)

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## GOVERNMENTAL RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING: A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

While public administration programs as well as certain political science departments have long made use of "public service internships," the current emphasis on achieving "relevance" in education has drawn new attention to internships. American society has long been praised for its pluralism; however, it is currently under attack from young people, blacks, Chicanos, women, and others who question not only the relevance but also the integrity of governments and leaders. If government is to overcome this negative image, develop realistic citizen participation, and bridge the credibility gap that seems to exist, then government leaders must establish new lines of communication with those groups feeling alienated, disenfranchised, or otherwise outside our political system.

One of the essential elements in the revitalization of government at all levels is in professionalizing and upgrading the level of the people who fill the decision-making and support ranks of the agencies that implement programs and policies. Frank H. Bailey, in a discussion of state governments that is relevant to other levels as well, made a persuasive argument that, "a significant measure of the success of state government in the future will be its ability to attract, recruit, train, and maintain competent professional, administrative, and technical personnel."<sup>1</sup> Much of our success in accomplishing the goal of the much heralded "New Federalism" to slow and even reverse the transfer of power to Washington will depend on whether or not local and state governments are able to recruit and train capable people. One of the tools which has been applied to recruitment and the development of qualified personnel is the internship.

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We would like to express our appreciation to the Comparative Development Studies Center (State University of New York at Albany) for its support in the research that provided the basis for this article. A special acknowledgment should be given to Mr. John Worthley, Deputy Director of the New York State Legislative Internship Program, for his assistance in compiling and analyzing much of the data contained herein. In recognizing his contributions, we wish to absolve him of any guilt by association for this work.

<sup>1</sup> Frank H. Bailey, "State Manpower and Training Needs," Civil Service Journal (April-June, 1970), p. 4.

## A PERSPECTIVE ON INTERNSHIPS

The public service internship is an educational innovation that is assuming increasing significance in academic programs whose purpose is to train and educate public administrators. In a recent work on internships, Thomas P. Murphy touched upon their goals:

The use of the term "intern" is intended to connote the the transition between learning and practice, much in the manner of the medical internship. Transition is really the key to the creation of internships; the primary intent is to bridge the gap between academic and professional worlds for the fledgling administrator.<sup>1</sup>

The term "internship," borrowed from medical education, was taken over by the professional schools and departments of public administration in the 1930's. In the development of professional competence and practical experience, it seemed natural to attempt to link the academic study of public administration and political science and their practice with a transitional apprenticeship period. The utilization of internships for training in public administration began in the New York Bureau of Municipal Research in 1911, and public administration internships began in universities as early as 1914. The origins of the first political internship program were described as follows:

When a severe shortage of heating fuel developed during the winter of 1942-43, institutions engaged in non-essential activities like higher education of women were forced to close for the cold winter months. Government workers were, of course, in great demand at this time, so it was not difficult for the Wellesley Political Science Department to arrange for a small number of its students to spend this long vacation in Washington as interns. So began the Wellesley Washington Internship Program. As far as I have been able to determine, this was the first organized attempt at the undergraduate level to supplement academic study with practical experience in politics. The unlikely combination of war and women started a trend in political education that has become increasingly widespread.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Thomas P. Murphy, "An Academic Perspective on Internships," in Thomas P. Murphy, ed., Government Management Internships and Executive Development (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1973), p. 3.

2 Philip N. Phibbs, "The First Twenty Years: A Case Study of Political Participation by Former Student Interns," in Bernard C. Hennessy, Political Internships: Theory, Practice, Evaluation, Penn. State Studies, vol. 28 (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970), p. 6.

The term "Internship" is frequently used very loosely to cover a number of kinds of activities. The Resources Development Internship Project, for example, recognizes three principal types of activities that are commonly called internships. The first type of activity may be called a "work experience internship," which usually is intended to give the student a taste of employment, earnings which will assist him in paying his college expenses, and a basic familiarity with the workings of his host agency. The second type is termed a "professional training internship," where emphasis is placed on utilizing technical and professional skills within an operational context. Finally, the third type of internship, which can be called a "legislative or administrative internship," has as its objective gaining a deeper understanding of the political or administrative processes than would be possible solely on the basis of classroom training.<sup>1</sup> In an earlier paper, one of the authors grouped internship programs into three categories: staff training programs, academic programs, and public relations programs.<sup>2</sup> Leon S. Cohen has outlined the different categories of legislative internships as follows:

- I. Academic Level
  - A. Graduate
  - B. Undergraduate
  
- II. Supervising Legislative Agency
  - A. Non-Partisan Research Agency
  - B. Leadership Staffs
  - C. Standing Committees (or Commissions)
  - D. Individual Legislators
  
- III. Length of Internship
  - A. Academic Year
  - B. Semester (or Quarter)
  - C. Short-Term (one-two Months)
  
- IV. Sponsorship and/or Funding Sources
  - A. Internal (Legislature)
  - B. External (Universities, Foundations)
  - C. Both<sup>3</sup>

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1 Resource Development Internship Project, Handbook for Professional and Administrative Internships (Bloomington, Indiana; The Project, 1972), pp. 10-11.

2 Richard Nunez, "Foreign Legislators Look at American Internship Programs," unpublished paper.

3 Leon S. Cohen, "Evaluation of State Legislative Internships," Public Service Internship News (November/December, 1973), p. 6.

After an extensive review of the then-existing programs, the Associate Director of the Citizenship Clearing House, John Swarthout, reported in 1957 that the term "internship" was used to cover at least four kinds of activities:

(1) supervised observation programs, in which students spend periods of a week or so observing from the inside the functioning of a working agency;

(2) supervised participation programs, in which students work with parties, candidates, or others on a limited part-time basis, usually in connection with related courses;

(3) true internships in which students perform substantially full-time on-the-job duties but under academic supervision; and

(4) probationary-orientation employment, in which the "intern" engages in full-time on-the-job activity, designed in part for training purposes but usually not under academic supervision and conducted with an eye to continuation of the intern in service with the agency upon completion of the internship period.<sup>1</sup>

It would seem that the first activity described ought not to be regarded as an internship, but as an observational device. Thus, there has been a tendency to label as internships all sorts of things that are nothing of the kind. Bernard C. Hennessy has delineated three critical elements required in any internship program: "a real work situation as distinguished from speculation or simulation; the opportunity for the student to participate on the same basis as other workers; the opportunity for the systematic and continuous examination of the experience in relation to generalizations of political science."<sup>2</sup> Unless all three of these characteristics are present, a practical experience cannot accurately be termed an internship. Therefore, in this paper we will employ Hennessy's definition of an internship: "a period of service as a regular staff member for a political agency or leader, under conditions that provide opportunities to observe the relationship of detailed practice to generalizations about politics (theories, propositions, or hypotheses)."<sup>3</sup> An internship, in short, is an intensive period of practical work designed to

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1 John Swarthout, "Summary of Internship Report to Executive Committee," in Hennessy, Political Internships, p. 8.

2 Ibid., p. 9.

3 Ibid., p. 8.

supplement, to exemplify, or selectively to highlight, the student's understanding of political fact and strategy. The internship is a device for enriching and complementing the study of politics (for example) with a period of supervised participation in politics.

Today the place of internship programs in graduate (as well as some undergraduate) curricula is well established in a number of colleges and universities. The pressure for so-called "life-experience" courses, the move toward independent study and off-campus educational programs, as well as the realization by university and government officials that such programs can meet many of the needs and demands of the diverse participants, have all contributed to the burgeoning of intern programs.

Despite this growing activity and interest, however, the literature of public administration and political science is largely silent on the subject of internships. In a recent article, Robert S. Hirschfield and Norman M. Adler have noted this difficulty:

Of eighty-three works listed in a "Bibliography of Major Publication on Intern Programs and Participant Observation," only ten relate directly either to the organization or theory of internships, while the remainder deal with participant-observation as a research tool for social scientists. Of the ten related pieces, seven are unpublished working papers from a conference on internships held seven years ago. Only one was printed subsequently in a scholarly journal. In fact, the bibliography in which they are cited is unpublished and generally unavailable. Of the remaining relevant studies on internships, one is an undated memo from the files of the American Political Science Association, and only three are published works. Taken together, this hardly constitutes a resource library on internships in politics.<sup>1</sup>

The publication of that report in PS, a companion article by Ronald D. Hedlund,<sup>2</sup> the publication of the Murphy volume, and the establishment of a center for disseminating internship information, the National Center for Public Service Internship Programs, indicate a new stage in the evolution of concern with internships. Yet much remains to be done, especially in terms of evaluating such programs. Hirschfield and Adler argue that the spread of internship programs has probably been inhibited in

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1 Robert S. Hirschfield and Norman M. Adler, "Internships in Politics: The CUNY Experience," Political Science, vol. 6 (Winter, 1973), p. 13.

2 Ronald D. Hedlund, "Reflections on Political Internships," Political Science, vol. 6 (Winter, 1973), pp. 19-25.

part because of the paucity of information.<sup>1</sup> And Hennessy points out:

At the present time nothing is more important for the future of political education, in my view, than the careful attention to assessment of the various programs. We need evaluation research not only because we should maximize the practical and educational carry-over from these programs on the individual student participants, but also because we should link these programs in some systematic and empirical way with the growing interest and knowledge in pedagogy and in the learning processes.<sup>2</sup>

Since a number of state legislatures now have been operating internship programs for some time, it would be desirable to examine the nature and workings of these programs. This is what this paper proposes to do in an exploratory way.

#### STATE LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIPS

In 1953, the American Political Science Association established the Congressional Fellowship Program (at first called the Congressional Intern Program). The APSA program was open to young college teachers, journalists, and Ph.D. candidates with all work except the dissertation completed. In 1957, the University of California, the Ford Foundation, and the California Assembly combined to initiate the first state legislative intern training, modeled, in part, after the Congressional Fellowship Program. Ford Foundation funds were provided to pay half the students' stipends, plus all the administrative costs of the program. The Assembly provided the other half of the interns' monthly income and paid travel and other expenses incurred by interns while conducting legislative business. Beginning with the academic year 1965-66 the Assembly agreed to take over the complete financing of the program. Five universities cooperate in providing academic sponsorship.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Hirschfield and Adler, "Internships in Politics," p. 13.

2 Hennessy, Political Internships, p. 73.

3 See L. H. Lincoln, "California's Legislative Internship Program," State Government, vol. 31 (January, 1958), pp. 12-3, 20 and Jesse M. Unruh, "California's Legislative Internship Program: An Appraisal after Eight Years," State Government, vol. 38 (Summer, 1965), pp. 154-9.

Beginning in 1960 the Ford Foundation began to finance graduate legislative internship programs, based on the California model, in other states. By 1965 there were twelve such state programs, all providing 50-50 stipend matching with the legislatures, and drawing graduate students in the social sciences, law, and journalism. At least two other states -- Florida and Wisconsin -- have internships as a result of spinoff from the Ford Foundation effort.<sup>1</sup> More recently, several states have established their own internship programs. In 1969, both houses of the state legislature in Rhode Island cooperated in the initiation of an internship program. This self-supporting, state-inspired program derived from experiments beginning in 1967 under the aegis of the Rhode Island Legislative Council, at which time twenty students were employed. Unlike many internship programs, the Rhode Island one includes within its scope the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Since the creation of the State Government Internship Commission in 1969, cooperating sponsors included 24 members of the General Assembly -- 14 members of the House and 10 senators; the Governor's office; the office of the Lieutenant Governor; eight executive agencies; the Attorney General's department; House fiscal staff; the superior and family courts; and the League of Cities and Towns.<sup>2</sup> Another program similar to Rhode Island is that of Georgia begun in 1970 with an emphasis on undergraduate education.<sup>3</sup>

Besides the Rhode Island and Georgia programs, approximately eighteen other states have predominantly undergraduate-oriented legislative internship programs. Thus, currently, about two-thirds of the states have some form of internship available to university students (graduate and/or undergraduate), even if only on an informal basis. Results of a state-by-state survey by Thomas Murphy of legislatures and associated private and state universities indicated that only nine states have neither experimented with internship programs nor shown any official desire to do so. These states were: Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, South Carolina, and Wyoming.<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that in the evaluation by the Citizens Conference on State Legislatures

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1 Whitman Bassou, "The Legislative Internship Program: A Report to the Ford Foundation," unpublished report, October 1, 1968, pp. 7-8 and Appendix 1.

2 For a full description of the program, see Victor L. Profughi and Oliver L. Thompson, Jr., "Rhode Island State Internship Program," State Government, vol. 45 (Summer, 1972), pp. 187-91.

3 See "The Georgia Intern Program," in Public Service Internship News (November/December, 1973), pp. 9-10.

4 Thomas P. Murphy, "State Legislative Internships," in Murphy, Government Management Internships, p. 109.



of the functionality, accountability, information-handling capability, independence, and representativeness of the fifty state legislatures, five of the nine ranked between 42nd and 50th. Moreover, of the ten top-ranked states in the Citizens Conference study, nine have internship programs, Nebraska with its unicameral legislature being the exception.<sup>1</sup>

Given the diffusion of such programs, it seems strange to note that no comprehensive evaluation of legislative internship programs has been undertaken. The Ford Foundation has reviewed its program several times for internal administrative purposes, and the directors in several of the states have assessed their own programs. Occasionally some of the directors have met at professional association meetings; in 1966, an American Political Science Association (APSA) internship evaluation conference was held, providing a useful summary and review of the program; in 1971, a conference was held in Kentucky on Students in Government; and in 1972, APSA sponsored a conference on Political Science and State and Local Government, at which internship programs were discussed. Yet we still lack even the most elementary data on number of interns, kinds of assignments, costs by years and by state, and administrative histories.<sup>2</sup> This study seeks to initiate such an effort by examining and evaluating the program in one state, New York.

#### THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The New York State Legislative Internship Program was initiated in 1961 under the sponsorship of a coordinating college committee and the State of New York. Financial support for the program was provided by the Ford Foundation and the New York State Senate. With the termination of Ford Foundation funding in 1966, the New York State Senate assumed full financial responsibility for the program.

The program has been a joint effort involving the cooperation of the State Senate and six institutions of higher education:

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1 The Citizens Conference on State Legislatures, The Sometime Governments (New York: Bantam Books, 1971). While no cause and effect relationship between internships and legislative "professionalization" has ever been shown, a number of observers feel that some valid correlation exists between the initiation of university sponsored programs and the upgrading of legislative staff services.

2 Murphy's recent article represents a pioneering effort to close this gap in our knowledge. See Murphy, "State Legislative Internships," pp. 109-33.

Colgate University, Columbia University, Hunter College of the City University of New York, the University of Rochester, the State University of New York at Albany, and Syracuse University. The program is administered by an executive committee consisting of representatives of the cooperating institutions and the Secretary of the Senate. The committee provides general policy guidance and selects interns from candidates nominated by graduate departments of colleges and universities throughout New York State. Supervision of the interns is provided by the Secretary of the Senate, the committee or office to which the intern is assigned in Albany, and by a faculty supervisor representing the cooperating academic institutions.

Since the program is designed primarily for those who expect to pursue careers in college teaching, law, journalism, and public service, applicants are required to be matriculated graduate students in programs sponsored by departments of public administration or political science or by law schools in any accredited university or college in the State of New York. Five internships are available each year. Interns receive a stipend of \$4,500 and serve from September 1 through May 31.

A basic aspect of the program is a seminar held under the direction of the faculty supervisor. The faculty member meets with the interns on a weekly basis until the legislative session. Two meetings a month are usually scheduled when the legislature is in session. Readings on various aspects of state government and the legislative process are usually assigned and the seminar is conducted as a graduate course.

Prior to the legislative session, a series of meetings is scheduled for the interns with prominent state officials, members of the legislature, department and agency heads, and legislative staff members. During the session, interns devote full time to service with a standing committee, interim committee, or an individual senator, and perform such tasks as research, report writing, drafting of speeches and correspondence, liaison with administrative agencies and other legislative offices, attending and reporting hearings, and summarizing transcripts.

The major objectives of the program are threefold:

To provide intensive and practical training in the process of legislation and public policy formulation;

To provide supplementary assistance to the offices and committees of the State Senate; and

To stimulate research in the state legislative process and public policy.

In assessing program achievements against program aims, the success of the program can be seen in a number of different manifestations.

For example, the large number of applications received every year from persons in all sections of the country representing a variety of backgrounds attests to the program's visibility and reputation. It is especially noteworthy that the number of applications received and the number of institutions represented have been slowly but gradually increasing during each successive year of the program. Secondly, a widespread receptivity toward interns and the program is shown by members of the Senate and their staffs. The number of inquiries regarding the availability of interns and the relative ease with which assignments are obtained indicate the program's stature among senators. Finally, the most positive proof of the achievements of the program has been the willingness of the New York State Senate to continue full funding of the internships.

In spite of the numerous indications of the program's success, much basic information regarding the program's impact has not been available. An evaluation by Professor Ruth Weintraub of Hunter College in 1966 produced much useful information,<sup>1</sup> but much has changed since then and a more up-to-date evaluation seems necessary. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine:

- 1) What types of positions are former interns now holding?
- 2) What subsequent involvement have these persons had in teaching, research, and practical politics?
- 3) What changes have occurred in the program since 1961?
- 4) How are persons recruited to apply to the program?
- 5) What is the research potential for program participants?
- 6) What are the strong and weak points of the Legislative Internship Program (LIP)?
- 7) How has the program contributed to an understanding of the state legislature?
- 8) What have been the instructional benefits of participation in the LIP?
- 9) How could the program be improved?

#### The Methodology

A survey of former legislative interns was undertaken after extensive consultation with the Deputy Director of the program, the Secretary of the Senate, and current interns. Thus a determination of important areas for investigation and the likely range of responses to questions was made. A draft survey instrument, suitable for use as a mail questionnaire, was prepared and presented to the current interns and the Deputy Director in December, 1973. After considerable discussion, the questionnaire was revised, printed and distributed in January, 1974. The population included all participants

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1. Ruth G. Weintraub, "The Internship Program: 1961-1966," unpublished report.

in the 1961-1972 period.<sup>1</sup> [A copy of the questionnaire is attached in Appendix A] Accompanying the questionnaire was a letter from Professor Richard Nunez, Director of the LIP, explaining the nature of the study and requesting interns to respond at an early date. In order to maximize returns, a follow-up reminder was sent in March and a second reminder followed in April. Of the 60 questionnaires mailed, six were not able to be delivered. Of the balance, 34 were returned, or 63 percent of the questionnaires delivered.

Analysis of these 34 questionnaires indicates a fairly representative response rate for former participants. While the response rate for certain years was somewhat lower, this does not seem to be of any significant importance (Table 1).

While certain years may be under-represented in the sample of interns surveyed, overall the disparity of rates does not seem to warrant extreme concern.

#### Profile of the Interns

One of the basic tenets of behavioral social science is that the individual actors themselves and their experiences are important sources of influence on their outlooks and subsequent actions. Thus, evaluation of the Legislative Internship Period must begin with a consideration of the kinds of persons who have served as interns.

Students matriculated in departments of political science or public administration or in law schools are eligible for the program and, thus, interns have usually been in their early or mid-twenties when they entered the program. The average age at the time of appointment for those returning the questionnaire was 23.3.

At the time of their appointment, only two individuals were not students. The others were enrolled in graduate schools and engaged in the study of history, government, public administration, etc. In fact, 41 percent of the participants had received their masters degree at the time of their selection to the program.

One of the continuing controversies surrounding the selection process for any program that recruits participants from a broad spectrum of backgrounds is possible favoritism for particular educational institutions. The most common backgrounds for interns seems to be attendance at state and non-Ivy League private universities, especially those located in the Albany area (Table 2).

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<sup>1</sup> This research effort was guided by the provocative study of the Congressional Fellowship Program conducted by Ronald Hedlund. See "Participant Observation in Studying Congress: The Congressional Fellowship Program," (Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association, 1971).

TABLE 1  
QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS BY YEAR OF INTERNSHIP

| Year      | Number in Program | Number Who Returned Questionnaire | Response Rate |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| 1961-62   | 5                 | 2                                 | 40%           |
| 1962-63   | 5                 | -                                 | 0             |
| 1963-64   | 5                 | 3                                 | 60            |
| 1964-65   | 5                 | 3                                 | 60            |
| 1965-66   | 5                 | 1                                 | 20            |
| 1966-67   | 5                 | 3                                 | 60            |
| 1967-68   | 5                 | 3                                 | 60            |
| 1968-69   | 5                 | 4                                 | 80            |
| 1969-70   | 5                 | 4                                 | 80            |
| 1970-71   | 5                 | 4                                 | 80            |
| 1971-72   | 5                 | 3                                 | 60            |
| 1972-73   | 5                 | 4                                 | 80            |
| <hr/>     |                   |                                   |               |
| Total     |                   |                                   |               |
| 1961-1972 | 60*               | 34                                | 57%           |

\*Due to unknown addresses, only 54 questionnaires could be sent. With 54 as a base, the response rate becomes 63 percent.

TABLE 2  
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AT TIME  
OF APPOINTMENT TO PROGRAM

| Institution                    | Number | Percent of Total |
|--------------------------------|--------|------------------|
| SUNY at Albany                 | 9      | 26%              |
| Fordham                        | 8      | 24               |
| Syracuse                       | 4      | 12               |
| Skidmore                       | 2      | 6                |
| Siena                          | 2      | 6                |
| New York University            | 2      | 6                |
| Russell Sage                   | 2      | 6                |
| University of Pennsylvania     | 1      | 3                |
| Michigan Law                   | 1      | 3                |
| Mt. St. Vincent                | 1      | 3                |
| Not available or not in school | 2      | 6                |
| Total                          | 34     | 101%             |

It is somewhat discouraging to report that almost two-thirds of the interns (62 percent) came from three schools -- the State University of New York at Albany (SUNYA), Fordham, and Syracuse. This may be due, in part, to a better response rate from Albany alumni or the fact that a number of interns, in order to gain graduate credit while in the program, enrolled in the most convenient institution -- SUNYA. In any case, it seems that the base of program involvement should be broadened to include a greater number of political science departments.

It is often assumed that one factor that may affect an intern's success in a program is his experience with and attitude toward political parties. Given the highly partisan and politically charged atmosphere associated with work in a legislative office, a strictly neutral, "hands-off" attitude towards politics may be a detriment to the intern. Members of the Senate and their staffs are occasionally reluctant to accept interns who are unwilling to assume a role in the ongoing political work of the office. Also a person may profit less from the assignment if he fails to take part in the political activities of the office. Others, however, would argue that such involvement may impair one's judgment and ability to observe.

About half (46 percent) of the respondents reported some prior involvement in practical or party politics, usually at the local level, working in campaigns or for the local party. Only 30 percent of the respondents indicated an exposure to the New York State Legislature prior to their appointment as interns. Only 15 percent indicated that this contact took the form of participation in the process or contact with legislative personnel. For the balance, the form of exposure to the legislature was theoretical or observative.

A reason initially given for establishing the LIP was the need to stimulate more academic research on the state legislative process and public policy. Almost half (44 percent) of the respondents indicated that legislatures or legislative behavior was one of their areas of specialization before they began the internship.

#### Recruitment of Interns

A good deal of energy has been given to the recruitment process in the Legislative Internship Program. For example, in seeking applicants for the 1973-1974 LIP, letters announcing the program were sent to over 100 political science department chairmen. In addition, LIP staff, interns, and former interns personally contacted large numbers of potential candidates and encouraged them to apply. Given the goal of recruiting the best possible interns, one needs to consider the question: Why did they apply?

As was noted previously, most of the interns replying to the questionnaires were students when they applied to the program. Their initial source of information about the program came from a faculty member at their school or from the formal announcement brochure (Table 3).

TABLE 3  
SOURCE OF INITIAL INFORMATION  
ABOUT THE LIP

| Source of Information | Number | Percent of Total |
|-----------------------|--------|------------------|
| Faculty Member        | 15     | 45%              |
| Brochure              | 11     | 33               |
| Personal Contact      | 4      | 12               |
| Other                 | 3      | 9                |
| Total                 | 33     | 99%              |

More than 79 percent of all respondents reported that they were encouraged or advised to apply to the program. Concerning the positions held by those advising the respondents to apply, 77 percent were described as being faculty members and 20 percent as former interns.

Once basic information about the program has been acquired, the potential applicant is likely to consider a number of factors in his decision to apply. Consideration of the importance given these factors should help to clarify the program's image in the recruitment of successful applicants.

In the survey, interns were asked to rate the importance of various specified factors in their decision to apply. Their replies clearly indicated the perceived importance of the practical involvement aspect of the program (Table 4). More respondents rated this



factor as being more important than any other, 88 percent. Another set of reasons motivating interest in the LIP is its usefulness in securing a professional position. Support for the validity of this motivation is provided by the level of importance respondents gave to factors related to "career advancement" and "contacts to be made."

TABLE 4  
IMPORTANCE OF FACTORS IN DECISION TO APPLY  
(percent by row)

| Factor                | Level of Importance: |          |        |      | No Response | Tot. % | Tot. No. |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------|--------|------|-------------|--------|----------|
|                       | Very                 | Somewhat | Little | None |             |        |          |
| Practical Involvement | 88                   | 9        | 3      | -    | -           | 100    | 34       |
| Contacts to be Made   | 32                   | 47       | 15     | 3    | 3           | 100    | 34       |
| Career Advancement    | 32                   | 44       | 21     | -    | 3           | 100    | 34       |
| Prestige of Program   | 18                   | 53       | 21     | -    | 6           | 98     | 34       |
| Research Aspect       | 15                   | 47       | 26     | 8    | 3           | 99     | 34       |
| Dissertation Work     | 9                    | 3        | 12     | 68   | 9           | 101    | 34       |
| No other Alternative  | 6                    | 21       | 30     | 41   | 3           | 101    | 34       |

The reputation of the LIP was a "Very" or "Somewhat" important reason in applying for 71 percent of all respondents. And 62 percent of the respondents indicated that the LIP's research potential was a factor in their decision to apply. The comparatively low proportion of individuals citing the research prospect as highly important seems to result from the program's reputation as being something other than an opportunity for research and not by a lack of

interest by the interns in doing research.

### Subsequent Careers

One of the most basic questions raised about any internship program concerns its long-term effects upon participants. Frequently a program is evaluated according to the subsequent careers and activities of participants and the current positions held by former interns are taken as indicators of the program's success. For example, Ruth Weintraub stated in her evaluation of the LIP:

Of the twenty-five young men and women who have completed their internships, sixteen are doctoral degree candidates in Political Science, preparing for college teaching, and almost all of these graduate students are writing their doctoral dissertations in an area related to state legislative process and public policy. Nine former interns are already teaching or have taught at a college or university. The course offerings of these present and future college teachers will surely be enriched because of their internship and research experiences.

A sizable number of former interns are employed in the public service, both in the legislative and executive branches. One holds an especially responsible position as Chief Consultant to the Assembly Minority of the California Legislature. Party politics has also proved attractive. One former intern was Assistant Executive Director to the Liberal Party of New York State, and another, who is currently practicing law, plans to enter elective politics. Nor has the field of journalism been neglected. A former intern is now the White House correspondent for the New York Daily News and also writes a weekly national, syndicated column.<sup>1</sup>

Any analysis of this sort, however, should also include some consideration of the program's perceived effect on these subsequent experiences as well as the experiences themselves.

In order to obtain information of the type desired, data were collected on the interns' career development, current positions, and evaluation of factors in achieving these positions. In terms of the effect of the program on career movement, only one respondent reported that the LIP had no effect on his career and none indicated that it had detracted from it. Almost three-fourths of those responding (74 percent), on the other hand, reported that the program

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1 Weintraub, "The Internship Program," p. 3.

had enhanced their career movement. The balance of the respondents felt that it was too early to tell. As expected, more participants in recent years were unable to assess the effects of the LIP because of the short time span between completing the program and receiving the questionnaire. Forty-four percent of those responding indicated that the program had changed their perspective on what career to pursue. One former intern commented:

In the past, I had been interested in a teaching career and had only an academic interest in politics. Presently, I would rather work directly in politics.

Another former intern said:

As a result of the program, I achieved a marriage or an illicit love affair between education and politics.

And a third summed it up when he merely noted, "I'm still here!"

In addition to information on how the internship affected their careers, respondents supplied specific information on the positions held since their participation in the program. In terms of position mobility, 24 percent of all respondents indicated holding only one position since their internship, 65 percent listed two, three, or four positions, and 12 percent listed five or more. As would be expected, greater mobility was reported by participants from early years. This degree of position mobility, and various statements by the interns themselves, seem to indicate that former interns experience numerous job and career options.

Of equal interest is the nature of the positions held. While the specific titles attached to these positions varied considerably, eight different types were discernable. The greatest proportion of former interns spent most of their time after the program associated with a legislature -- as a legislative or administrative aide in the New York State Legislature, another state legislature, or in congress (Table 5). Of the remainder, 12 percent reported careers in teaching, 9 percent in research, 12 percent as student, 9 percent with the executive branch of government, and 15 percent in administrative positions.

A number of factors contribute to the achievement of a specific position. Skill, education, special training all play a role, as do special opportunities like the LIP. When asked how the program has affected performance in their current duties, nearly two-thirds of those responding (65 percent) reported that their participation in the internship served as a great help (Table 6).

TABLE 5  
OCCUPATIONAL POSITIONS HELD BY FORMER INTERNS

| Type of Position                      | Most Common* | Second Most Common |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Legislative or<br>Administrative Aide | 26           | 44                 |
| Administration                        | 15           | 15                 |
| Teaching                              | 12           | 9                  |
| Executive Branch                      | 12           | 6                  |
| Student                               | 12           | 6                  |
| Research                              | 9            | 9                  |
| Lawyer                                | 6            | 6                  |
| Journalism                            | 3            | -                  |
| Not Listed                            | 6            | 6                  |
| Total %                               | 101          | 101                |
| Total N                               | 34           | 34                 |

\*The position held for the longest period of time is the "most common." If other positions listed were the same as the "most common," a "second most common" was not included.

TABLE 6  
LIP ROLE IN PERFORMANCE  
OF CURRENT DUTIES

| LIP Role         | Number | Percent of Total |
|------------------|--------|------------------|
| Helped Much      | 22     | 65%              |
| Helped Little    | 1      | 3                |
| Hindered         | -      | -                |
| No Effect        | 3      | 9                |
| Can't Tell Yet   | 2      | 6                |
| Brought Contacts | 6      | 18               |
| No Response      | -      | -                |
| Total            | 34     | 101%             |

It seems clear that in terms of specific positions as well as career movement, the LIP is viewed by many interns as having very positive effects. It also seems that well qualified persons are able to use the internship experience for career enhancement.

#### Teaching and Research Value

The Legislative Internship Program is a multi-purpose one. One purpose of the program has been to stimulate research on the state legislative process and, in turn, to improve the teaching of those interns who sought an academic career after the program. Thus, it was intended that the LIP would provide an opportunity for a select group of political scientists, other social scientists, and journalists to obtain first-hand knowledge of the New York State Legislature through direct participation and observation. As was noted earlier, the LIP offered the initial personal exposure to the New York State Legislature for most of the respondents.

Inherent in the notion of exposing students to the legislative process is the assumption that this experience will produce deeper insights into the system and its operations. Direct participation and observation are seen as means for giving persons access to the Legislature and legislators thereby increasing the types and extent of information to be obtained.

Of those responding to our survey, 29 percent indicated that they had accomplished some major research project while an intern -- either a dissertation or a major legislative project. Since the internship, 59 percent of the respondents indicated they have accomplished some major research and, of these, 80 percent stated that the program had improved their ability to conduct research. The program is viewed as serving a number of purposes in improving the ability of individuals to conduct research (Table 7).

TABLE 7  
RESEARCH PURPOSES OF PROGRAM

| Research Purpose                     | Number | Percent |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Familiarity with Legislative Process | 29     | 85%     |
| Access to People and Data            | 28     | 82      |
| Experience-Complement to Theory      | 26     | 76      |
| Background-Feel                      | 26     | 76      |
| Other                                | 2      | 6       |

One of the most frequently cited advantages of participant observation and internship program is that it provides one with a "feel" for politics.<sup>1</sup> James A. Robinson described "having a feel for a situation" as:

<sup>1</sup> James A. Robinson, "Participant Observation, Political Internships, and Research," unpublished paper prepared for a conference on political internships, Las Croabas, Puerto Rico, April, 1965, p. 12.

... the state of being comfortable in it, of believing that one has the salient facts of the event, of knowing something of what to expect next, of taking many things for granted, of predicting without being surprised by it. The basic intellectual operation involved in acquiring "feel" is that of drawing an analogy between one's experience and the new set of circumstances in which he finds himself.<sup>1</sup>

The insider's perspective, the familiarity with the legislative process, the "feel," provides a great advantage to the intern. Various scholars have viewed this perspective as essential in any form of intellectual work. John von Neumann said, "It is exceptional that one should be able to acquire the understanding of a process without having previously acquired a deep familiarity with running it, with using it, before one has assimilated it in an instinctive and empirical way."<sup>2</sup> Or, as Ezra Pound inquired:

But if a man don't occasionally sit in a senate how  
can he pierce the dark mind of a senator?<sup>3</sup>

The experience in the legislative process may complement theory; it may suggest subjects not yet covered in formal studies; or it may lead to reconsideration of some subjects that the intern learns are inadequately or incorrectly treated in the existing literature. It certainly increases the researcher's access to people and data, as the respondents indicated.<sup>4</sup>

As we noted earlier, 21 percent of the respondents currently are teaching or have taught university-level courses. Of those interns who have taught or are teaching courses, over half (57 percent) indicated responsibility for courses related to legislatures. Of these, all indicated that the internship was helpful in their teaching duties -- making them "more knowledgeable" in the legislative process and giving them a "better perspective" on the subject.

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1 Robinson, "Participant Observation, Political Internships, and Research," p. 12.

2 John von Neumann, "The Mathematician," in James R. Newman, ed., The World of Mathematics (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956), vol. 4, p. 2053.

3 Ezra Pound, The Pisan Cantos (London: Faber and Faber, 1949), p. 86.

4 Robinson argues that a latent effect of intern programs has been to enlarge the number of opportunities for liaison between public officials and policy scientists, thereby increasing the opportunity for research. See Robinson, "Participant Observation," pp. 3-4.

Program Evaluation

In order to properly evaluate a program as diverse as the Legislative Internship Program, one must look at a variety of data -- the comments of the interns, questionnaire data, and the authors' impressions. This section attempts to blend these three sources of information into an overall assessment of the LIP.

In the questionnaire, the interns were asked to provide an evaluation of the purposes served by the program (Table 8).

TABLE 8  
PURPOSES SERVED BY THE LIP

| Purpose                          | Level of Ranking |      |        |            |             | Total % | Total N |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------|--------|------------|-------------|---------|---------|
|                                  | Very Well        | Well | Little | Not at All | No Response |         |         |
| Information on State Legislature | 71               | 29   | -      | -          | -           | 100     | 34      |
| Staff Work Ability               | 47               | 50   | -      | -          | 3           | 100     | 34      |
| Research Interests               | 15               | 41   | 24     | 6          | 15          | 101     | 34      |
| Teaching Proficiency             | 15               | 12   | 12     | 12         | 50          | 101     | 34      |

It seems overwhelmingly clear that the interns, as a whole, regard their experiences in the program to be extraordinarily productive of new information about state legislatures and the legislative process. All of the respondents indicated that they felt the program served this purpose "very well" or "well." Quite clearly there is much more to be learned about politics than graduate students ordinarily know. And one effective way to learn more is to serve in an internship program. Sixty-two percent of the respondents indicated that participation in the program had led them to a major reevaluation of their ideas and information on the legislature, while 24 percent reported it had led to a minor reevaluation, and only 9 percent reported no change. The program also



served to improve their staff work abilities, but only marginally served to increase teaching proficiency.

In terms of overall evaluation of the program, 26 percent felt that the program entirely lived up to their expectations, 56 percent felt that it mostly lived up to their expectation, and 18 percent indicated that it only lived up to their expectations to some extent. And 91 percent of the respondents indicated that they would recommend the program "very strongly" or "strongly." This quantitative evidence and the comments of former interns provide solid endorsements for the quality of the program. In elaborating on the quality of the program, three statements by former interns illustrate the positive response:

It was my first year out of college, my first full-time job, my first year living completely on my own... and was thus a big year for me. I became aware of much and it was a step into the real world, so to speak. Much of this was not realized during the internship but manifested itself afterwards: in my research work, in my confidence and outwardness in working with others, especially more knowledgeable and experienced colleagues, and even my political savvy.

The program in retrospect, provided a year long experience in the "real world" of the legislative process. This experience has proved invaluable to me as a teacher.

The internship was a valuable experience; I learned more about the legislature than someone who spent a comparable amount of time reading about it. The internship has given me some valuable tools, as well as a particular concept of thinking with regard to legislation. I have learned to look beyond what a bill says to the area of implementation and the fiscal and social effects of legislation. I have also acquired an appreciation of the ability to state one's views about a program to both individuals who are in favor and opposed. It may be too early at this point to assess the complete impact the internship will have on my life. But I do know there are things that I have learned and picked up which will be invaluable in the future.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It seems clear from the evidence assembled that the Legislative Internship Program has been an exceedingly useful experience. The program provided the means whereby interns were able to become involved in a number of activities normally closed to graduate students. As a result, interns reported having been able to undertake many assignments that otherwise would have been more difficult or even impossible. The internship is seen as having an effect upon the subsequent work experiences and careers of interns, their positions, their mobility, their knowledge of politics, and their outlook on the state legislature. Many also saw the program as having altered their personal priorities and goals. The overwhelming majority saw the program in very positive terms and felt that it ought to be continued. It seems that the conclusion reached by Ruth Weintraub several years ago holds: "In assessing program achievement against program aims, it can be reported with pride that the major objectives of the program have been realized."<sup>1</sup> While the contribution of the program to the stimulation of research seems unclear, it does seem that participation in the program is likely to provide one with a better basis for interpreting legislative activity and describing its implications to students. This is in keeping with A. J. Wann's findings about the experiences of the Utah program:

The evidence seems clear that the internships have matured and broadened the training of the graduate students who have participated in them and have given them a depth of understanding and a degree of expertness in state and local government which simply is unmatched by other graduate students.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the interns have been provided with worthwhile and challenging experiences which have both broadened and deepened their understanding of how government really works. And those for whom they have worked have acknowledged that the interns have often brought new knowledge, special skills, and fresh insights into the offices where they have served, and that their contributions significantly enhanced the research capability and the quality of analysis involved in a number of decisions in which they participated. This is clearly illustrated by the fact that a substantial number of the interns were hired into regular full time employment in the public service in positions which developed out of their internships. This should be seen as an encouraging development for, as Wann points out:

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1 Weintraub, "The Internship Program," p. 3.

2 A. J. Wann, "State and Local Government Internships: Some Observations and Conclusions," unpublished paper prepared for the APSA Conference on Political Science and State and Local Government, October 26-29, 1972, Biloxi, Mississippi, p. 4.

Given the fact that some of the most pressing and demanding problems facing our society are those intimately involving state and local government, given the fact that there is a tremendous need for an influx of intelligent and knowledgeable young people into state and local government employment, given the fact that there seems to be a demonstrated willingness on the part of many high level state and local government officials to introduce bright young Ph.D. and Masters candidates into the possibilities of government employment through internships, and given the disastrous condition of the academic marketplace and the lack of adequate employment opportunities for young Ph.D.'s in college and university teaching for the foreseeable future, it would seem to make great sense to plan any future state and local government internship programs not exclusively around training teachers as in the past but as excellent methods for introducing graduate students to possible careers in state and local government.<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of this experience it seems clear that, as Don Eberly has commented, "For university officials who consider knowing something to be a higher form of learning than merely knowing about something, the time has come to introduce internships as an integral part of the learning process."<sup>2</sup>

This review of the New York State Legislative Internship Program has focused on the major goals served by the program. One purpose of this effort has been to share the experiences of persons involved in this program with faculty and students contemplating or already involved in such programs and to refine further a general scheme for evaluating intern programs. Only after we undertake systematic reflection and analysis regarding internship goals and methods are internships likely to maximize their learning potential.<sup>3</sup> It is hoped that the shortcomings of this study may serve to stimulate more refined studies of internship programs and their effects.

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1 Wann, "State and Local Government Internships," p. 6.

2 Quoted in Hirschfield and Adler, "Internships in Politics," p. 18.

3 Hennessy challenges American educators to begin to deal with the question of why -- or how -- learning by doing is better than, say, "book learning." See Political Internships, pp. 105-9.

APPENDIX A

New York State Legislative Internship Program

Evaluation Questionnaire

Name:

Address:

A. Background

1. What year were you a Senate Intern?
2. What was your age when you entered the program?
3. What is your education background?

| <u>Institution</u> | <u>Degree</u> | <u>Major</u> | <u>Year</u> |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|

4. What is your present position?
5. What positions have you held since the Internship?

B. Recruitment

1. What was your position when you were appointed to the Internship Program?  
If a student, at which institution?
2. As best you remember, how did you hear of the program?

Were you encouraged or advised to apply?

If yes, by whom?

3. How important were the following factors in your decision to apply?

Very   Somewhat   Little   None

Prestige of  
Program

Contact to be  
Made

Career Advance-  
ment

Practical In-  
volvement  
Aspect of the  
Program

Unavailability  
of other  
Options

Chance to Work  
on Dissertation

Other

4. Prior to becoming a Senate Intern, had you been involved in practical or party politics?

Have you been involved since being an intern?

In what way?

5. Prior to becoming a Senate Intern, did you have any exposure to the New York Legislature?

To any other legislature?

If yes, in what form?

Did you consider legislatures to be one of your specialties?

c. Career Value

1. What effect did the program have on your career movement?

|                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| enhanced it       | _____ |
| no effect         | _____ |
| detracted from it | _____ |
| can't tell yet    | _____ |

2. Did the program change your perspective of what career you would pursue?

How?

3. How has the program affected your performance in current duties?

|             |       |                |       |
|-------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| helped much | _____ | can't tell yet | _____ |
| hindered    | _____ | helped little  | _____ |
| no effect   | _____ | brought        | _____ |
|             |       | contacts       | _____ |

D. Research Value

1. Did you accomplish some major research while an intern?

On what?

2. Have you accomplished some major research since entering the internship?

3. Did the program improve your ability to conduct research?

4. What purposes are served by the program for research purposes?

- a. Familiarity with legislative process \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Access to people and data \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Experience-complement to theory \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Background-feel \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

E. Teaching Value

1. If you are now teaching, are you teaching courses related to legislatures?
2. Was the internship helpful in terms of your teaching duties?

If yes, in what way?

F. Overall Evaluation

1. How well did the program serve the following purposes?

Very well   Well   Little   Not at all

Research  
interests

Information on  
state legis-  
lature

Teaching  
proficiency

Staff work  
ability

2. Did the program live up to your expectations?

Yes, entirely

Yes, mostly

To some extent

No, not much

Definitely not

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How much did the program lead you to revise your ideas and information on the legislature?

Major reevaluation

Minor reevaluation

No change

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Would you recommend the program to
- very capable people \_\_\_\_\_
  - mediocre people \_\_\_\_\_
  - everyone \_\_\_\_\_
  - no one \_\_\_\_\_
5. How strongly would you recommend the program?
- very strongly \_\_\_\_\_
  - strongly \_\_\_\_\_
  - somewhat \_\_\_\_\_
  - not very strongly \_\_\_\_\_
  - would not recommend it \_\_\_\_\_
6. How would you rate the overall quality of the program?
- excellent \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - fair \_\_\_\_\_
  - poor \_\_\_\_\_
7. What are the strongest areas of the program?
8. What are the weakest areas of the program and what changes would you recommend?
9. What changes would you recommend in the following aspects of the program?
- a. recruitment process
  - b. selection procedure
  - c. composition of the program (type of interns, numbers, etc.)
  - d. academic component
  - e. staff work component
  - f. other
10. What in your opinion are the most important personal and professional characteristics of a successful intern?



APPENDIX B

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION

In providing an evaluation of the program, the interns were asked to comment on the strongest and weakest aspects of the LIP and to suggest changes that would strengthen various aspects of it. Overall, the strongest areas of the program were reported to be the practical experience in a legislative setting (82 percent) and the work with individual senators. One former intern said:

The strongest area of the program is the access it provides to the legislature and the legislators, the opportunity to be on the inside of the governmental process and to participate in it in a meaningful way.

Other aspects of the program mentioned were the contacts provided (12 percent), the efforts of the Secretary of the Senate, Mr. Albert Abrams (9 percent), and the series of meetings with state officials (9 percent).

When asked about the weakest areas of the LIP and those most in need of revision, the unstructured manner in which interns were assigned to senators (15 percent), the assignment by staffers to meaningless jobs, such as running errands (12 percent), and the lack of direction from September to when the legislature came into session in January (12 percent) were most frequently mentioned.

When asked to recommend changes in specific aspects of the program, several points were made:

(1) On recruitment, most comments were directed toward better publicity regarding the program. The stated goal was to secure more participation in the program and increased representation from a larger number of schools.

(2) On selection, some interns suggest that personal interviews be held with the top candidates before a final decision was made. It was also suggested that a larger number of interns be selected each year and a greater effort made to secure more minority group members.

(3) Several interns were critical of the academic component of the program, suggesting that it either be dropped or strengthened to provide greater integration of theory and practice.

What are the most important personal qualities for a successful intern? The list of responses resemble the characteristics presumably desirable for any political-administrative position (Table B-1).

TABLE B-1  
MOST IMPORTANT PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS  
OF A SUCCESSFUL INTERN

| Characteristic                        | Number | Percent |
|---------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Independent Capability,<br>Motivation | 13     | 38%     |
| Willingness to Learn                  | 8      | 24      |
| Outgoing                              | 7      | 21      |
| Discretion                            | 4      | 12      |
| Writing Ability                       | 2      | 6       |
| Related Prior<br>Experience           | 2      | 6       |

Thus, independent motivation, a willingness to learn, and an outgoing nature were deemed most important for a successful internship experience.