DEPARTMENT OF
GOVERNMENT
AND POLITICS

GVPT Research Assistant Program – Spring 2022

The Government and Politics Research Assistant program provides students with an opportunity to develop their research, analytical, writing and presentation skills. Students accepted as Research Assistants (RAs) are paired with a GVPT faculty member whom they will work with throughout the semester. There are two components to the RA position. The first is assisting with the faculty member's research, which can involve a number of activities including collecting data, coding data, and compiling and summarizing literature reviews. The second is developing your own unique research project under the direction of the faculty member. At the end of the semester each RA will give a poster presentation on their project.

In exchange for their work throughout the semester—both for the faculty member and on their own project—the RAs enroll in an independent study course and receive three upper-level credit hours of experiential learning which can count towards the GVPT major requirements.

The GVPT RA Program is capped at 5 students. This ensures that each student will have the individualized attention needed to succeed in the program. It is recommended that students have a sponsoring professor before applying, but it is not required.

Requirements

- Strong interest in researching issues related to political science
- A desire to gain and improve research skills
- 60 credit hours
- Minimum 3.3 GPA
- A completed independent study form, signed by your sponsoring professor before the end of the Schedule Adjustment period (not due at time of program application)

Benefits

- Receive training by a GVPT graduate student on the basics of how to conduct research, analyze data, use statistical programs and run basic statistics (descriptives, crosstabs, bivariate correlations, etc.)
- Work one-on-one with a faculty member and assist with his or her ongoing research
- Strengthen your research, writing, and presentation skills by conducting your own research project and presenting your findings to faculty and other guests at an end of semester symposium
- Improve job prospects and/or graduate school applications by developing your research and analytical skills
- Earn upper-level GVPT course credit
- Network with other undergraduate students doing similar work

<u>Time Commitment</u>

- Students are expected to spend 10 hours per week doing research. The hours are split evenly with 5 hours spent doing work on the faculty member's research and 5 hours of work on your own research project. You should discuss how this time will be allocated with your faculty member.
- One hour per week will be reserved for a classroom component where a GVPT graduate student will train you on research skills and provide guidance on your project. This component switches every other week between a traditional classroom setting and individual meetings. This classroom component is mandatory and your participation and attendance will be a factor in your final grade for the independent study course. The dates and times of the classroom component will be determined once the next RA cohort has been selected.
- You are also expected to meet regularly with your sponsoring professor.

<u>Application Materials</u>

- A cover letter detailing why you are interested in the program, your research interests, and if you have a specific faculty member with whom you would like to work with. The letter should also include contact information, major, class standing, UID, and a contact for one academic reference.
- A current unofficial transcript.
- A one-page resume detailing educational and employment background that highlights courses and other experiences relevant to conducting research in political science.
- A writing sample.
- A 300-500 word essay on the following topic: "If selected for the Research Assistant program, what political science topic do you intend to research and why?"

<u>Deadline</u>

The application deadline is 5 PM on November 30, 2021.

Submit application materials to Karmin Cortes, GVPT Associate Director, via email at kcortes@umd.edu. Students with successful applications will be contacted for an interview. An interview is not a guarantee of acceptance. Students will be notified of their acceptance to the program via email.