As an academic internship program, WINS features robust course work that is developed for WINS participants and delivered by AU’s exceptional professors. Faculty include award-winning, nationally recognized professors who are top scholars and practitioners in their fields. All WINS participants take an internship class on Native identity and politics, professional development, leadership, and communication. Classes incorporate lectures, readings, research, and guest speakers who enrich discussions.

In the 8-week summer program, students also take a class in Native topics. Designed to enhance awareness of Native issues and potential solutions, the class explores the role of government, advocacy organizations, and Native communities in creating change. Recent topics have included education, health, and economic development. Summer participants earn a total of 6 credit hours.

In the 15-week fall and spring semesters, students may take an elective course in addition to the internship class, choosing from a wide variety of AU classes, for a total of 9 credit hours. They also have the option of taking a test preparation course (GRE, GMAT, or LSAT).

The centerpiece of the WINS program is a full-time internship (40 hours per week) with a federal department or agency or a Native-focused advocacy organization. In addition to gaining skills and knowledge that can benefit their Native communities, many students find that this valuable experience can jumpstart a career or enhance a graduate school application. WINS has established long-term relationships with numerous organizations, including:

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- American Federation of Teachers
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Center for Native American Youth
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of Justice
- Department of Treasury
- Department of the Interior
- Department of State
- Environmental Protection Agency
- National American Indian Foundation
- National Congress of American Indians
- National Indian Education Association
- National Institutes of Health
- National Science Foundation
- Social Security Administration
- White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education

Coming from a small university, for me it was really a pleasant surprise to have a small class size and the one-on-one interaction.

- Jasmine Locklear, Lumbee Tribe
  Western Carolina University, North Carolina
  Intern at the Office of Native American Affairs, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
WASHINGTON, DC

AU’s location in the vibrant city of Washington, DC, represents a wealth of cultural resources and experiences. Students are encouraged to take advantage of historical resources such as the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian and to explore the district’s diverse neighborhoods. Program staff also make an effort to connect students with the Native community locally. AU’s residence halls are among the best-equipped in the metropolitan area. Participants enjoy access to on-campus facilities, including the University Library and Tom’s Market, Jacobs Event Center, Reeves Aquatic Center, and computer labs. On-campus resources to support students’ academic and personal success include the Writing Center, Career Center, and International Student and Scholar Services.

CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

Throughout the year, WINS organizes panels and symposiums, professional development programs, and special events for Native Heritage Month. Participants also attend a farewell banquet and, in the summer, a powwow. The university has established relationships with institutions and organizations throughout Washington, DC, and many faculty and alumni are engaged with centers of policy, practice, and research. Equally important to the WINS experience is the opportunity to gain friendships, social support, and interactions with other participants from different backgrounds. Students also find social and educational opportunities within AU’s diverse community, which includes students from 50 states and 140 countries.

ELIGIBILITY AND COSTS

WINS serves approximately 90 participants each year. The program is open to Native students who are:

• American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Native Hawaiian
• Enrolled full-time and in good academic standing in a college or university
• Second-semester sophomores, juniors, seniors, recent graduates, and graduate students

AU and sponsoring organizations cover the costs of participants’ tuition, lodging, travel to and from Washington, DC, and food, local travel, cultural activities, the additional expenses not covered by the stipend, and personal expenses.

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