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How – and Why – to Hire La Follette School Project Assistants

What is a La Follette School Project Assistantship?

- Employing a La Follette School Project Assistant (PA) is a cost-effective means to accomplish special projects and increase productivity.
- The La Follette School partners with agencies and organizations in all sectors, linking them with highly qualified students eager to supplement knowledge learned in the classroom with practical experience.
- A Project Assistantship (PAship) is a paid position that provides a stipend, benefits, and tuition remission to a La Follette School student for a contracted period of work. Rates of pay and other budget matters are set by university policy.
- Agencies run the hiring process, but the La Follette School handles administration of a contract between the School and agency, and payrolls the student through the University.
- Selection of candidates is a highly competitive process. PAships are typically viewed as among the most valuable opportunities offered through the La Follette School.

What can I expect from La Follette Project Assistants?

La Follette students are graduate students who can hit the ground running. Through a rigorous curriculum spanning several disciplines and a professional development program that hones job readiness skills, students:

- Acquire academic knowledge and practical skills in statistical analysis, microeconomic policy analysis, public management, policy analysis, and performance management;
- Gain contextual knowledge in the American policy process or international governance;
- Build the writing and presentation skills that are critical to their careers; and
- Choose from La Follette School courses that include budgeting, advanced statistical methods, benefit-cost analysis, program evaluation, macroeconomic policy, and personnel administration.

How do I set up a La Follette Project Assistantship?

The La Follette School Associate Director will assist you in setting up a PAship:

- The PAship requires a contract between the employer and UW-Madison; the contract will be drafted by the La Follette School Financial Specialist.
- PAships must be for at least 33.4% time (approximately 13 hours per week), but can be up to 75% time, depending on a student's situation.
- PAships can be arranged for one semester, one academic year, or on an annual basis.
- RE: the hiring process, the employer drafts a job/project description, which is circulated to students, who apply based on their skills, interests, and availability. Employers run the interview process and hire the candidate of their choice.
- Contracts (including hiring) should be completed by August 1st for work beginning in the fall semester (late August) or December 1st for work beginning in the spring semester (mid-January).

What are some examples of successful PAships?

- Agencies, non-profits and businesses including the Department of Administration, the Department of Health Services, Legislative Council, AFSCME, Dane County United Way, and Education Analytics have employed La Follette School PAs to assist in statistical analysis, research and cost-benefit studies.
- To view profiles of recent La Follette PAs, see <http://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/news/paships-let-students-take-on-policy-questions>.

What are the next steps?

- If you are interested in offering a PAship or in getting more information, please contact Associate Director Hilary Shager at 608.263.2409 or hshager@lafollette.wisc.edu.