



# THE WASHINGTON SEMESTER PROGRAM

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## Registration Information

Enclosed you will find a Registration Authorization Form, which should be returned **by December 1, 2009**. If you are from one of the Washington Semester member schools, please consult the faculty representative appointed to counsel you on your elective or research project choices. If you plan to take an elective in lieu of the research project, you should provide course numbers for at least three choices (in order of preference) on the enclosed Registration Authorization Form and *be sure to have your faculty representative sign the form if you are from a member school*. Also, be sure to choose an elective that meets after 5:00 p.m., regardless of the program to which you have been admitted.

If you are from a non-member school, just complete the materials that are applicable to you and return them directly to us. No advisor signature is necessary for non-member students.

### What to Choose: Course Elective, Research Project, or Neither

In past semesters, an average of 55% of Washington Semester students opted for the elective (meeting once a week in the evening); 35% enrolled in the research project course; and 10% chose neither, opting for only 12 credits (two seminar courses and the internship only).

The choice is yours no matter which program you are enrolled in. However, please be aware that some of the Washington Semester member schools require that students complete the research project. ***DePauw, Middlebury, Lehigh, Southern Methodist, Tufts, and Saint Lawrence*** are just a few of the schools in this category. If you are uncertain, it is best that you check with the Washington Semester faculty representative on your campus before registering.

Also, it is important to note that if you opt to not enroll in either the research project or the course elective, your tuition charge remains the same. American University assesses a flat fee for participation in the program . . . for 12, 15, 16 or 17 credits. Therefore, I personally recommend that you maximize your program fee and enroll in more than 12 credits!

### A few things to note in making your choice:

1. The research project may be of particular interest to you since you will be studying in the information capital of the world. You will have access to government documents, interest group reports, and the ability to interview prominent Washingtonians, all sources which are unavailable to you at your home school. Under the close guidance of your professor, you can become an expert on the topic of your research. Also, you will find the workload in the research course to be more suitable to your semester's schedule in that you engage in an independent study and will meet with your professor periodically. Regular American University courses require weekly meetings, two examinations and a variety of written and reading assignments—this kind of "rigidity" may not fit in with the rest of your semester's experience.
2. If you decide on the elective course instead of the research project, choose a course that meets after 5:00 p.m. The daytime hours are reserved for seminars and your internship. Most students opt for any evening course on seminar days or electives in the 8:10p.m.-10:00pm block on their internship days to avoid rushing back to campus. ***(Please note that students enrolled in the International Environment & Development, Peace & Conflict Resolution, International Law & Organizations, International Business & Trade- China, or Contemporary Islam programs may not opt for an elective on main campus. You will be gone for three weeks of the semester and would miss too much class time. You are only eligible for the Washington Semester "special elective choices" which will be determined and communicated to you in December.)***

3. Choose electives that are above the 200-level. Since most of you are juniors, it will be more rewarding to be in a class with your peers. Courses at or below the 200-level are designed for AU undergraduates who are fulfilling their general education and major requirements and thus may not be suitable for you. The 500-level courses are for advanced undergraduates and beginning graduate students. While these courses are open to you, you have to be careful in making sure that the workload will not interfere with other aspects of your program. It is useful to find out more about the requirements and expectations of the course you select (from the professor) before registering. Also, be sure you have met any prerequisites noted. **\*\*600-level and above courses are not open to you.**
4. Registration in your elective preferences is not guaranteed, however we will do our best to accommodate your requests. If you do not get into one of your choices, we will work with you at the start of the semester to find an alternative course.
5. To find course descriptions of elective courses, check the American University Web site:  
<http://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/schedule/class.cfm>
6. Communications, Languages, and Art courses are particularly difficult for Washington Semester students to gain entry since so many American University majors fill these classes. Government classes fill up quickly as well. Many of these courses also satisfy American University general education requirements. So, please do not be too discouraged if you attempt to register for these courses but are continually closed out of them.
7. Have more than one course option available to you. Even if you are advance-registered in your first choice of elective, there is always the possibility of the course being canceled or the time being changed to a daytime course. Having several options that have been approved by your home school representative can really save a great deal of trouble.
8. Very Important: Unless you find it absolutely necessary, try not to have to take courses that are requirements toward your major or to graduation at your home school. Again, this can be very disappointing if you find that the class is closed or canceled.
9. If you do find yourself in a bind and must take a certain course elective that you cannot get into at American, you might wish to consider the Consortium of Area Universities. If a particular course is not offered at American at a suitable time and you really need the course, you can check the consortium Web site ([www.consortium.org](http://www.consortium.org)) to find out if the course is offered at another area University at an appropriate time. Then consult our Registrar regarding procedures for registering through the consortium.
10. If you do advance-register in an elective course and later decide that you wish to change it, you may do so during the first two weeks of the semester. After the first two weeks, you may only drop the course with a grade of "W" on your transcript. You may not add any courses to replace the dropped course after the second week of classes.
11. If you wish to enroll in any course (program course or elective) on a pass/fail basis, you must have prior permission. Member school students should obtain written permission from their home school representative. Non-Member students should contact the Washington Semester offices directly. Without this approval, all courses will be registered for a letter grade. Think carefully about this option before making a decision. Once you are enrolled on a pass/fail basis, you will never receive a letter grade (A-F) regardless of how well you do in the course. Take into consideration future educational applications to law or graduate schools before making a decision.
12. Finally, please be sure to familiarize yourself with the final exam dates and deadlines for making changes to your registration in the front of the Schedule of Classes. These dates apply to the entire University community of which you will be a part. If you think you will need approval from your home school representative to make changes to your registration, try to get the approval in advance if possible or at least have some idea of what is acceptable.