



Working Abroad—a Parliamentary Experience

Undergraduates often have an ideal view of how the world works. We assume after putting in four, long years of university study, possibly even working an on- or off-campus job, eager employers will be lining up waiting for the moment when we finally put on our caps and gowns. Rarely is that truly the case.

Most of us will realize all too late that employers are actually looking for real-world experience. For those of us hoping for international careers, employers expect us to have actually been abroad. Organizations like the Kennedy Center and the Center for the Study of Europe (CSE) realized the importance of international internships long ago. Together, these centers, with faculty support, have recently created more opportunities that, if pursued, will provide undergraduates the experience that will place them in a competitive position in a tight labor market.

During spring term 2004, I participated in the Scottish Parliament internship—a relatively new program sponsored by CSE that sends students to work directly for members of Parliament in Edinburgh. After returning from Scotland, I became the student facilitator for both the Scottish and European Parliament internships. It has been incredible to not only have participated in the internship but also help to develop the program for future interns. What started out as a small, unpredictable internship sending a few participants once a year has blossomed into an established and expanding program that sends interns abroad ten months out of the year.

No Events