

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Qualifications

**Question: *What are the minimum qualifications for being a fellow?***

**Answer:**

1. Have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution by September 1st of the fellowship year and either a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.5 or higher or a GPA of 2.5 or higher in the last 60 (semester) or 90 (quarter) units. No preference is given to the type of major or how recently the applicant has graduated. Individuals with advanced degrees and those in mid-career are encouraged to apply.
2. Be 20 years of age or older by Sept. 1 of the fellowship year.
3. Non-U.S. citizens must provide proof of appropriate immigration status. The Capital Fellows Programs do not meet the requirements for F-1 or J-1 visas, nor any work permits requiring participation in the E-verify system.

**Question: *How much does G.P.A. weigh in on your decision of who is accepted?***

**Answer:** Although your G.P.A. is important, it is only one consideration among many that selection committees weigh.

**Question: *Do I have to have my four-year degree at the time I apply?***

**Answer:** No. You must obtain your degree by September 1, of the fellowship year. All incoming fellows must provide proof of graduation from a university or four-year college prior to the start of the fellowship.

**Question: *Do you have to be enrolled at Sacramento State in order to apply for a fellowship?***

**Answer:** No. Anyone with a four-year degree from a regionally accredited institution may apply.

**Question: *Are the Capital Fellows required to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE)?***

**Answer:** No.

**Question: *Are applicants already pursuing an M.A. degree evaluated on a different basis?***

**Answer:** No, the only educational requirement for the programs is the completion of a baccalaureate degree.

**Question: *I am interested in the fellowship opportunities and as a law school graduate I'm curious if there are legal-specific opportunities. I recognize that graduate students are encouraged to apply, but I would be particularly interested in making use of my legal degree.***

**Answer:** Law school graduates have put their legal training to use in each of the four programs, and fellows are matched to placements that best utilize their education and skills. However, a specifically legal-related work assignment is not guaranteed.

**Question: *Is previous legislative or political experience required and do you have to be a member of a certain political party?***

**Answer:** Applicants with any party affiliation are welcome to apply, including Republicans, Democrats, and people affiliated with third parties or no party at all. No previous legislative or political experience is required.

### General information

**Question: *Can an applicant apply to more than one of the fellowships of the Capital Fellows Programs?***

**Answer:** The Capital Fellows Program consists of four individual programs: Jesse M. Unruh Assembly Fellowship Program, Executive Fellowship Program, Judicial Fellowship Program, and California Senate Fellows program. You may apply to as many programs as you like. The members of the selection committees are aware that candidates often apply to more than one program. However, each program is unique to the branch of government it serves. Only apply to the program(s) that truly interest you, and make sure you individualize each application.

**Question: *I would rather do my fellowship outside of Sacramento. Is this possible?***

**Answer:** The Judicial Fellowship Program places Fellows in selected courts across California, and all Assembly, Executive and Senate Fellows work in Sacramento.

**Question: *Since I would earn credit at Sacramento State does that mean that I am enrolled in a graduate program at Sacramento State?***

**Answer:** Upon acceptance into the program, fellows are automatically enrolled as unclassified graduate students at Sacramento State. Upon successful completion of the Fellows program, all fellows are eligible to receive a *Certificate in Applied Policy and Government* from Sacramento State. In addition, some or all of the units earned may be applied to graduate programs upon completion of the fellowship. There is no standard rule, and units are accepted by graduate schools on a case-by-case basis. Executive and Judicial Fellows earn graduate credits through the Department of Public Policy and Administration; Assembly and Senate Fellows earn graduate credits through the Department of Political Science.

**Question: *I would like to submit an application for the fellowship, but I am currently abroad. Can I still apply?***

**Answer:** Yes. The entire application must be completed and submitted online.

**Question: *When do applicants receive notification of their selection for interviews?***

**Answer:** Invitations to interview will generally be sent in April.

**Question: *When and where are the interviews? Is it possible to interview for multiple fellowships?***

**Answer:** Interviews for all four programs generally take place in late April/early May (in Sacramento and Southern California). It is possible to interview with more than one program and every effort will be made to coordinate your interview times.

**Question: *With the interviews taking place in late April/early May, they may conflict with final exams week and/or commencement weekend. What can be done to accommodate this?***

**Answer:** All interviews must be conducted during the two interview periods. There are no exceptions.

**Question: *Is an in-person interview required for those applicants who are invited to interview or can it be conducted by teleconference?***

**Answer:** Applicants who pass the paper screen must interview in person either in Sacramento or Southern California. *No phone or teleconference interviews are conducted.*

**Question: *Is it possible to defer your placement as a Capital Fellow?***

**Answer:** No. Once the position is offered to you, you must decide whether to accept or decline for the current year.

### **Transcripts for the Application**

**Question: *Since the transcripts do not have to be official, will a printout from the university website of my academic record be sufficient?***

**Answer:** Yes. You can submit internet-generated transcripts for the application as long as your name is included as part of the transcript.

**Question: *I studied abroad last fall, and my transcript for that semester will not be available before the application deadline. Thus, my current academic work will not be reflected on the university transcript included in my application. What should I do?***

**Answer:** If the transcript is not available, please notify the Center for California Studies at (916) 278-6906 or [calstudies@csus.edu](mailto:calstudies@csus.edu).

## **International Students**

**Question:** *I am a Permanent Resident, but not a citizen. Can I still apply?*

**Answer:** Yes. Please see the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website for further clarification.

**Question:** *Do you accept international students or non-US citizens?*

**Answer:** Yes, but note, since program participants are both graduate students and employees of the university, fellows must be either U.S. residents or have obtained a visa to work in the United States. Providing documentation of eligibility to work is the responsibility of the applicant; the University is not able to help with this process. Eligibility documentation must be provided *prior* to the personal interview. *Note: The Capital Fellows Programs do not meet the requirements for an F-1 or J-1 visa nor do we participate in the E-Verify program.*

## **Out-of-state applicants**

**Question:** *I am very interested in learning about the California government, but have never lived or studied in California. Will this affect my chances of being accepted?*

**Answer:** No. Applicants need not be residents or have studied in California. However, applicants should be able to demonstrate knowledge of and a commitment to the State.

## **Continuing with graduate education after the fellowship**

**Question:** *I have been accepted into Law School for this fall, but I would really like to defer my enrollment for one year and pursue a fellowship. Is an early departure from a program acceptable?*

**Answer:** Fellows commit to remaining in their placements until the program concludes; however, in rare situations, it is possible to make arrangements with the program director for an early departure necessitated by enrollment in an academic program the following fall.

## **Housing and Transportation**

**Question:** *What is the public transportation system in Sacramento?*

**Answer:** Sacramento Regional Transit (RT) has a bus line service and a light rail system that serves the greater Sacramento area. Visit [www.sacrt.com](http://www.sacrt.com) for more details.

**Question:** *Is there transportation aid for the fellows?*

**Answer:** As Sacramento State employees, fellows are eligible to purchase a Sacramento Regional Transit District pass (valid through December 31) for a fee of \$40. When fellows are enrolled as students in the spring, they are eligible to use local public transportation free of charge. Required program-related travel costs for the Judicial Fellowship (a statewide program) are paid by the program.

**Question:** *Does the fellowship provide housing options at Sacramento State or any off-campus locations?*

**Answer:** No. Fellows are responsible for arranging their own housing. Current fellows are always a good resource and often fellows share housing with others in their class. Sacramento has many desirable neighborhoods and, in comparison with the Bay Area or parts of L.A., rent is typically more affordable.