

Program Eligibility

All applicants must:

- Be at least 20 years of age by September 1 of the fellowship year.
- Have a bachelor's degree by September 1 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.
- Have a demonstrated interest in state government and public policy.
- Be authorized to work in the United States for the duration of the fellowship program.

How to Apply

Applicants must submit the following by the application deadline:

- Completed online application at csus.edu/capitalfellows
- Statement of purpose and policy statement
- Resume
- College transcript(s)
- A list of three individuals who will write letters of recommendation

Applications and specific dates and deadlines can be found online at csus.edu/capitalfellows

For more information, contact

Center for California Studies, California State University,
Sacramento (916) 278-6906; capfellowsoutreach@csus.edu



"The fellowship has given me an intimate and hands-on perspective of state government, as well as a community of fellows and professionals that are invested in my personal and professional development. From orientation, academic seminar, and the placement process, I have learned so much about the executive branch and the role that California plays not only locally but its impact across the country. California leads in many initiatives from economic development, transportation, climate and education to name a few, and right now more than ever is the time to safeguard our values and make an impact through public service and government."

Marysol Valdez, Executive Fellow, 2024-2025



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The EXECUTIVE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

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THE EXECUTIVE FELLOW EXPERIENCE

Established in 1986 and jointly sponsored by the Office of the Governor and the Center for California Studies at Sacramento State, the Executive Fellowship Program places Fellows as full-time professional staff in offices across the executive branch, including constitutional offices, state agencies, departments, and councils and commissions. Fellows directly contribute to policy development, program implementation, and administrative initiatives that impact communities throughout the state. This opportunity provides Fellows with insight into how executive leadership operates and how policies are developed and carried out across California.

The program emphasizes professional growth through mentorship and hands-on experience, launching Fellows into public service careers. The Director of the Executive Fellowship Program manages the fellowship, provides training, and serves as the direct supervisor for Fellows. The Director offers guidance through regular one-on-one meetings, helping Fellows navigate the transition into public service. The Director serves as a key resource for reflection, problem-solving, and professional growth. Fellows are also paired with an on-site mentor who ensures opportunities for meaningful assignments in their placement office.



"The Executive Fellowship offered me a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work directly with top decision makers in California. It allowed me to start my career with significant access and credibility that would usually take years to earn, while giving me the support to grow before taking on my next big step."

Damien Farhad Henson, Executive Fellow, 2024-2025

The Nature of Fellowship Work

The 10-month fellowship begins in September with an intensive orientation, after which fellows start work in their placement offices. Some prior placement opportunities include:

- Delta Stewardship Council
- California Environmental Protection Agency
- California Student Aid Commission
- Department of Finance
- Office of the Governor
- Department of Justice
- Department of Healthcare Services

Fellow responsibilities vary by placement office. Common responsibilities include legislative analysis, stakeholder engagement, communications, project management, and gaining expert knowledge on issues important to Californians.

Program Benefits

- Paid full-time employment status, including health, vision, and dental benefits
- One-time moving allowance
- Student loan deferment eligibility
- Graduate Certificate in Applied Policy and Government upon program completion



Academic Seminar

Executive Fellows participate in weekly academic seminars with their cohort, where they study Public Policy and Administration. The seminar allows Fellows to apply theoretical academic concepts to real-world responsibilities in their placement offices. Upon completion of the fellowship, Fellows earn six graduate units in public Policy and Administration, at no cost for tuition or fees.

