



**Homeland
Security**

Science and Technology

Building A Successful Application for the DHS HS-STEM Summer Internship Program

What's Included in this guide:

- General tips for completing your application
- Creating consistency among all the pieces of your application
- Choosing good references
- Writing successful essays
- Uploading acceptable documents
- Selecting projects
- Helpful Links

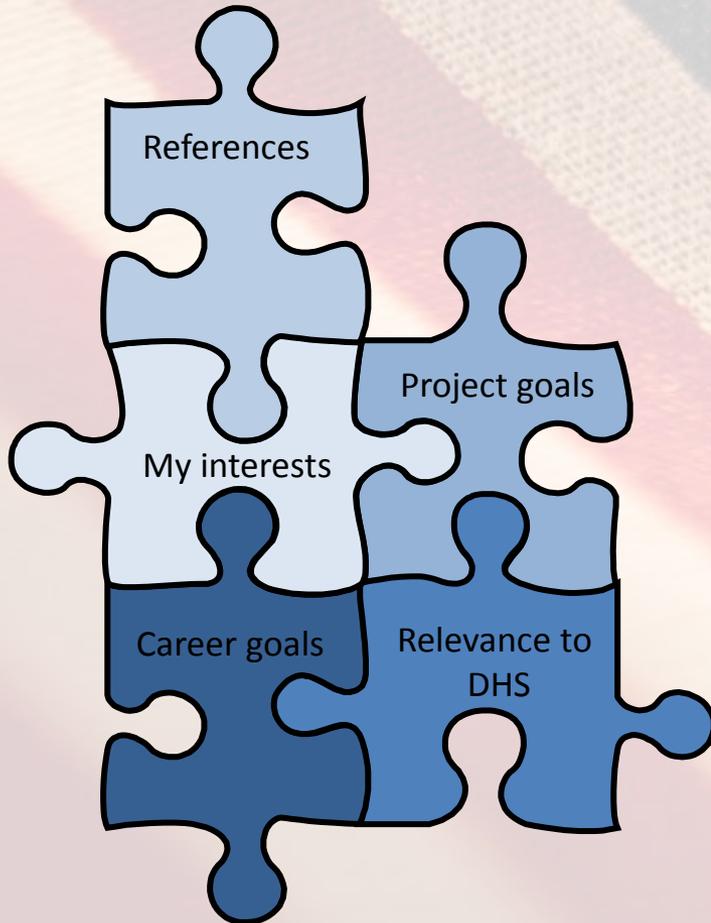
For more information or to apply, please visit: <http://www.orau.gov/dhseducation/internships/>

General Tips for Successfully Completing Your Application



- Plan Ahead! Completing an application is a time consuming process; be sure to follow [application instructions](#) and meet [deadlines](#).
- Check the [eligibility requirements](#) before completing an application.
- Request [supporting documents](#) as soon as possible. Make sure your supporting documents are acceptable.
- Check that your home page in the online application system shows at least two references as “received” *before the application deadline*.
- Check spelling, grammar, and accuracy before submitting all information.
- Do not submit an incomplete application – *it will not be considered* (e.g., missing references, missing or unacceptable documents, incomplete essays).
- Familiarize yourself with the DHS Research Areas, DHS mission, and HS-STEM Program goals (see [Helpful Links](#) below).

Have Consistency Among All Application Materials



- Choose professional/academic references that support your application.
- Write essays with clear and concise research interests and career goals.
 - Demonstrate that your research interests are aligned with the DHS Research Areas.
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the DHS mission and HS-STEM Program goals.
 - Make it evident that your career goals are aligned with the DHS mission.
- Select projects that match your academic background and research interests.

Choose the Best References

- Try to find references who enthusiastically support your application.
- Explain the internship program to your references so they understand the purpose of their recommendation. If time allows, show them your essays and ask for feedback.
- References are asked to report their association with you, and to rate your personal and scientific capabilities.
 - The **best references** are from professionals who can speak to your scientific potential. Examples of the best references might be researchers, instructors, and professionals in HS-STEM fields.
 - **Weaker references** are those that may be useful for speaking about your work ethic, passion, or personal qualities (e.g., coaches, pastors, or sales supervisors), but will not be scored as highly as others that can speak to your scientific potential.
 - The **weakest references** are those from personal acquaintances, such as friends, relatives, or neighbors.



Make Your Essays Count



- ***General Essay Guidelines:***

Longer essays are not necessarily higher quality essays. Being clear and concise with specific examples shows confidence in your work and that you are not merely trying to add “filler” to your essays. Ask colleagues, teachers, advisors, or references to read your essays before submitting. At the very least, read your essays yourself before you submit them – correct grammar, typos, and content errors.

- ***Essay 1: Research Interests***

You should clearly explain your current research interests. Include what research you are pursuing or would like to pursue, the objective of the research, and why you are so interested in this particular field. Simply stating that you are studying a topic and enjoy it will not carry nearly the same weight as describing specific research examples and their potential outcomes. Use these examples to show that you are actively involved in your scientific career. Finally, remember to explain how the DHS HS-STEM internship experience aligns with your research interests.

- ***Essay 2: Relevance to the DHS Science and Technology Mission***

You should research the DHS Science and Technology mission and Research Areas and find correlations with your interests and background. You need to clearly and concisely explain how your specific skill set and interests apply to a particular DHS research area.

- ***Essay 3: Professional Goals***

You should explain both your current and post-graduation goals. We want to know what your true aspirations are, how the DHS HS-STEM internship experience will contribute to achieving those objectives, and how your professional goals are aligned with the DHS Science and Technology mission. Be as specific and honest as possible.

Ensure Your Supporting Documents are Acceptable

- Acceptable transcripts have official university markings, such as the registrar's signature, university logo or stamp, letterhead or watermark, etc. More details can be found at <http://www.orau.gov/dhseducation/internships/acceptable-docs.html>
- Make sure that transcripts show grades through Summer 2013 and include all postsecondary institutions attended since Fall 2012.
- If current enrollment/coursework is missing from your transcript, then you must provide documentation on university letterhead that includes the student name, confirms full-time enrollment, lists courses and credit hours for the Fall 2013 term, and is signed by an authorized university official (e.g., registrar officer, academic advisor, or department head).

Applications with unacceptable supporting documents will not be considered.

Transcript Record for First M. Last Name

NAME: First M. Last Name
Date of Birth: 1-1-2012 * Social Security Number: 123-45-6789 * Student ID: A12345-6

No Academic Institution Listed

PII Not Redacted

Term	Course	Grade	Term	Course	Grade
Fall 2006	ENG100	A	Fall 2008	ENG104	A
	MTH100	B		MTH104	B
	PHY100	A		PHY104	A
	CHM100	A		CHM104	A
TERM GPA: 3.85			TERM GPA: 3.85		
CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85			CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85		
Spring 2007	ENG105	A	Spring 2009	ENG105	A
	MTH105	B		MTH105	B
	PHY105	A		PHY105	A
	CHM105	A		CHM105	A
TERM GPA: 3.85			TERM GPA: 3.85		
CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85			CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85		
Fall 2007	ENG102	A	Fall 2009	ENG106	A
	MTH102	B		MTH106	B
	PHY102	A		PHY106	A
	CHM102	A		CHM106	A
TERM GPA: 3.85			TERM GPA: 3.85		
CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85			CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85		
Spring 2008	ENG103	A			

AWARDED B.A. Chemistry 2010
END UNDERGRADUATE RECORD

No current coursework listed (if applicable)

No official institution markings (watermark, stamp, logo, and/or signature)

Back page not included

Example University - Sacramento 100 Sacramento Blvd Sacramento, CA 95845

NAME: First M. Last Name Issued to Student
Date of Birth: [REDACTED] * Social Security Number: [REDACTED] * Student ID: [REDACTED]
Graduate Status: Graduate Print Date: 1-1-2012

Term	Course	Grade	Term	Course	Grade
Fall 2006	ENG100	A	Fall 2008	ENG104	A
	MTH100	B		MTH104	B
	PHY100	A		PHY104	A
	CHM100	A		CHM104	A
TERM GPA: 3.85			TERM GPA: 3.85		
CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85			CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85		
Spring 2007	ENG101	A	Spring 2009	ENG105	A
	MTH101	B		MTH105	B
	PHY101	A		PHY105	A
	CHM101	A		CHM105	A
TERM GPA: 3.85			TERM GPA: 3.85		
CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85			CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85		
Fall 2007	ENG102	A	Fall 2009	ENG106	A
	MTH102	B		MTH106	B
	PHY102	A		PHY106	A
	CHM102	A		CHM106	A
TERM GPA: 3.85			TERM GPA: 3.85		
CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85			CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85		
Spring 2008	ENG103	A	Spring 2010	ENG107	A
	MTH103	B		MTH107	B
	PHY103	A		PHY107	A
	CHM103	A		CHM107	A
TERM GPA: 3.85			TERM GPA: 3.85		
CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85			CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85		
Spring 2009	ENG104	A	Spring 2011	ENG200	In progress
	MTH104	B		MTH200	In progress
	PHY104	A		PHY200	In progress
	CHM104	A		CHM200	In progress
TERM GPA: 3.85			TERM GPA: n/a		
CUMULATIVE GPA: 3.85			CUMULATIVE GPA: n/a		

AWARDED B.A. Chemistry 2010
END UNDERGRADUATE RECORD

BEGIN GRADUATE RECORD for M.A. Chemistry

Example University - Sacramento

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE: [Signature]

Select the Project That is Right for You



- Identify research projects that interest you and match your background.
- Contact research mentors to better assess your interest (mentors are listed in each project posting in the Project Catalog).
- Review the Hosting Site information concerning location, housing, on-site transportation or other information that may impact your decision. Contact Hosting Site internship coordinators if you have questions.
- Consider selecting more than one project at different hosting sites to increase your chances of being selected (you can select up to five).

Helpful Links

- **DHS Mission:**
<http://www.dhs.gov/our-mission>
- **DHS Science and Technology Mission:**
<http://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology-directorate>
- **HS-STEM Program Overview:**
<http://www.orau.gov/dhseducation/internships/index.html>
- **DHS Research Areas:**
<http://www.orau.gov/dhseducation/about/researchAreas.html>
- **How to Apply:**
<http://www.orau.gov/dhseducation/internships/application.html>
- **Hosting Site Information:**
<http://www.orau.gov/dhseducation/internships/hostSites.html>
- **Frequently Asked Questions:**
<http://www.orau.gov/dhseducation/internships/faqs.html>
- **Still have questions? Email us at DHSed@orau.org**

