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Tonya Final Report Summary: My Summer with CSPC

My internship with the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC) gave me great insight into the inner-workings of the non-governmental organization and its potential influence on domestic as well as international politics. The Center is a unique force in Washington, DC as its mission is to strengthen the effectiveness of government through leadership lessons of the past. Its methodology, however, extends beyond the scope of historical analysis and instead grasps at the modern issues facing the Presidency today and how we can resolve them.

At Sewanee, my research focuses on international law and Middle Eastern studies. The Center, though dealing with several policy areas –both domestic and foreign, allowed me to focus my internship on areas that interested me. In fact, what attracted me to the internship was the unique opportunity it presented for me to explore my own role in affecting effective governance here in the United States while utilizing my interests in foreign policy. Some of the projects that I was given the opportunity to work on include a Pakistan Land Development project, the Mobilizing NATO in Afghanistan and Pakistan assessment, as well as the designing of a roundtable on “Terrorism in Southeast Asia.” All of these projects exposed me to experienced policymakers and government officials, but they also gave me a knowledge base for the researching and funding that is necessary to pursuing these strategic analyses and to sustaining a non-profit organization.

That said, my time spent with the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress had a large impact on my future career goals. Although I plan to pursue an international law degree in the future, I would like to obtain a position with another NGO in the coming years. Through my internship I was able to attend conferences, lectures, and forums that separate organizations hosted, and these trips gave me a clearer idea of the issues facing DC politicians today –especially in the international sphere. Politics play a strong role in conflicts here and abroad, and this summer convinced me of the impact NGO work could ultimately have in the US political sphere.