Social Sciences: Projects in Education, Environmental Studies, History, Sociology, and the Wellesley Centers for Women

Education

Soo Hong
Teacher-parent relationships in urban schools

I will be working on a book project that explores the narratives and experiences of urban public school teachers who integrate students’ families into their work as teachers and can provide us with alternative family engagement models and strategies in schools. As an extension of this project, I will also be launching an inquiry of Boston-area teachers (candidates in teacher preparation programs and teachers within their first ten years of teaching) to explore their current experiences with family engagement, the challenges and obstacles they face in connecting with families, the questions they have about this work, and their suggestions for personal and professional development in engaging families. With foundations in anthropological and sociological theory and methodologies, this is an interdisciplinary project.

The student will gain skills in literature review, research design, pilot of research instruments, data collection (interviews), and data coding/analysis through the use of Atlas.ti qualitative analysis software.

Environmental Studies

Beth DeSombre
What Is Environmental Politics?

What Is Environmental Politics a book project is about the different ways society attempts to deal with the political choices required to prevent or recover from environmental damage. Each chapter focuses on a set of concepts or political actors or structures (the role of science, political structures, political actors, international environmental politics) and will be illustrated with details from environmental issues. The volume as a whole addresses what makes environmental politics different from other types of political issues, and concludes with discussion of where the intervention points are to make better political outcomes more likely. The entire project is interdisciplinary.
Some social science (political science, economics, or sociology) and ES background necessary; student will gain skills in collecting and reviewing academic literature, as well as data gathering and analysis.

**History**

Lidwien Kapteijns  
*Somali Girls' Education in Historical Perspective*

Prof. Kapteijns in History is inviting applications for a research project about the history of education in Somalia/Somaliland from the colonial period to the present, with a focus on girls' education in contemporary Somaliland. Some knowledge of Islam and proficiency in Italian and/or Somali are highly desirable.

**Sociology**

Markella Rutherford  
*Children, Youth, and Inequality*

I will be working on two projects that broadly involve children, youth, and inequality. One project focuses on the ways neoliberal policies affect children and parents, with a focus on how race and class shape perceptions of "good" and "bad" parents. Another project asks questions about parent and student anxieties in high-performing schools, with an eye toward how these anxieties may be connected to immigration, race, and suburban white flight. The student assistant will gain research skills through literature review, data collection for content analysis, qualitative analysis of media texts and interview transcripts using Atlas.ti, and manuscript preparation.

**Wellesley Centers for Women**

Linda Charmaraman  
*Adolescent online engagement: Implications for academic, psychosocial, behavioral, and civic outcomes*

During the academic year, our Media and Wellbeing Research Lab will be engaged in the critical stages of a research study on adolescent online engagement, thus can offer valuable exposure and interdisciplinary skill development in research design, piloting and measure development, participant recruitment, off-site data collection, conducting interviews and focus groups, data entry, coding and cleaning datasets, data analysis, interpretation of findings, dissemination, and
organizing community workshops. Transportation will be provided for all off-site trips. No prior research experience is necessary but desired.

Helpful: Some coursework in psychology, education, or sociology Strong writing organizational skills Working knowledge of major social media sites (e.g. Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr) Interest in exploring graduate or professional school options Interest in working with underserved populations (e.g., racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, sexual, and/or gender minorities).

A must: Ability to maintain frequent communication about progress on intern tasks and responsibilities.