Archer Center Independent Study and Research Syllabus
Updated 05.18.2020

Course Information
PA 8331
Archer Center Independent Study and Research

Summer 2020
May 26; June 1-July 27, 2020
Mondays 5-7 pm CT (6-8 pm ET) and by appointment

Professor Contact Information
Professor	**Michelle L. Chin, Ph.D.**
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Office Location	1750 Pennsylvania Ave NW Suite 900, Washington, DC 20006
Office Hours	4-6 pm ET Mon/Tues
Other Information	Other meetings by appointment

Lecturer Contact Information
Lecturer　　　　　　**Diedra Henry-Spires** (cell: 301-221-1807; email: Diedra.Henry-Spires@UTDallas.edu)
　　　　　　　　Office Hours　- by appointment

Lecturer　　　　　　**John Kane** (cell: 202-487-6612; email: John.Kane@UTDallas.edu)
　　　　　　　　Office Hours　- by appointment

Lecturer　　　　　　**Sue Ramanathan** (cell: 202-257-3121; email: SRamanathan@UTDallas.edu)
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Lecturer　　　　　　**Becky Shipp** (cell: 703-907-9889; email: Rebecca.Shipp@UTDallas.edu)
　　　　　　　　Office Hours　- by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions
Acceptance into the Archer Fellowship Program.

Course Description
This course is tailored to each student's graduate program of study. Each student will work independently with Dr. Chin and the Archer Center Lecturers to develop a policy research project that aligns with and advances the student's professional, academic and/or research goals.

Students are required to participate in policy working groups (listed below), where Fellows will meet virtually each week with their assigned Archer Center Lecturer and relevant policy experts to discuss their policy proposals. All meetings of the Policy Working Groups will occur via Microsoft Teams.

The policy working groups are:
- General Domestic Policy Working Group (John Kane)
  - Education Policy Subgroup (Dr. Chin)
- Health Policy Working Group (Diedra Henry-Spires & Becky Shipp)
  - Health-Med Subgroup (Becky Shipp)
  - Health-Public Subgroup (Diedra Henry-Spires)
- National Security & Global Affairs Policy Working Group (Sue Ramanathan)

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes
1. Students will identify knowledge resources that are unique to D.C. or which are otherwise more easily obtainable in D.C. than in Texas.
2. Students will identify a public policy problem and will describe and develop strategies for assessing the policy problem.
3. Students will develop strategies for resolving or addressing the policy problem.
4. Students will determine linkages between their specific academic/research interests, their internship experience, and knowledge resources noted above (#1).

Required Textbooks and Materials
You should be able to access the required readings online through the links provided (some may require your UTD credentials to access), or posted to the course website on e-Learning. You can access the UT Dallas Eugene McDermott Library's online catalog and databases here: https://www.utdallas.edu/library/.

Required materials
- Access to a computer and reliable internet service.

General required reading
- *Federal Register* (The daily journal of the United States Government) – Become familiar with the website: https://www.federalregister.gov/.
- General periodicals that cover federal policymaking and politics
    - Congress & White House
        - *Politico* (https://www.politico.com/)
        - *Roll Call* (https://www.rollcall.com/)
        - *The Hill* (https://www.thehill.com/)
    - Federal Agencies
        - *Government Executive* (https://www.govexec.com/)
    - General coverage
        - *National Journal* (https://www.nationaljournal.com/)
        - *Congressional Quarterly* (http://library.cqpress.com.libproxy.utdallas.edu/index.php use UTD credentials to access)
- Topic-specific periodicals – There are many journals focused on specific policy domains. You should identify the leading journals in your topic area of interest. Work with your lecturer to identify these periodicals.

Policy Working Group (Readings will vary depending on your policy interest and your working group)
1. Identify at least one **federal agency** that has jurisdiction over the policies that interest you. Then,
    a. Read the **public law that authorizes the agency**. When was it adopted? What was the congressional vote? Read a few news articles related to the agency's founding to get a sense of the public and political support for the agency. Compare the original coverage to contemporaneous coverage to see how the agency's public/political support has changed.
    b. Read the **agency's strategic plan**. What are the agency's priority goals? How do these goals relate to the preferences/priorities of the President and Congress?
    c. Read the **agency's organizational chart**. Who are the leaders of the agencies key components? How many of these components are staffed by political appointees? How many political appointees have been nominated but are not yet confirmed?
    d. Read the **FY 2020 budget** for the agency that was issued by OMB. What are the Administration's priorities, based on the allocation of resources in the proposed budget?
    e. Read the actual FY 2020 budget adopted by Congress to see how much the agency received in FY 2020 appropriations. What are the differences between the President's proposed budget and actual congressional appropriation?

2. Identify and read the public law that pertains to your policy interest. *Example*: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) authorizes federal preK-12 education programs. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination by direct providers of housing. The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act revised the structure of the Defense Department. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 authorized the E-Rate program to provide telecommunications to schools and libraries. The Social Security Act authorized the system of benefits for old-age workers, benefits for victims of industrial accidents, unemployment insurance, aid for dependent mothers and children, the blind, and the physically handicapped.

Writing resources (Not required, but listed for reference)
- **Drafting a policy memo**
  - o Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University (http://wws.princeton.edu/admissions/wws-blog/item/policy-memo-writing-tips)
  - o Thompson Writing Program, Duke University (https://twp.duke.edu/sites/twp.duke.edu/files/file-attachments/policy-memo.original.pdf)
  - o Harvard Kennedy School of Government (https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/hks-communications-program/files/lb_how_to_write_pol_mem_9_08_17.pdf)
  - o "Examples of Policy Writing" Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan (http://fordschool.umich.edu/files/policy-writing.pdf)
  - o "Writing a Policy Memo" Bush School Texas A&M University (https://sites.google.com/site/bushschoolwriting/policy-documents/policy-memos)
- **Use of Social Media**
  - o "Effective Social Media Strategies – Four Tips, Four Benefits," Madhur Chartuvedi, *Oracle* (http://www.oracle.com/us/corporate/profit/big-ideas/042213-mchaturvedi-1937903.html).
  - o "The Impact of Utilizing Social Media as a Communication Platform During a Crisis Within the Oil Industry," Nor Emmy Shuhada Drani and Prashalini Naidu, *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 35 (2016) 650-658. (https://ac.els-cdn.com/S2212567116000800/1-s2.0-S2212567116000800-main.pdf?_tid=e649fc96-b18c-4964-9e9b-3d05414b4a70&acdnat=1525910874_b09c82979024a11727d88a93c36466d9)
  - o "Effective Social Media = Storytelling," Tim Jones, *Inside Higher Ed*, April 26, 2016 (https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/call-action-marketing-and-communications-higher-education/effective-social-media-storytelling)
  - o "Mind the Gap: Social Media Engagement by Public Health Researchers," B. Keller, A. Labrique, K.M. Jain, A. Pekosz, O. Levine, *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, January 14, 2014 (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24425670).
  - o *Social Media Strategy: Virtual Social Media Working Group and DHS First Responders Group*, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, January 2012 (https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Virtual%20Social%20Media%20Working%20Group%20VSMWG%20Social%20Media%20Strategy.pdf)
  - o *Social Networking and National Security: How to Harness Web 2.0 to Protect the Country*, James Jay Carafano, *Backgrounder*, The Heritage Foundation, May 18, 2009 (https://www.heritage.org/defense/report/social-networking-and-national-security-how-harness-web-20-protect-the-country)
- **Op-eds and Letters to the Editor**
  - o "How to Write an Op-Ed or Column," Harvard Kennedy School of Government (https://shorensteincenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/HO_NEW_HOW-TO-WRITE-AN-OPED-OR-COLUMN.pdf)
  - o "Tips for Aspiring Op-Ed Writers," Bret Stephens, *The New York Times*, August 25, 2017 (https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/25/opinion/tips-for-aspiring-op-ed-writers.html)
  - o "13 Tips for Writing and Pitching Op-Ed Stories," Cision Bloggers, PR Newswire, July 17, 2014 (https://www.prnewswire.com/blog/13-tips-for-writing-and-pitching-op-ed-stories-10590.html)

- o "Writing an Op-Ed," American Association for the Advancement of Science (https://www.aaas.org/page/writing-op-ed)
- o "Op-ed Writing: Tips and Tricks" The OpEd Project (https://www.theopedproject.org/oped-basics/)
- o "Pitching" The OpEd Project (https://www.theopedproject.org/pitching/)
- o "Submission Information" The OpEd Project (https://www.theopedproject.org/submission-information/)
- o "Tips for Writing Op-eds to Respond to Breaking News," Tyler Creighton, *rethink,* April 4, 2017 (https://rethinkmedia.org/blog/tips-writing-op-eds-respond-breaking-news).

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Students must produce these deliverables by **the posted dates.**

1. **Participation (25%)**
    a. Weekly posts about your reading of relevant political and policy publications to the discussion board for your policy working group. **Due every Friday at 11:59 pm local time: June 5, 12, 19, 26; July 3, 10, 17, 24.**
2. **Policy Paper (50%)**
    a. **May 10** – Draft Policy Research/Background Paper due at 11:59 pm local time. Email Word document to Dr. Chin and your lecturer. *This is not graded, but necessary for tailoring the course to your needs.*
    b. **July 21** – *Final Policy Research/Background Paper* electronic copy **due by 11:59 pm local time. Email Word document to Dr. Chin and your lecturer.**
3. **Advocacy (25%)**
    a. **July 13** – *Advocacy Materials* **due by class meeting (5 pm CT/ 6 pm ET). Email to Dr. Chin and your lecturer.**
        i. 1-page summary of your policy recommendation
        ii. PowerPoint presentation
    b. **July 13, 20, 27 –** Class presentations

NOTE: Meet independently with your Archer Center Lecturer to get feedback on written drafts of your policy research/background paper before the final due date of **July 21**.

Details: Policy Research/Background Paper

- *Paper Specs*: 5-10 pages (excluding Title page, Works Cited/Bibliography, and Appendix), 12-pt font, double-space, APA/MLA format. Each page following the title page should include a header with your full name and the page number.

- *Description*: Papers will address a policy topic relevant to the student's academic and research goals. Students must draw on and incorporate knowledge resources to describe and develop their strategies for assessing and addressing the policy-related issue. The topic can be one that aligns with a student's internship work and/or graduate studies, and the topic that the student has selected in Professor Shute's course.

- *Organization:* The paper should be organized as follows:

    - o **Title Page:** Your name, title of the paper, date.

    - o **Abstract:** Brief description of research and findings.

    - o **Overview/Introduction:** What's the policy topic and specific problem to be analyzed? Why is it important or salient at this time?

o **Background**: What is known about past and present federal or state government responses to the policy problem? Summarize the legislative history of the policy problem. Who are the stakeholders impacted by the policy?

o **Analysis of Solution Options:** What are options for solving the policy problem? What are the costs/benefits of these various options? Who benefits and who is disadvantaged by implementation of the options? What governmental policy actors are responsible for the adoption/implementation/enforcement of the options? What are political obstacles to success in adoption/implementation/enforcement?

o **Recommendations:** Which solution do you recommend and why? Under what political conditions do you expect to achieve success?

o **Appendix**: In this section, you should include a list of empirical research questions that emerge from your research on this policy topic, and also provide a proposal(s) for publications, conference presentations and/or future research projects.

o **Works Cited/Bibliography**: Complete list of citations.

SCHEDULE OF POLICY WORKING GROUP WEEKLY MEETINGS

Unless otherwise noted, the Policy Working Groups will meet virtually with their Archer Center Lecturer each Monday from 5-7 pm CT (6-8 pm ET). In general, the first hour will be reserved for meetings with guest speakers, followed by focused discussions within your policy working group (or subgroup) in the second hour.

June 1 – Overview of Policy Development
Guest Speaker: Congressional Research Service

5-6 pm CT (6-7 pm ET)   All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
6-7 pm CT (7-8 pm ET)   Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

June 8 – Budget Development
Guest Speaker: CBO and OMB

5-6 pm CT (6-7 pm ET)   All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
6-7 pm CT (7-8 pm ET)   Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

June 15– Agency Roles in Policy Development
Guest Speaker: 1-2 Agency Staff

5-6 pm CT (6-7 pm ET)   All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
6-7 pm CT (7-8 pm ET)   Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

June 22 – Role of Congressional Member Office
Guest Speaker: House/Senate Staffer

5-6 pm CT (6-7 pm ET)   All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
6-7 pm CT (7-8 pm ET)   Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

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June 29 – Role of Committees in Congress
Guest Speaker: Committee Staff (2-3)

5-6 pm CT (6-7 pm ET)   All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
6-7 pm CT (7-8 pm ET)   Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

July 6 – Role of Congressional Leadership
Guest Speakers: Leadership staff (House/Senate)

5-6 pm CT (6-7 pm ET)   All Policy Working Groups meet jointly with guests
6-7 pm CT (7-8 pm ET)   Meet with your policy working group & lecturer

July 13 – WORKSHOP of Presentations
5-7 pm CT (6-8 pm ET)   Each Policy Working Group presents to their lecturer

July 20 – WORKSHOP of Presentations
5-7 pm CT (6-8 pm ET)   Each Policy Working Group presents to another lecturer
          1. General Domestic Policy presents to Prof. Ramanathan
          2. Health-Med Subgroup presents to Prof. Henry-Spires
          3. Health-Public Subgroup presents Prof. Shipp
          4. National Security and Global Affairs Policy Group presents to Prof. Kane

July 27 – Policy Conference in DC
- 1-4 pm ET (noon-3 pm CT): Policy presentations at the Archer Center

Course Policies
Late work may be penalized at the discretion of the student's supervising lecturer. Students should contact their supervising lecturer to request any accommodations or additional time to complete the assignment.

Grading Policy
All writing assignments must be submitted before a final grade will be posted.
25% - Participation
25% - Advocacy Materials (due 5 pm CT/6 pm ET, July 13)
50% - Policy Research/Background Paper/Abstract (due 11:59 pm CT, July 21)

Grading Scale
A+ (98+)   A (94-97)   A- (90-93)
B+ (88-89)   B (84-87)   B- (80-83)
C+ (78-79)   C (74-77)   C- (70-73)   D (60-69)   F (59 or lower)
Final grades will be reported to UT Dallas and your home UT System institution by **August 9, 2020** and posted in accordance with their respective grade submission deadlines. **_Note_**: UT System campuses vary in their use of the +/- grading scale. Grades for students enrolled at campuses that do not follow this system will be reported as follows: A (90-100), B (80-89), C (70-79), D (60-69), F (59 or lower).

Comet Creed
This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: "As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures
The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies for these policies.

   The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor and Lecturers.