

**Call for Applications:  
West Coast Poverty Center 2012-2014  
Social Policy Research Fellowships**

The West Coast Poverty Center (WCPC) is pleased to announce the Social Policy Research (SPR) Fellowship program, an interdisciplinary initiative of the School of Social Work, the Evans School of Public Affairs, and the College of Arts and Sciences. A cohort of up to three pre-dissertation doctoral students will receive up to two years of full support to pursue coursework, training and original research in topics related to U.S. social policy and poverty alleviation. Funding for the SPR Fellowship Program is provided by the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation and the University of Washington.

**About the Social Policy Research Fellowship**

Through a combination of coursework, mentoring and a second-year research placement, the SPR program aims to foster junior scholars' understanding of the intersection of poverty research and policy in the U.S. and facilitate locally relevant, nationally significant research.

During the first year, Fellows will complete coursework, attend a proseminar and prepare for their second year project. Fellows will identify a local, state or federal government agency or nonprofit organization active in the Seattle region and, working in conjunction with a Field Mentor at the organization and a WCPC Faculty Mentor, develop a research project that has direct relevance for local, state, and/or national public policy. Examples of potential research partners include the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, the Washington State Department of Corrections, or nonprofit organizations working in Washington State.

During the second year, Fellows will complete a 20-hour per week research placement with the partner organization, under the joint supervision of their Field and Faculty Mentors. By the end of the second year, Fellows will be expected to produce two products: 1) a scholarly work that will further their academic careers (e.g., a manuscript for publication, a chapter of a dissertation), and (2) a policy-relevant deliverable for the partner organization.

**SPR Fellowship Requirements**

The SPR Fellowship will be a highly individualized program of study developed in conjunction with a student's Faculty Mentor and the SPR Faculty Director. The typical program of study would require a Fellow to:

1. Develop a first-year learning plan, in consultation with the SPR Faculty Director. The typical Fellow will complete a minimum of three doctoral-level courses—one in each of the following areas: U.S. policy formation, issues in U.S. poverty and social policy, and applied research methods in social policy. A list of courses that could satisfy these requirements is provided as Attachment A. An alternative course of study may be considered on a case-by-case basis, at the discretion of the SPR Faculty Director.

Students who have completed one course in each of the three areas prior to the beginning of the Fellowship are encouraged to develop an alternative plan of study.

2. Participate in a three-credit “Research in Practice” seminar on the use of research evidence in policy and practice.
3. Participate in a one-credit SPR Fellowship proseminar in each quarter of their Fellowship support.
4. With the assistance of faculty advisors, identify a research plan and partnership by the conclusion of the first Fellowship year and, as needed, begin the IRB application process.
5. During the second year of support, complete a 20-hour per week research placement resulting in: 1) an academic work suitable for eventual publication (such as a dissertation proposal, essay or chapter, or original data collection) and 2) policy recommendations or analysis for the research partner.

### **Fellowship Eligibility**

University of Washington pre-dissertation doctoral students who have completed the core coursework requirements of their academic departments are invited to apply for the SPR Fellowship. All applicants must identify a WCPC faculty affiliate as an academic sponsor and demonstrate they are in good academic standing in their home departments.

Students with an interest and training in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are encouraged to apply. Applicants do not need to have a specific research topic at the time of application, but the research projects they develop during the first year of the fellowship must reflect both strong theoretical grounding and clear relevance for policy. Applicants’ research interests should reflect those of the WCPC and faculty affiliates. Potential topics may include (but are not limited to):

- Criminal justice
- Economic security
- Education
- Financial asset-building
- Housing
- Immigration, migration and poverty
- Marginalized populations
- Poverty and inequality
- Social assistance programs

### **Funding**

Fellows will receive full funding for up to two academic years (e.g., six quarters), beginning September 2012. Funding includes tuition and a stipend equivalent to .50 FTE at the University rate for doctoral students employed as Research Assistants.

The full application must be received by 5PM on Wednesday, February 22, 2012.

Applications must include:

- A letter of nomination from a WCPC faculty affiliate who will serve as the applicant's Faculty Mentor.
- A letter from the applicant's home department chair or graduate program advisor indicating that the student is in good academic standing.
- A copy of the applicant's CV.
- A one to two-page statement that describes the candidate's degree progress (e.g., year in program and milestones completed), other possible or anticipated sources of funding, and any relevant poverty and social policy- related coursework or research already completed. The statement should also summarize the candidate's research interests, and how the Fellowship will support the candidate's development as a scholar. Students are encouraged to describe possibilities for their second year research placement, including potential organizations or types of organizations and research topics.

**Award Notification:**

A subset of applicants will be contacted for interviews with the selection committee before Fellowships are awarded. Interviews will take place in March. Awards will be announced by late April or early May.

**Submission Information:**

Email all application materials to [wcpc@uw.edu](mailto:wcpc@uw.edu).

For further information and questions please contact [wcpc@uw.edu](mailto:wcpc@uw.edu) or 206-616-2858.

**Appendix A: Course Options**

Policy Formation course options include:

- PPM 508/POLS 575 Public Policy Processes (typically offered in the winter).
- POLS 573 Domestic Policy Problems and Institutional Failure
- EDLPS 560 Perspectives on Policy and Policy Making in Education

Poverty issue area course options include:

- PBAF 576 Poverty and Anti-Poverty in the United States (typically offered in the winter)
- SOC 518 Social Stratification (typically offered every other winter).

Applied methods course options include:

- PPM 510 Public Policy Analysis (typically offered in the spring);
- SOC WL 590 Topics in Advanced Research Methods
- PPM 599 Program Evaluation and Social Experimentation
- CS&SS 527 Survey Research Methods

*Students who have completed courses in each of these areas prior to the Fellowship will be expected to work with the SPR Faculty Director to develop an alternative plan of study.*