

**Sophomore Early Research Program 2012-2013**  
**Social Sciences Faculty Projects**

**Social Sciences: Projects in Africana Studies, Anthropology, Economics, Environmental Studies, Peace and Justice, and Political Science.**

**Africana Studies**

Donna Patterson

The primary focus of the research includes gathering secondary and primary material, cataloging, and digitizing files for a project that examines the plight of biomedical professionals in Francophone West Africa. A smaller subset of our time will include conducting research on drug trafficking in West Africa, East Africa, and India. These interdisciplinary projects include different methodological approaches and are influenced by the social sciences, humanities, and hard sciences. My preference is for a research assistant who can fluently read in French and/or Amharic or Swahili but I am open to other possibilities.

**Anthropology**

Philip L Kohl

The student who would work with me would help with the final revisions and lay-out of a large co-authored monograph on archaeological investigations (excavations and surveys) that were conducted principally in the 1990s in southern Russia. This large monograph has been in preparation for several years and is very close to being "in press". The student would help proof-read the monograph and help confirm that everything, especially the illustrations and images, are in order. Knowledge of Russian would help but is not obligatory since the prepared monograph is all in English.

**Economics**

Daniel Fetter

Description: The research student will be involved in a number of projects in economic history, applying economic theory and data analysis to understand the past (and thereby to shed light on the present). The student will gain skills in finding and collecting systematic quantitative data from primary sources: for example, in past work I have had students help extract new data on house prices from historical newspaper advertisements. The student will also gain skills cleaning and working with data in statistical software packages (e.g., Stata).

**Environmental Studies/Political Science**

Beth DeSombre

**Why Good People Do Environmentally-Bad Things**

This project aggregates and evaluates data and theories across the social sciences for why people act the way they do in ways that have environmentally problematic consequences. We will focus on integrating across explanations and evidence from economics, political science, psychology, sociology and anthropology for explanations for people's environmentally-related behavior, beginning with the hypothesis that there are good reasons that people act the way they do, and

that we need to understand them in order to better create environmentally-positive behavior. The student will seek out, read, and integrate the relevant literature and experimental data on specific topics of environmental behavior.

Jay Turner

Are batteries going to power a more environmentally just and sustainable future? Many technologies important to sustainability initiatives, such as electric cars, renewable energy sources, and digital communications technologies all rely upon batteries. Yet, of all the energy sources important to modern society, we know the least about batteries: what raw materials do they rely upon, what are the human and environmental health consequences of making them, and how they are disposed of? My research draws on fields including industrial ecology, supply chain analysis, and environmental studies to explore the environmental history of batteries and the lessons that history can offer us as we think about the role of technology in a more sustainable future.

## **Peace and Justice**

Catia Confortini

The Intersection of International Relations, Peace Studies and Global Health

In this project, the student will work under my supervision to undertake mainly bibliographic research for my book project on the international politics of women's breast cancer activism. The student will learn to use library resources to research articles and books in the areas of global public health and women's activism, specifically concerning the care for breast cancer patients in insecure settings. Finally, the student will learn to use analytical and synthetic writing skills to start building a literature review on global public health, women's activism and the politics of breast cancer.

## **Political Science**

Christopher Candland

I would like assistance with research for a journal article that will compare government policy toward Muslim charities in Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Turkey.

The assistant would familiarize herself with existing secondary research (which I have collected); review government policies toward payment of *khums*, *zakat*, and other forms of Muslim charity; contact government officials and charity managers from whom she would solicit materials and conduct interviews; and work with me to evaluate the impact of policies on charitable giving and program effectiveness.

The benefits for the assistant include learning about Muslim philanthropy; learning and practicing interview techniques; developing skills to evaluate self-reported data; understanding the process of researching, writing, and publishing academic research; and working at the intersections of anthropology, religious studies, and political science.