Proposal for IPAF 4900 Research Experience Course Offering

Instructions for faculty member proposing the research experience:

1. Please fill out the information about the research experience requested in the form below. The completed form will be posted on the IPAF 4900 web site. When completing the form, please don’t include anything you would not wish to have posted in a public place.
2. Forward the form to your undergraduate supervisor for approval. For faculty members in units without undergraduate programs, please forward to your chair or director.

Instructions for undergraduate supervisor:

1. Please review the research experience to make sure that the information provided is clear, and that the research experience provides a meaningful learning opportunity for the student, and is in other respects satisfactory.
2. Once you are satisfied with the proposed research experience course offering, forward this document to FPA.Research.Experience@carleton.ca (the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Public Affairs), indicating your approval of the research experience.

Submission deadlines for this form are March 31st (for projects to be carried out in the summer term or the fall term), July 15th (for projects in the fall or the winter term) and October 15th (for projects in the winter or the summer term).

Next steps:

You will be notified once the project is posted on the IPAF web site. Please bring it to the attention of potential candidates.

The application deadlines for students to apply for IPAF 4900 are April 30th (for IPAF 4900 opportunities in the summer or fall term), August 15th (for fall and winter term opportunities) and November 15th (to take IPAF 4900 in the winter or summer term).

Successful applicants are chosen by the undergraduate supervisor, together with the supervising faculty member. When the supervising faculty member is the undergraduate supervisor, the Associate Dean, Planning and Curriculum will assist in choosing the successful applicant.
IPAF 4900: Research Experience Opportunity

Project Title: Assessing Print Media Coverage of Current Indigenous Issues in Canada

Term: Fall 2017

Supervisor: Dr. Heather Dorries

Unit: SPPA

Description of project:
The media has a strong role in shaping public perceptions of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada notes that that “Media coverage of Aboriginal issues remains problematic; social media and online commentary are often inflammatory and racist in nature.”¹ Recognizing the role of the media in creating a national historical narrative, which in turn influences public opinion and policy responses, the TRC advocated for more accurate and positive media representations of Indigenous peoples. The proposed project will provide students with an opportunity to examine and analyze Canadian print media coverage of one of three recent events in Canada related to Indigenous peoples:

- The redevelopment and reclamation of Chaudière Falls in Ottawa (2014-2017)
- The relocation of First Nations communities in Manitoba following the 2011 “superflood” (2011-2017)
- The release of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (June-December 2015)

Under the guidance of Professor Dorries, students will conduct a search for and content analysis of print media related to these events. This analysis will focus on how Indigenous issues are problematized, with special attention paid to the ways that policy histories are mobilized to both explain these events and to justify potential policy solutions.

Number of students required:
Up to three students

Research duties:
Students will spend approximately 5 hours per week on this project. Duties will include:

1. Locating and analyzing 5 articles concerning the coverage of Indigenous peoples in the Canadian news media
2. Conducting a comprehensive search for print media items related to one of the events listed above, using relevant databases (training will be provided)
3. Compiling news coverage in NVIVO (training will be provided)
4. Reading and analyzing the news items, using codes developed by Professor Dorries
5. Reflecting on progress in a weekly learning journal
6. Reflecting on findings at the conclusion of the course in a 5-page research memo

Learning and reflection activities:
Learning and reflection activities will include keeping a learning journal in which they document their work and note any findings. Regular meetings with the supervisor and other students working on the project will provide a further opportunity to discuss and reflect on the learning experience.

Learning outcomes:
At the end of this research experience, students will be able to:
- Identify and use key news databases (e.g. Factiva, LexisNexis) to conduct a comprehensive search for news items
- Use coding software (NVIVO) to code news items
- Describe and assess the coverage of Indigenous issues in the Canadian news media, with a focus on one particular issue

Evaluation Criteria:
Students will be evaluated on three criteria:

1) Literature Review and Report (25%)
Students will identify, read, and compose a brief (1500 word) report on 5 scholarly articles concerning the portrayal of Indigenous peoples in the news media. This preliminary exercise, to be completed during the first 3 weeks of the course, will inform the data collection and analysis to be conducted by the students during the rest of the course.

2) Media Content Analysis and Learning Journal (50%)
Under the guidance of the Professor Dorries, students will be trained to use relevant news databases, and will conduct a comprehensive search for news items related to one particular issue of relevance to Indigenous peoples. Students will also be trained to use coding software to code and analyze these news items. Students will track their progress and findings in a weekly learning journal, which will form the basis for the evaluation of this component of the course.

3) Reflective Paper (5 Pages) 25%
At the conclusion of the course, students will submit a paper in which they reflect on their findings.

Skills or knowledge required:
- An interest in Indigenous issues is a requirement for participation in this research experience.
- Previous course work related to Indigenous history, or Indigenous issues will be of great benefit
- Critical thinking skills
- Strong writing skills
- Ability to work independently

Any required health and safety training:
None

Other considerations:
No
Application instructions:
Participants are selected on the basis of merit and fit with the research project. Please submit a CV, transcript, and cover letter indicating why you are interested in and qualified for this research experience to the undergraduate administrator of the unit listed above. The application deadline is normally April 30th (for IPAF 4900 opportunities in the summer or fall term), August 15th (for fall and winter term opportunities) and November 15th (to take IPAF 4900 in the winter or summer term). Only students with a GPA of 9.5 or higher and at least third year honours standing will be considered.

To find out more about IPAF 4900, please visit: http://carleton.ca/fpa/ipaf-main/