

2021-2022 Academic Year Internship Opportunities

Project: Social Media, Civic Engagement, and Health

Mentor: Linda Charmaraman, Ph.D.

Internship Description:

Dr. Charmaraman leads several research projects within the [Youth, Media & Wellbeing Research Lab](#) at WCW pertaining to the risks and benefits of using social media in adolescence. These projects include a) survey and interview studies of middle school students, their parents, and school staff on how they manage social technology use, b) implementing digital wellbeing, identity, and STEM workshops in partnership with the Wellesley College Computer Science department, and c) developing and piloting digital wellbeing lessons for middle school students as part of [Open Circle](#), a nationally recognized social and emotional learning (SEL) program of WCW.

In addition, the Youth, Media & Wellbeing Research Lab will be analyzing and disseminating results from 2020 presidential election surveys that investigated how adult voters used social media to inform their voting behaviors and how racial/ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and/or political identity played a key role in their decision-making.

Internship Responsibilities:

- Literature searches, writing literature reviews
- Learning NVivo to analyze qualitative interview or focus group data
- Work with a team to interpret quantitative and qualitative results
- Collecting pilot data with middle school teachers and students
- Copyediting and formatting grant applications, manuscripts, and reports
- Co-presenting works-in-progress at WCW lecture series, Ruhlman conference, or community-based webinar
- Assist with writing blog posts, website content, infographics, and/or research briefs about project findings
- Attend weekly intern, biweekly project, and monthly lab meetings

Skills Required:

- Experience and/or enthusiastic willingness to learn how to conduct, analyze, and report social science research
- Prior experience working with youth aged 10-17 desirable (e.g., summer camp, mentorship programs, tutoring, etc.)

- Some coursework in at least one of the following fields is required: psychology; education; sociology; ethnic studies; women's and gender studies; communications; computer science; media, arts, & sciences; social science methods (quantitative or qualitative)
- Knowledge of library search engines and retrieving journal articles
- Ability to translate research findings for public consumption (or willingness to learn)
- Ability to respond to work requests by email in a timely manner
- Ability to work independently, reliably, and cooperatively as part of a research team
- Desire to attend graduate school
- Proficiency in Spanish or Portuguese, or experience with SPSS or R a plus
- [Depending on whether we are allowed to be on-campus or not] Ability to meet on a regular basis at Cheever House and arrange schedule to meet internship-related deadlines. For instance, a typical schedule is to meet for 4 hours, 2 days a week.
- Students who have prior experience working or volunteering at the Youth, Media & Wellbeing Research Lab are encouraged to apply

Experience Intern Can Expect to Gain:

With the goal of developing the research skills mentioned above in the Intern Responsibilities, Dr. Charmaraman hopes to incorporate her intern's research interests and goals in crafting a productive, year-long immersion into mixed-methods and cross-disciplinary research.

In order to gain a full appreciation of the life of a researcher, Dr. Charmaraman will invite the intern to become involved in 2 or 3 of her projects. These include but are not limited to the following: (a) the role of social media in resiliency (e.g., sense of community, reduced isolation) and risk (e.g., body image concerns, losing sleep), (b) online civic engagement and identity development, (c) promoting healthy social media use through innovative STEM or SEL methods, or (d) how to disseminate our research findings to parents, schools, medical professionals, and policymakers.

Dr. Charmaraman hopes to mentor someone who is interested in exploring graduate school or a future career in either research or nonprofit work. In addition, there is a possibility of co-publishing a peer-reviewed article depending on the motivation and dedication level of the intern.