SURE: Theology Research with Prof. Dave Turnbloom

Research Project Description

  This project will be a continuation of the work begun last summer as part of the SURE program. Last summer, Dr. Turnbloom worked with three students to establish the Collaborative Humanities Investigating Religion and Power (CHIRP) Lab. You can see our website at www.chirp-lab.com. Over the course of AY 21-22, we have been engaged in a research project that examines the way that the categories of PTSD, moral injury, and moral distress can help us better understand the impact of the sexual assault crisis on the role of worship rituals in the life of the Catholic community. This research will be the foundation for the work we do this summer; we will critically analyze the rhetoric employed by Catholic officials in their responses to the sexual assault crisis. Relying on our previous research on PTSD and moral injury, we will show how Catholic officials tend to rely on language that appeals to trauma bonds in a way that mirrors the language used by domestic abusers when trying to maintain control over their victims. The agenda for the first 6 weeks of summer will be to focus on researching (1) patterns in the rhetoric used by Catholic officials in their response to the sexual assault crisis and (2) trauma bonds that arise within the context of domestic violence. As we did last summer, we will work on developing annotated bibliographies on these topics. The final 4 weeks will be dedicated to outlining an essay and developing a plan for our writing/research to take place during the AY 22-23.

Undergraduate Researcher Position Description

  The students will meet with Dr. Turnbloom on a part-time basis to discuss and analyze resources. Last summer, our lab developed analysis worksheets that we fill out and keep in a shared drive. The worksheets include sections for author bios/CVs, abstracts, relevant quotations, evaluative summaries, and relevant citations for future reading. They are a way for us to systematize our discussions and amass a database that is readily available for future collaborators. As our dialogue develops, we make videos for our website that introduce themes that are central to our project. This is a way of

making our research accessible to the public and future collaborators. In short, the students will research relevant sources, complete analysis worksheets, and present their analysis on a daily basis in our group meetings. As such, they are reading four to five articles/chapters each week. We will then begin to outline the structure of an essay/presentation.

During this ongoing dialogue, students will be tasked with creating website updates (e.g. videos, blogs, podcasts) that track the trajectory of our research. The goal here is to develop the ability to communicate our research to the public in a clear and engaging manner.

The project will start on May 16th and run 10 weeks, ending on July 22nd. Student researchers will be expected to be present on campus for the research project 20 hours per week.

Minimum Qualifications

Students should be able to read and critically analyze texts, as well as contribute to our lab's writing. Students should also be able to readily use library resources to find relevant sources.

Other Information

In your cover letter, please answer the following questions: Why is this project of interest to you? What skills/experiences do you have that make you a good fit? Would you be willing to continue working with our lab (3 hours per week) during the normal school year?