2015-2016 Call for Applicants - IRW Global Scholars

Poverty

Institute for Research on Women (IRW)
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Each year, the Institute for Research on Women invites several individuals to join us as IRW Global Scholars for four to nine months. While Global Scholars are expected to provide their own funding, the IRW offers private offices, institutional affiliation, access to the Rutgers library, and participation in a lively interdisciplinary feminist community. The theme for our discussions from September 2015 through April 2016 will be "Poverty." We invite applications from university scholars and scholar/activists whose work is compatible with the theme.

About the IRW

The Institute for Research on Women (IRW) promotes innovative scholarship on women, gender, and sexuality through interdisciplinary forums, lectures, and conferences. The IRW's weekly seminar allows Global Scholars to discuss drafts of their work with Rutgers faculty and graduate students, all of whom are working on writing projects related to "Poverty." In addition, our Global Scholar Program provides an opportunity for postdoctoral scholars and activists to benefit from Rutgers' unique resources related to the study of women and gender. The IRW is a member of the Institute for Women's Leadership (IW), a consortium of 9 different Rutgers units focused on women and gender, also including Douglass Residential College, the Women's and Gender Studies Department, the Center for American Women and Politics, the Center for Women's Global Leadership, the Center for Women and Work, the Center on Violence against Women and Children, the Institute for Women and Art, and the Office for the Promotion of Women in Science, Engineering and Mathematics.

IRW Global Scholars

IRW Global Scholars typically hold jobs or academic appointments elsewhere but wish to be in residence at the Institute for a semester or a year. Global Scholars do not receive any financial support from Rutgers or the IRW, but we are happy to arrange access to University libraries and recreational facilities, provide private offices, and extend invitations to participate in university lectures, colloquia and seminars. Scholars also receive university email accounts and modest photocopying and long-distance telephone support. Former IRW Scholars have received funding through Fulbright, IREX, other local foundations, and their own institutions. University regulations limit our ability to accept applicants who are not funded through their home institutions or through external grants, fellowships and awards, but we can usually accept one scholar in this situation per academic year.

We invite applications from prospective scholars whose individual research or activism is compatible with the theme of our interdisciplinary research seminar. We expect that Global Scholars will
participate in the weekly seminar along with Rutgers faculty and graduate students whose work explores the seminar theme from a variety of disciplinary and methodological perspectives.

Located within the Women’s Scholarship and Leadership Complex at Rutgers, our Global Scholar offices provide networked PCs with internet access and a shared laser printer. The offices surround an open conference room that is available for scholars’ meetings. Next door to the Institute, the gracious Wittenborn Scholars Residence is available to house individual scholars affiliated with the IRW on a first come, first served basis.

**IRW Interdisciplinary Research Seminar**

The IRW's nineteenth annual interdisciplinary seminar takes as its theme "Poverty." Selected Rutgers faculty, advanced graduate students and IRW Global Scholars whose projects address this theme will participate in the 2015-2016 seminar, which meets weekly from September through April. Seminar fellows will attend the Thursday morning seminar meetings, provide a paper for discussion in the seminar, and open a seminar session with an extended response to another scholar’s paper.

The seminar will offer an opportunity to engage poverty from multiple disciplinary, theoretical, and policy frameworks. The last decade has been marked by extreme volatility in global financial markets, growing concern about sexual rights in the geopolitical arena, and an explosion of groundbreaking academic work in gender and sexuality within the social sciences and humanities. It is also a period when many countries have seen rising gaps of wealth and access to resources. In the United States, studies have shown that large swaths of undocumented people, non-married, racialized women, rural and urban children, gender nonconforming people, and those with more marginal queer identities languish in growing states of poverty. Indeed, one might argue that poverty is the invisible and unspoken new status quo.

Poverty as a keyword has been associated with race, scarcity, cultural relativism, environmental toxicity, aesthetics, culture, and forms of inequality in income, education, health, and housing. The seminar will provide an opportunity to parse out these concepts while also attending to activism and social practices that address poverty and systemic inequalities. The seminar will examine how institutions and regulatory systems shape families, kinship, domestic relations, intimacies, and practices of care in the twenty-first century. Continuing our research on the impact of prisons on culture and gender, the seminar will also consider how the rise in incarcerated populations has impacted families broadly from reproduction to parenting to sexual intimacies to employment and labor. Related inquiries focus on the conditions of labor during the recent recession and the ongoing War on Terror. This seminar attends to important scholarship on “affective labor” (Michael Hardt), highlighting feminist inquiries about labor in family and domestic settings that are often overlooked, unpaid, or underpaid. Scholarship on care, commodified intimacies, and labor practices (such as the writings of Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, Eileen Boris, and Elizabeth Bernstein) provides important context. Approaches drawing on Achille Mbembe’s necropolitics or on Giorgio Agamben’s conception of bare life and scholarly work that considers the relationship between cultural theory and poverty are pertinent. Additionally, legal, political, and sociological approaches to welfare rights, social exclusion, and environmental justice are highly relevant to this seminar.

Studies may focus on any time period(s) or geographical location(s) and be rooted in any disciplinary or interdisciplinary approach(es). Some possible topics relevant to the seminar theme include, but are not limited to:
Application Procedures
Postdoctoral scholars working in any discipline may apply. Applications should be sent by email to irw@rci.rutgers.edu with “Global Scholars” in the subject line. They should include the following: letter of intent specifying project title and proposed dates of visit; project description (five pages maximum, double-spaced); curriculum vitae and email address; names and contact information of four professional references. Prospective global scholars are invited to discuss the relevance of their project to "Poverty" as part of their application. Applicants interested in further information about this program or the IRW are invited to visit our website http://irw.rutgers.edu or contact the Institute by email (irw@rci.rutgers.edu) or phone (848-932-9072).