DUKE ENGAGE IN WASHINGTON, DC
Contributing to national science policy

Program Dates: June 4 - August 1, 2020
(Dates subject to change up until the point of departure.)

Service Themes
- Public Policy
- Science & Engineering
- Technology & Media
- Environment & Conservation
- Health & Human Services

Program Focus
Addressing policy making in, and related to, the sciences.

Program Leaders
- Nita Farahany, Ph.D./J.D., Director of the Initiative for Science & Society, Professor of Law & Philosophy, is a leading scholar on the ethical, legal, and social implications of biosciences and emerging technologies, particularly those related to neuroscience and behavioral genetics. From 2010-2017, she served on the Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues.

Program Overview
During their eight weeks in Washington, students will intern with governmental agencies, think tanks, or nonprofit organizations where they will assist with analysis of policy questions and formulation of policy options regarding science and technology policy and ethics. In addition, students are expected to fully engage in enrichment programming and reflections related to public opinion and science policy, gentrification and its impact on Washington, DC, and weekend volunteer events benefitting the local community.

The purpose of the program is to draw on what you have learned at Duke and elsewhere to contribute to and engage in the process of creating science policy. We expect students to bring knowledge gained back to Duke in order to inform and enrich their academic and service commitments. The Duke Initiative for Science & Society has a long-standing commitment to exploring the connections between science and technology and the policy-making process. The DukeEngage Washington program complements their undergraduate offerings at Duke, which includes the Huang Fellows program and Science & Society Certificate.

Goals for Students
The goal of the program is to engage Duke undergraduates with opportunities to participate in experiential learning in the federal and state level policy making processes, with a specific focus on the sciences and the unique challenges that work in this niche presents, including effective science communication. During the eight weeks in Washington, the
program fosters an ethic of service and civic participation in students.

By the program’s end, students should be able to:

- Communicate science concepts in an accessible way
- Understand the structure of policymaking, with a more specific understanding of how science is impacted by and can impact policymaking
- Generate alternative solutions to policy problems they have worked on over the summer
- Believe they can achieve a thorough understanding of social problems on a local level, and that they have the tools to impact those problems
- See the connections between their academic work and their internship experiences
- Engage effectively with those of differing points of view, working towards creating effective solutions together

**Partnership Opportunities**

Organizations that might host DukeEngage students include:

- National Institutes of Health (National Human Genome Research Institute, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)
- Center for the Study of Social Policy
- Niskanen Center
- Duke Margolis Center for Health Policy
- American Association for the Advancement of Science
- Global Americas Business Initiative
- Conservation X Labs
- Alliance for Health Policy

Examples of projects that student groups have carried out include:

- Explored caregiver burnout and possible solutions for cancer care providers
- Wrote items for online newsletters and online information resources disseminated by an agency policy office
- Prepared a presentation and background papers for staff about the Bayh-Dole Act and university indirect costs reimbursement. Students also prepared case studies of nonprofit disease research advocacy organizations that described their modes of operation in preparation for a 60-expert workshop.
- Developed projects focused on the experiences of children in foster care systems, including children of color, LGBT youth, and immigrant children, folding in the work of neuroscience as applicable

The program director works with community partners to arrange student placements after acceptance into this program. Students with specific placement ideas should raise those in their DukeEngage interview. In applying for this program, students must understand that placement could be at any one of the community partner organizations or others that later become available. Students need to be aware that: (1) some placements may require a separate application process or further interviews, and (2) final decisions will be made by partners and the program director, not by students.

**Program Requirements**

Language Requirements: None.

Coursework Requirements: It is helpful but not essential to have taken courses in the sciences, political science and public policy, bioethics, or science communication.

Other Skills: Policy research; oral and written communication.

Personal Qualities:

- Willingness to help others – be willing to engage in research, writing, or other policy-related work to help
government or nonprofit organizations to analyze or formulate their policy platforms. Examples of work include background research, writing policy documents and memorandums, and engaging in professional policy networks. This requires acute listening skills, being willing to take direction from supervisors, and seeking out guidance when uncertain.

- Awareness of what you know and what you do not know – students should take initiative to track down information but also be willing to ask for help.
- Ability to work productively as a junior member on a supervised team committed to solving a problem. This requires maturity and openness to criticism and responding with patience and perseverance to unanticipated situations and obstacles.
- Using good judgment – students must be mindful of what information can and should be shared publicly and exercise discretion with respect to information not yet appropriate to be made public. Washington, DC, is focused on politics and policy; because of this, maturity and good judgment are vital while working in this environment.
- Self-reliance and self-confidence – understand your role and ability to contribute ideas in new environments with an appropriate mixture of optimism and realism. Be sensitive to hierarchy and expertise yet willing to speak truth to power when appropriate.
- Problem solving and goal orientation – use strong analytical and research skills in producing deliverable end-projects for a team trying to address policy in the sciences. Contribute to complex policy reports. Listen and contribute at meetings. Be creative in thinking through policy.

**Program Details**

**Description of Community:** Washington, DC, is a vibrant city filled with a diversity of people, ideas, and cultures. At the same time, the city is also undergoing an unprecedented set of changes, including population shifts. We will engage within a diverse set of communities that call Washington home while also considering how a number of factors at play are changing it.

**Housing and Meals:** Students will live together in a university or apartment-like setting with kitchen facilities. Rooms, kitchens, common rooms, and bathroom facilities will be shared. There will be Internet access. DukeEngage students may reside with other Duke students or with students from another college.

Students will have a meal allowance. This meal allowance will cover groceries to cook in temporary housing. Washington is an expensive city in which to eat out, and the DukeEngage meal stipend is not intended to cover numerous meals outside of your apartment.

In Washington, students will get a SmarTrip card, which can be used on Metro trains and buses for transportation to and from their placement sites. Cars are not permitted.

**Local Safety, Security, and Cultural Norms:** If you have special needs related to health, cultural, or religious practices, please contact the DukeEngage office, dukeengage@duke.edu, to discuss whether or not your needs can be reasonably accommodated in this program.

For information related to how your religion, race, sexual/gender identity, ability or other aspects of your identity might impact your travels, we recommend starting with the Diversity, Identity and Global Travel section of the DukeEngage website.

**Reflection and Enrichment:** We will meet weekly as a group for dinner to discuss work-related concerns and issues impacting science policy. Outside speakers will be selected in an effort to address student interests, host social events (with some emphasis on health policy, science, and human rights), and cultivate a strong emphasis on laughter punctuated by insight.
Students in the Washington program work full-time Monday through Friday at partner organizations. One night a week, they take part in a speaker series with a professional working at the intersection of science and policy. A second night each week will be devoted to group reflection sessions. The group will devote five to seven weekend days and three or four workdays to volunteer opportunities in the Washington community and enrichment programming in the Washington metropolitan area. Most weeks, students will have at least one weekend day to themselves as well as three or four weekday evenings.

This summer concludes with an end-of-summer science policy mixer with alumni, partner organizations, and students celebrating their hard work and collaboration.

Curricular Connections
While all students are welcome to apply, this program may be of particular interest to students studying public policy or natural sciences, or completing the Science & Society certificate program. This DukeEngage program is connected to the Undergraduate Certificate in Science and Society coursework and class offerings. For more information about Science & Society visit https://scienceandsociety.duke.edu and http://sciencepolicy.duke.edu.

Related courses and experiences students can explore include:

Courses
- Genome 498S  Certificate Capstone
- Bioethic 502  Communicating Science & Bioethics
- Biology 255  Philosophy of Biology
- Bioethic 591  Topics in Science Policy
- AAAS 261D  Race, Genomics, and Society

Experiential Learning
- Science, Law, and Policy Lab (SLAP Lab)
- Duke SciPol

More Information
To learn more about the topical area and to consider the ethical and policy dimensions at hand, consider watching one of the following:

Documentaries: “Merchants of Doubt,” “How to Survive a Plague,” or “Twitch”
Films: “GATTACA” or “Project X” (1987)