The First-Year Fellows Program: An Early Introduction to the Rockefeller Center

As a first-year student on campus, you might be wondering, “What sorts of opportunities are available just for me?” The Rockefeller Center offers a unique opportunity to engage meaningfully in public policy early in your Dartmouth career. You will have the opportunity to gain both knowledge and practical leadership skills as you participate in this program. So here is how to get involved.

Your first stop is to register for Public Policy 5, “Introduction to Public Policy,” during the winter term. This course is designed as the gateway for students beginning to pursue a minor in public policy and entry into the First-Year Fellows program. You also should complete any social science research methods course. In the spring, you are then eligible to apply to be a First-Year Fellow. If selected, you will spend the summer interning under the mentorship of a Dartmouth alumnus/a or an experienced supervisor who works in the public or nonprofit sector. During this internship, you’ll receive feedback from your mentor and from staff who will check in with you periodically.

Programs like this are truly priceless, not only for all of the things we learned but also for meeting so many great people and the experiences that I’ll have in the future. I think this really will help me accomplish a lot this summer and later in my life. It’s funny how little decisions like going to Civic Skills Training might end up changing one’s life significantly.

—Trevor Chenoweth '12

Civic Skills Training not only taught me what skills are expected in a formal office situation, but also helped me realize how important it is to be genuine at all times. It was so helpful to learn both the surface-level skills and the deeper perspectives that are necessary to successfully accomplish tasks and achieve goals. All of the guest speakers offered great advice based on a wealth of experience, which, in addition to preparing me for my internship this summer, also helped me think about future plans by shedding light on possible career fields in Washington, D.C. This summer has already been one of the best experiences of my life.

—Jessica Merry '12

To prepare for your internship, you will travel to Washington, D.C., to take part in the Center’s Civic Skills Training. This intensive, expense-paid, five-day program is an important advantage that teaches you public speaking, networking, and how to write press releases and policy briefs. Panels with Dartmouth alumni working in Washington also are arranged to provide you with exposure to career paths following Dartmouth, as well as how to get the most out of your time on campus.

Back on campus, you will be asked to reflect on your experience at a debriefing session, both through written summaries and discussions. As early as the fall of your sophomore year, you may be ready to take on even more ambitious projects to develop your leadership potential.
THE DIRECT LINE
by Andrew Samwick, Director

Welcome to Dartmouth! Amazing opportunities await you at the Rockefeller Center: the public policy minor, the Policy Research Shop, distinguished visitors to campus, student-led discussion groups, and a broad range of internship, training, and leadership development opportunities. I hope that you make "Rocky" a big part of your Dartmouth experience.

Come to the Rockefeller Center to find a home, mentors, and peers as you get engaged with public policy. The Rockefeller Center has a specially designed First-Year Fellows program for the class of 2013 that begins by taking Public Policy 5 in the winter of 2010. Public Policy 5 is the introductory course in the public policy minor, which allows you to customize your own interdisciplinary plan of study around an important policy area that you define, such as the healthcare, education, the environment, law, poverty, or urban issues. Outside the classroom, you can join a number of weekly discussion groups about law, politics, and leadership; there is even a First-Year Forum just for the newest members of the Dartmouth community. You can also plan a leave-term internship and apply for funding through the Rockefeller Center.

The Rockefeller Center staff and I, along with student leaders from the classes of 2010, 2011, and 2012, look forward to meeting you at the Rockefeller Center’s Open House on September 17.

To learn more about opportunities at the Rockefeller Center, visit us online at http://rockefeller.dartmouth.edu/studentopps/index.html.

The ROCKY EXPERIENCE

“I’m very much known as the Rocky Kid,” says Lucy Pollard ’10. “I can’t stress enough how much the Rockefeller Center has had an impact on my Dartmouth experience.” Pollard and classmate Jessica Guthrie ’10 have been a part of the Rocky experience since their first days on campus.

As a First-Year Fellow, Guthrie interned with then Congresswoman (now Senator) Kirsten Gillibrand ’88 (D-NY) after completing the Center’s Civic Skills Training program. “She was my mentor and helped me see public policy firsthand,” Guthrie recalls. “As a freshman in college, being able to work in a congressional office really put me on the path toward public service.” Back on campus, Guthrie got involved with the Women in Leadership group and sharpened her research skills through the Policy Research Shop (PRS).

Pollard says she was drawn to the Center through its First-Year Forum. She attended the discussion group regularly during her freshman year, advancing to a leadership role as a sophomore. Her first project with the PRS, investigating the protection of Vermont’s rivers and shorelines, awoke a passion for policy research. Pollard says the response of state legislators to the students’ work on these projects was empowering. She since has worked on a half-dozen additional projects as a paid PRS intern. “I’m hugely appreciative of everything, from the cocurricular side to the curricular side, that the Center’s afforded me,” she says.

Both Pollard, a history major, and Guthrie, a sociology major, declared public policy their minor, and both have been selected as Rockefeller Leadership Fellows their senior year.

“You don’t have to be into government, you don’t have to be into policy to really enjoy the Rockefeller Center. You can be an engineering major or a biology major and still get a lot out of it,” says Guthrie. “Freshmen should take the time to find out if Rocky has something to offer them because I can almost guarantee that there’s going to be something there for every single student, regardless of their interests.”
Public Events
September • 2009

Don’t Miss Rocky’s First-Year Student Open House
Meet the faculty, staff, and students who make Rocky’s programs work.
Thursday, September 17 | 9:30–10:30 A.M.
Hinman Forum | Rockefeller Hall
Information | Student Leaders | Food

Ronald G. Shaiko
Senior Fellow and Associate Director, Curricular and Research Programs, Rockefeller Center for Public Policy and the Social Sciences, Dartmouth College
“Petitioning Government: Interest Groups, Lobbying, and the First Amendment”
Thursday, September 24, 4:30 p.m.
3 Rockefeller Hall
A Constitution Day program

William A. Fischel
Patricia E. and William B. Hale ’44 Professor in Arts and Sciences, Department of Economics, Dartmouth College
“Making the Grade: The Economic Evolution of American School Districts”
Tuesday, October 6, 4:30 p.m.
3 Rockefeller Hall

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ROCKEFELLER at DARTMOUTH

Your gateway to public policy

Find out more about the Rockefeller Center’s Programs at:
http://rockefeller.dartmouth.edu

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