

The logo for Public Research Fellows is an orange rounded rectangle with a white speech bubble tail pointing to the left. Inside the rectangle, the words "PUBLIC RESEARCH FELLOWS" are written in white, uppercase, sans-serif font, stacked in three lines.

PUBLIC RESEARCH FELLOWS

Public Research Fellows & The Engaged Humanities 2024-25: Civil Dialogue & Civic Engagement Call for Student Fellow Applications

The Public Research Fellows brings students and faculty together from across disciplines to explore timely topics and problems through publicly-engaged research projects that use engaged humanities approaches. This year, with the support of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the program will convene a working group of faculty and students to build projects and courses that engage Portland through the lens of civic life. In an era of increasing polarization and stress on democratic norms, how can we use the tools of the humanities to create hopeful and productive forms of civic engagement? And how might connecting the humanities to other academic disciplines in turn help us engage across difference and with our communities?

The 2024-25 working group faculty thus far include: Dr. Andrew Guest (Psychology); Dr. Molly Hiro (English); Dr. Jen McDanel (English); Dr. Sruthi Rothenfluch (Philosophy); Dr. Anne Santiago (Political Science & Global Affairs); and Dr. Shaz Vijlee (Engineering). (More may join during the academic year.)

Potential projects across the year will be co-developed by the working group faculty and students through collaborative research and discussion, but possibilities include:

- Building, executing, and assessing new Core courses like “Democracy and Diversity” and “Portland and the Public Imagination”
- Designing campus projects and events related to civic discourse, belief polarization, community engagement and related topics
- Developing ongoing projects and collaborations with local community partners that bring the campus and the city together around issues of civic life

If you’re interested in a collaborative undergraduate research experience that connects scholarship to the wider public and the communities in which we live, check out the program details below and apply to be a Student Fellow by August 5.

What do Student Fellows do?

- Participate in small teams (at least 1 meeting per two weeks) to help develop projects, events, and courses by conducting research under faculty guidance and collaborating with other student fellows (students will enroll in one research credit per term with one of the faculty fellows in the working group).
- Enroll in a pair of 1-credit reading courses in both fall and spring semesters:

Fall 2024: CAS 391: “Engaged Humanities Fundamentals” (T 6:00-6:55pm)

Spring 2025: CAS 391: “Engaged Humanities Futures” (T 6:00-6:55pm)

The fall course provides background and tools in engaged humanities methods that will help students translate undergraduate research to wider publics and the spring course helps students connect their academic work with their personal and professional goals after college using humanities mindsets and skills.

What's in it for Student Fellows?

- 4 credits total (2 credits for CAS 391 readings courses in fall and spring; 1 credit each in fall and spring for Undergraduate Research; together these can add up to an elective course toward your degree)
- Experience in undergraduate research and working closely with faculty
- The chance to collaborate with a close-knit, dedicated group of students from a variety of disciplines
- The opportunity to participate in a National Endowment for the Humanities supported project (a great line for your resume!) while helping to shape the future of the program and UP curriculum

What's the program looking for in Student Fellows?

We're looking for students who meet the following criteria:

- Creative, flexible, and works well with others
- Has a desire to learn about the engaged humanities and how they can help us build connections across disciplines and with civic life
- Has sufficient room in their schedule to dedicate time to the courses and their working group project research (~5 hours per week; will vary across the year)

How can you learn more about the program?

- Explore [PRF's website](#) and [Instagram](#)
 - See especially the [Program Archive](#) to learn about past PRF projects
- Email Dr. Jen McDaneld (mcdaneld@up.edu) with questions

To apply:

Send an email to prf@up.edu with the following:

1. Your name, year, and major(s)/minor(s). Also confirm that your schedule will allow you to enroll in CAS 391 fall and spring semesters (T 6-6:55). *Fellows must be able to participate in these courses.*
2. A response to the following questions in 1 page at most:
 - a. Why do you want to serve as a student fellow?
 - b. What academic interests, past experience, and personal strengths qualify you to participate in this year's working group in particular and/or as a PRF fellow in general (see criteria above)?
 - c. *Optional:* If you have particular areas of interest or potential projects in mind related to this year's theme, you can describe them briefly as well.
3. Your resume as an attachment.

Applications will be screened on a rolling basis throughout the summer; last chance to apply is Monday, August 5.