

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2023-2024 Ethics and Policy Student Fellows

The California Center for Ethics and Policy (CCEP) is a university center dedicated to providing students and the community with opportunities to critically investigate ethics and policy challenges in which California can exercise national and global leadership. CCEP organizes its programs and events around annual themes. The 2023-2024 theme is:

Misinformation in California

Central to CCEP's mission is its **Ethics and Policy Student Fellows program**. As a part of this program, student fellows:

- enroll in an intensive Ethics and Policy Seminar (CLS 4990, which will meet in Spring 2024, Tues/Thurs 3:45pm – 5:00pm) dedicated to the investigation of CCEP's annual theme (see the next page for a description of the Spring 2024 seminar)
- interact with visiting experts whose research engages with CCEP's annual theme
- are strongly encouraged to take a leadership role in the activities of the Center including:
 - outreach events, such as public workshops or voter registration initiatives
 - **CCEP's Podcast**. Some examples of student-developed episodes, including links:
 - Uncertain Forecast, Episode 1 – What is Plastic?
 - Securing Justice, Episode 3 – Moving Forward in Affordable Housing: The Role of Architects

CCEP is pleased to invite all interested Cal Poly Pomona undergraduate students to apply to the 2023-24 Student Fellows program. Eligible students should have junior status or higher. To apply, students should:

(a) e-mail a statement of interest, outlining their academic and co-curricular background relevant to this year's CCEP theme and describing how serving as a Student Fellow would advance the student's personal or professional goals. This statement should be between 500-1000 words and should also include the following information:

- Bronco ID number
- Major, minor (if any)
- An explanation of any leadership roles, internships, jobs, or coursework broadly related to this year's theme.

Email the statement as a Word or PDF document to CCEP Director Dr. Alex Madva (ammadva@cpp.edu)

(b) arrange for a letter of recommendation of approximately 500 words from a university faculty member familiar with applicant's background, skills, and potential, to be e-mailed to Dr. Madva.

Both of these documents must be received by September 29th, 2023. Applicants will be notified regarding whether they are accepted as Fellows by October 6th.

Applicants and letter writers are encouraged to visit the CCEP website (<https://www.cpp.edu/ethics-and-policy>) for further information.

Ethics and Policy Seminar (CLS 4990)

Spring 2024 Tuesdays/Thursdays 3:45pm – 5:00pm – 3 Units

Lies, Damned Lies, and Trolling: The Problem of Misinformation

Course Description & Objectives:

While misinformation has been a staple of human life since the first lie was told around the campfires of our distant ancestors, the dawn of social media has greatly magnified the scope and severity of this problem. From vaccine resistance, to the adoption of dangerous treatments for COVID-19, to a mob under the impression that the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election was stolen storming the U.S. Capitol to prevent the certification of election results, there are rumors, half-truths, and outright lies shaping the world around us and making it increasingly difficult for people to make informed decisions. To understand the phenomenon of misinformation, one needs to recognize the various types of misinformation that exist, be able to trace how these ideas spread, and see how the patterns of misinformation (as well as the consequences that stem from it) are demonstrated throughout history.

For the 2023-24 CCEP seminar, student fellows will explore the phenomena of misinformation in both a historical and modern context. They will analyze case studies dealing with Urban Legends, Moral Panics, Conspiracy Theories and Propaganda. This course will use these case studies to explore the patterns of untruths, rumors and belief that characterize these various forms of misinformation and learn to recognize, and hopefully resist, the urge to believe, like, or share misinformation in their everyday life.

Course Structure & Expectations:

This course will be organized as a lecture-seminar that will be held in person. The professor will open each section of a class with a lecture to introduce the form of misinformation to be explored. Subsequent class sessions in that section will be discussions, in which students will be expected to have done the readings before coming to class and be prepared to discuss the ways in which these case studies do or do not illustrate an example of the type of misinformation being explored.

Students will be expected to produce a creative project at the end of the semester that further explores or illustrates one of the key themes or patterns about misinformation discussed in class. In deciding on a project, students are encouraged to think of a specific example of misinformation (a rumor, conspiracy theory, moral panic, etc....) and craft a project that effectively describes and evaluates that event or situation. Creative projects may include (but are not limited to): A CCEP Podcast episode, a virtual photo exhibit, zines, YouTube videos, newsletters, etc.... The hope is that you can use your own creative talents and interests to engage with this challenging topic.

Instructor Biography:

Shonn Haren has been a Research and Instruction Librarian at Cal Poly Pomona since 2016. He received a Master of Arts in History from the University of California, Riverside in 2010, and a Master of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University in 2013. Prior to coming to Cal Poly Pomona, he worked for 10 years as a student cataloger and later library clerk in the UC Riverside Libraries, and then spent 2 years as a Reference and Instruction Librarian at Wichita State University in Wichita, Kansas.

Since 2017, Professor Haren has focused on Misinformation, with a particular emphasis on Fake News, Urban Legends, and Conspiracy Theories. He has given several on-campus workshops on the subject and was part of a panel presentation on Fake News at the 2018 California Academic Research Libraries Conference.

In his spare time, he enjoys calligraphy, watercolors, scale modeling and is learning to do some basic woodworking.