Call for Applicants for Madison Diversity Leadership Program (Spring 2020)

We invite upper level students to apply for the Madison Leadership Program. The purpose of this program is to cultivate the next generation of leaders, particularly women and members of underrepresented groups, with a focus on two key arenas of public affairs: (1) electoral politics and government, and (2) civic activism and non-profit leadership.

There is an urgent need to diversify public leadership in the United States. Despite gains made in the 2018 election, there are still only 23.4% women in the U.S. Congress, with higher percentage (over 28 %) represented in state legislatures. People of color, including African-Americans, Latinos, Asians, and Multi-racial Americans are represented in greater numbers than in prior history, although still less than their percentage of the population, with only three Black senators, for instance, representing 3% of the body, compared to the 13% of Americans who identify as Black. Deficits of these kinds are not limited to the United States; that said, 101 countries manage to do better than the US. Of course, electoral politics is only one dimension of leadership where women and minorities are under-represented; this under-representation is reflected as well in the non-profit, law, and governmental sector. In addition, it is important that our leaders have the necessary knowledge to connect with individuals and groups of different cultural backgrounds, both nationally and internationally. As such, our program will endeavor to nurture diverse leadership from all parts of the political spectrum and provide students with the local, national, and international perspectives necessary for their success.

Selected participants will enroll in a semester-long program (12 credits) of study, research, and community engagement. Students will be required to:

1. Enroll in a course in leadership that will involve speakers, visits to leadership organizations, and readings and assignments designed to familiarize students with conceptual and practical dimensions of leadership, both domestic and international.
2. Co-enroll in an internship with an organization whose work is related to the themes of the course and the program.
3. Participate in a fully-paid global engagement experience at Participatory Research In India (PRIA) in New Delhi, India. PRIA is an ideal partner for this program because for more than 30 years, the organization has worked to bring the voices of the marginalized into Indian democracy, through training in participatory action and effective leadership.
4. Participate in relevant lectures and/or symposia involving leaders in different roles in the public sphere who are engaged with pressing public policy issues in the US and globally.
5. Participate in Madison’s Research Showcase at the end of the semester.

Ten students, representing a wide range of interests, identities, and perspectives, will be selected through a competitive process. The application process will include a written application (below) due on March 27, 2019, and an in-person interview with the program directors, Julia Grant and Linda Racioppi. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their academic records; community or civic involvement and activism; their commitment to inclusion, civil discourse, and a career in public service; and potential for leadership in public affairs. Interviews will be conducted in early April.

Julia Grant is Professor of Social Relations and Policy and former Associate Dean of James Madison College. Linda Racioppi is Professor of Comparative Cultures and Politics and of International Relations; she currently also serves as Associate Dean for Research in James Madison College. They will be assisted on the India portion of the program by Sejuti Das Gupta, Assistant Professor in Comparative Cultures and Politics in James Madison College.

Please contact Professor Grant (grant@msu.edu) or Racioppi (racioppi@msu.edu) with questions.
Application for Madison Diversity Leadership Program  
Due: March 27, 2019

Name: 

Year: 

Major(s)/minor(s): 

Please provide a copy of your transcript and the name of one faculty reference.

Respond to each of the questions below.

1. List any work, volunteer, or academic experiences that make you a good fit for this program.

2. Describe how your past experiences and perspectives will contribute to the diversity of this program.

3. Discuss how you think this program will contribute to your development as a future leader in your area of interest or career path.