

2018 Faculty Fellows

Daniel Bender, PhD, Associate Professor, English, Dyson College of Arts and Sciences

"Democracy Entrepreneurs"

Professor Bender's collaborative research project, Democracy Entrepreneurs, extends his study of social systems that encourage or inhibit the agency of ordinary citizens as distinct from political elites. The investigation will be guided by a seminal question: To what extent can citizens be heard by policy makers and public officials and thus take part in democratic process? Students will be asked to specialize in one of four areas of broad-based civic concern: fair taxation across income levels, the Electoral College and its uneasy relation to the popular vote, the possibility of 3rd party candidates represented in major elections, and the prospect of low interest or no interest loans for college students. In line with current interdisciplinary alliances between humanities and civic engagement, students will become citizen experts in one of these designated topics. Formal study, followed by demographic surveys and grassroots organizing will produce a reform program written by each of the student participants, who, in building support for practical reform, act as entrepreneurs for democracy.

Matthew Bolton, PhD, Associate Professor, Political Science, Dyson College of Arts and Sciences

"The Role of Pacific Island Nonprofits in Advocacy for and Implementation of 'Positive Obligations' in the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty"

Professor Bolton's project will focus on a number of nonprofit organizations throughout the Pacific Island nations that have provided health and educational services mitigating the harm of nuclear weapons testing while also pushing governments to better provide assistance to victims and remediate contaminated environments. In particular, nonprofit organizations and diplomats from this region have played an integral role in advocating for the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty, recently adopted by the United Nations in June 2017. Professor Bolton's research will involve ethnographic participant observation in advocacy efforts, both at the UN in New York and also through field studies to see the work of nonprofit organizations in Pacific Island nations. In conducting his research, Professor Bolton will observe the activities of non-profits at work, process-tracing of their impact on policy through organizational archival research and interviews with key informants. For this research project, Professor Bolton will engage an undergraduate student that will assist with literature reviews and provide support during interviews at the UN General Assembly providing the student with an opportunity to observe advocacy during relevant UN General Assembly sessions. His students will also indirectly benefit from this research as the information from his project will augment his teaching of international relations and Model UN courses.

Brice Particelli, PhD, Lecturer and Assistant Chair, English, Dyson College of Arts and Sciences
"Dinosaurs, Dragons, and Unicorns: Genre Systems, Alternative Science, and Education at the Controversial Creation Museum"

Professor Particelli's research will focus on how social enterprises utilize culturally coded and embedded understandings of genre to connect to audiences. He has begun his work on an analysis of the genres surrounding the controversial Creation Museum, a nonprofit that uses selective scientific research, rhetoric, and genres to support their claim that the Earth was created on October 24th, 4004 B.C. While this idea sits on the outskirts of scientific research and consensus, it has deep influence on science education and local school curriculum. In his research Professor Particelli hopes to learn how an outlier to the scientific and educational communities utilizes existing genre systems to affect science education. Through his course "Introduction to Genre Studies" Professor Particelli plans to engage his students and their own case studies based around this question of how outliers or challengers to a system use genre to influence social causes. He plans to develop an analytical approach based within Rhetorical Genre Studies and Activity Theory that will help both science educators and writing studies scholars explore these kinds of outliers through genre and rhetorical study. Additionally, it will allow science educators and museum staff to better understand how genre plays a role in their field.

Namchul Shin, PhD, Professor and Chair, Information Systems, Seidenberg School of Computer Sciences and Information Systems
"The Impact of the Web and Social Media on Nonprofits' Performance"

Professor Shin's research project will empirically examine how nonprofit organizations create value for their use of the Internet, with a focus on the web and social media. For his project, Professor Shin will engage three Pace students to support the research process by collecting and organizing various data for the construction of a database combining two sources that will provide him with the top 100 nonprofits on the web, based on web traction and the top 100 nonprofits based on revenue. The internet is increasingly used by nonprofits to communicate with the public and increase charitable giving. In a market with increased competition, greater demand for services, and fewer resources, nonprofit organizations need diverse ways of achieving their social goals. Fundraising on the Web has been used by nonprofit organizations with varying degrees of success. However, there has been limited research on nonprofits' use of the Web and social media for fundraising. The research will examine the impact of nonprofits' use of the Web and social media on their performance, as measured by total revenue, including income from public support. By doing so, this research also legitimizes the value of Information Technology in the nonprofit sector for charitable giving.