Dear Student of High Achievement,

I would like to tell you about a special opportunity available to you through the Humanities Center at the University of Hartford.

The Humanities Center is accepting applications for Student Fellows for next year’s honors seminar. Students with a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average who will be sophomores, juniors, or seniors in the 2020-2021 academic year are eligible to participate in the Humanities Center as Student Fellows.

As a Fellow, you attend a year-long honors seminar on the yearly theme. Mala Matacin, Associate Professor of Psychology, will lead the Humanities Center Seminar for this next year. She has selected the theme of “Lights, Camera, Activism” for the seminar. Here you will get to know some of the brightest and most articulate students at the University of Hartford. You will also attend lectures by both university faculty who are doing research on this theme and visiting speakers. Here is a description of the seminar:

This seminar will explore how photojournalists and documentary photographers have used photos to shed light on a variety of social problems and to bring about public awareness and change. For example, Jonathan Torgovnik, the award winning photographer most known for his work about massive atrocities in Rwanda stated that “...it is the responsibility of the photographer to make a call for action.” At the same time, some photographers have been criticized for manipulation (such as “staging”) and perpetrating visual forms of violence against their subjects. Yet, there is evidence that documentary photographers, like those in Vietnam, helped change public opinions and the course of the war with their iconic images. Most recently, the images of the immigrant crisis have spurred social and political outrage. Photo activism can therefore be a powerful way of resisting dominant ideologies about those who are marginalized based on a variety of social identities (such as gender, sexual orientation, race, class and ability status). Scientists are also interested in the ways that images can be used to communicate their work to the public. Researches from the University of East Anglia in the UK, for instance, are addressing how visual material can be effectively used to communicate climate change date to non-academics.

With all this in mind, this course will therefore address, through an examination of various photographers, projects, photographic techniques and forms of social activism: 1) whether it is our duty in the first place to engage in advocacy and activism, 2) the subjective and objective natures of documentary photography, 3) the “outsider” and “insider” voice of photography (photographs of those within vulnerable communities vs. those who are not, and 4) whether current forms of activism (such as hashtag activism and “culture jamming”) can influence social change.
Among other things, students in the course will complete a large project using the tools of the PhotoVoice methodology to create awareness and social change on an issue (or issues) they deem important. **No previous media experience is needed to take the class or complete assignments, just an interest in the subject.** The Spring semester will be a series of lectures by faculty members and visiting speakers on the topic of “Lights, Camera, Activism.”

Students who are selected for this seminar are awarded a fellowship and will receive a stipend of $500 and take the seminar for a total of six credits, three in the fall term and three in the spring term.* The courses are listed as HON 389 in the fall 2020 schedule and HON 390 in the spring 2021 schedule. The class meets both semesters on **Tuesday evenings, 5:00-7:20 pm**, and student fellows must take both semesters.

Psychology students will be able to take HON 389 and HON 390 as electives toward their major. Students in Communication can count HON 389 and HON 390 as an elective outside “Advertising and Public Relations” and “Communication Studies” and an elective course in “Media Strategies.” Students in Digital Media and Journalism can take HON 389 and HON 390 as a course in the “Media Studies” group. Students in Cinema can count HON 389 and HON 390 as “Group 4” electives.

**To apply, send an email by Friday, April 3** to Dr. Mala Matacin (matacin@hartford.edu) and to me (Dr. Nicholas Ealy, Humanities Center Director at ealy@hartford.edu) that includes the following information:

- a brief explanation of why you want to participate in the Seminar (1 page)
- your major and minor (if you have one)
- your grade point average
- your local AND home phone number and mailing address
- your e-mail address
- your student ID number (not your social security number)

*If you send your application as an attachment to your email, please make sure that (1) you have your name on the attached document and (2) you have your name as the name of the attached file (example: NicholasEaly.docx or NicholasEaly.pdf).*

You will be notified of acceptance by **Friday, April 10**, with instructions for registration. **Do not attempt to register for HON 389 (Fall ’20) until you have been notified of your acceptance.** If you have any questions about the application process, please contact me at ealy@hartford.edu. In the meantime, I recommend you register for four classes for fall 2020, as this would be a fifth class for you.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Ealy
Director, Humanities Center

* Students who already receive a full tuition discount are not eligible for the stipend.*