

Archer Center Washington Internship



Course Information

PA 8332

Archer Center Washington Internship

Summer 2025

Dr. Jennifer Diascro

Professor Contact Information

Professor	Dr. Jennifer Diascro
Email Address	dal759114@utdallas.edu
Office Hours	Email for appointment

Course Overview

"Work is love made visible." Kahlil Gibran, 1923

During this course, students will develop their personal work philosophy and enhance their professional skillset through experiential training, coaching, and reading and reflecting on the practical and academic literature about work.

This course consists primarily of an internship in a governmental or non-governmental organization based in Washington, D.C., or whose work includes federal policy. Students are expected to work full-time (40 hours a week) at the internship, which may be paid or unpaid.

Students are responsible for seeking and selecting their internships. The Archer Center does not guarantee internship placements, but Archer Center faculty and staff will provide students with information about internship opportunities and advice about placements. The Archer Center faculty meet regularly with students to debrief and to integrate their practical training with other lessons in professional development.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Assess their professional skillset across the six Archer Principles (Appreciation, Responsibility, Character, Humility, Empathy, and Respect)
- Articulate the issues shaping work today including emerging technologies, generational workplace dynamics, and cross-cultural communication, as well as challenges working for or with the federal government and/or federal policy-making process.
- Express their philosophy of work including:
 - Approaches to dealing with moral or ethical problems in the workplace
 - Management and leadership principles

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Admission to the Graduate Archer Fellowship Program.

Course Textbooks and Materials

Required Texts

All course materials are provided or available for free on the Internet. Links to the materials are provided, or copies will be posted to the class eLearning site.

Required Materials

Access to a computer and reliable internet service.

eLearning

All course materials are available on [eLearning](#). All assignments, except where noted, should be submitted to eLearning. Login to your eLearning account [here](#).

The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class, as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, they are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Course Requirements and Assignments

Class Meetings: Full Cohort

The full cohort will meet twice as a group during the summer term. Attendance is required at each meeting.

- **May 30** (Fri), 3:30-5:30 p.m., Archer Center: Values as Professional Compass
- **July 30** (Wed), 7-8:30 p.m., National Archives: Reflections on *On Work* and Philosophy of Work

Coaching Sessions: Individual

Each student is required to meet with **Dr. Diascro** in two individual coaching sessions to discuss your internship experience and professional experience in D.C. These meetings will take place in person at the Archer Center, one in June and the other in July. Students are assigned to a date and time; the schedule is posted in [eLearning](#).

Please make note of your date and time in your personal calendar. **If you are unable to meet at the assigned time, please be in touch with Dr. Diascro immediately to reschedule the appointment. Rescheduled sessions may be held before work or on the weekend.**

Session	Date	Meeting Times
1 st Session	6/3	6-6:25
	6/5	
	6/10	
	6/18	6:30-6:55
	6/24	7-7:25
	6/25	
	6/26	7:30-7:55
2 nd Session	7/1	8-8:25
	7/3	
	7/8	
	7/10	8:30-8:55
	7/15	
	7/17	9-9:25
	7/23	

Writing Assignments

1. Philosophy of Work, Draft and Final

Purpose: Regardless of the length of our resumes, most of us have not spent time reflecting on the values and beliefs that are important in choosing a vocation and doing the work. As part of the experience in the Archer Program, we emphasize values that are important to our work, and we want to encourage you to think more deeply about what drives you in your work.

A **Philosophy of Work** is one method of accomplishing this task. It is a short statement that guides your approach to your job, career, and work experience. It should encompass your own articulation of the purpose of work, the values and attitudes you have about work, the meaning you apply to success and failure, and the role that work has in your life. It should also reflect your thoughts about how the Archer principles are relevant to the work that you accomplish this term.

Some philosophies of work include beliefs about the importance of hard work or the value of taking pride in one's work, others emphasize the need for a work-life balance and focus on the role of work in personal fulfillment and satisfaction. Some statements reflect on the relationship between work and society, such as the importance of contributing to the greater good and the responsibility of businesses to operate ethically.

These are very personal guides that can help you make decisions about your career, find meaning and purpose in your work, and achieve a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in your professional (and personal) life.

You ARE evaluated on whether you meet the deadlines for the draft and final versions, according to the formatting requirements, and how clearly you articulate your philosophy.

You are NOT evaluated on the substantive content of your philosophy of work; that is yours to evaluate and revise as you grow professionally and personally. Please resist the urge to use ChatGPT or similar AI product. There is no right or wrong philosophy, just one that reflects your ideas and experiences. Make it yours!

Formatting Requirements: Word document ONLY (NO PDFs), 1.15 line spacing, Calibri 12-point font, 1-inch margins.

Due Dates:

- **June 23:** DRAFT, 2-3 paragraphs. You are not committed to this content for your final, but it's important to start the process of thinking through your philosophy. Submit via [eLearning](#) by 11:59p.
- **July 21:** FINAL, 1-2 pages. Submit via [eLearning](#) by 11:59 p.m.

2. Reflection, Space and Selfie/Summary

Purpose: Among the goals of the Archer Program are to share the unique beauty and culture of Washington D.C. with you and to encourage you to create space away from work and home that provides the peace and comfort to reflect on your daily, weekly, and programmatic experiences.

This Reflection assignment is one way of combining these goals. We ask that you find a spot in the city that you can claim as your own personal space for reflection. While you're in D.C., this will be a place that you *revisit multiple times* as you contemplate the work you're doing, the events you're attending the people you're meeting, and the culture you're experiencing. When you leave D.C., this place will forever be yours, a special and private retreat of your own.

Locations: There so many wonderful places in D.C. to find a space for reflection. They include, but are not limited to, the U.S. Botanic Garden, the Library of Congress, the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden, the Lincoln Memorial and the Reflecting Pool, the Capitol Reflecting Pool, the Jefferson Memorial and the Tidal Basin, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, any of the war memorials, and neighborhood parks and fountains (e.g. at Dupont Circle).

Due Dates:

- **June 9 (Mon):** Chose your reflection spot. Post its location to [eLearning](#) by 11:59 p.m.

- **July 28 (Mon):** Take a selfie at your reflection spot and write a brief (a short paragraph, no more than half a page) reflection on how two of the Archer principles showed up in your internship experience. Post them together to [eLearning](#) by 11:59 p.m.

Course Policies

Students are expected to meet the requirements of the office at which they have an internship, to meet all internship-related requirements of the Archer Program, and to conduct themselves according to university rules.

Students must obtain permission from their internship supervisors to attend Archer Center events that conflict with regular internship working hours.

Academic credit for the course is based on completion of coursework that complements the student's work in a full-time (32-40 hours a week) internship at a governmental or non-governmental organization based in Washington, D.C., or whose work includes federal policy. This internship work may be paid or unpaid.

***Please note** that the process of internship selection, support and professional development is managed by **Sally Lawrence, the Archer Center's Associate Director of Professional Development and Employer Relations**. Separate from the Internship course, Sally will meet with students to provide training in professional development and support the internship agreement, assessment/review, and other information requirements related to your internship. If you have any questions about your specific internship requirements and/or the working relationship with your internship supervisor, please reach out directly to Sally (slawrence@utsystem.edu).*

The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class, as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, they are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Accommodations

"The University of Texas at Dallas is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (2008), you are required to register with the AccessAbility Resource Center, located in the Administration Building (AD), Suite 2.224. Their phone number is 972-883-2098, email: accessability@utdallas.edu and website is <https://accessability.utdallas.edu>. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper AccessAbility Resource Center letter of accommodation and meet with me at the beginning of the semester."

Grading Policy

This course is **Pass/Fail**. Students who successfully complete their internship, attend all class and coaching sessions, and complete the writing assignments according to standards (above) will pass. Final grades will be reported to UT Dallas and your home UT System institution and posted in accordance with their respective grade submission deadlines.

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: "As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

Academic Calendar

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

Week 1: May 27-30: Values and Work

Meet: May 30: Archer Center for Values as Professional Compass, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Week 2: June 2-6: Being Intentional About Work

Read:

[On Work](#) by Kahlil Gibran

[A Review of the Empirical Literature on Meaningful Work: Progress and Research Agenda](#)

Consider:

As you get oriented to your internship work, begin thinking about what that work means to you. Consider why you chose this internship site/organization, how it fits into your field of study, how it fits into other parts of your life, what you feel when you do the work. What about the work appeals to you? Why? What is easy and challenging about the work? Why?

Reflect on the Archer principles, your own values, and Gibran's poem as you think intentionally about your internship work this week and throughout the term.

Coaching Sessions 1: see schedule in [eLearning](#)

Week 3: June 9-13: Archer Principle 1: Appreciation

Due: June 9: Reflection Spot, post to [eLearning](#) by 11:59 p.m.

Read:

[What Are the 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace?](#)

[How Gratitude Can Transform Your Workplace](#)

Consider:

A 2022 study suggests that the more recognition employees receive from their leaders, the more engaged employees are in the workplace. Other recent research reveals that "high-quality recognition" increases the likelihood of employee retention.

During this week, consider what appreciation means to you and what form it takes in your internship space. How do you know it when you see it in the workplace? How have you experienced it (or not) and what has that felt like? When and how can you show appreciation to others at work? Does your workplace promote a culture of appreciation and gratitude?

Coaching Sessions 1: see schedule in [eLearning](#)

Week 4: June 16-20: Archer Principle 2: Responsibility

View:

[Oppenheimer on the Atomic Bomb](#)
[Watergate Articles of Impeachment](#) with Barbara Jordan

Consider:

Working in or with the Federal government exemplifies the adage, “With great power comes great responsibility.”

During this week, reflect on the following questions:

- What is power? Is power something that is given, earned, or inherited? How do individuals or groups acquire power, and how do they maintain it?
- What are the limits of responsibility, and what happens when someone fails to live up to their responsibilities? What are the consequences, and who determines them?
- How do we ensure that those who hold power are held accountable, while also allowing them to exercise their power in productive and beneficial ways? What are the trade-offs involved in balancing power and responsibility?

Coaching Sessions 1: see schedule in [eLearning](#)

Week 5: June 23-26: Archer Principle 3: Character

Due: June 23: Draft, Philosophy of Work, submit to [eLearning](#) by 11:59 p.m.

Read:

- [Remembering Allan McDonald: He Refused to Approve Challenger Launch, Exposed Cover-Up](#)
- [Hiram Bingham IV](#)

Consider:

“...Always do the right thing for the right reason at the right time with the right people. [And] you will have no regrets for the rest of your life.” - Allan McDonald

Character is a set of qualities that make up your moral and ethical values, including honesty, integrity, responsibility, respect, and empathy. Character is important in the workplace because it affects how employees interact with one another, how they approach their work, and how they make decisions.

During this week, return to the values you identified at the beginning of the term. How are these values part of your character? Are they integral to who you are and/or are they aspirational? How are they relevant – in practice or in aspiration – to your work? Are they compatible with your internship workplace? What sacrifices are you willing to make in the workplace in support of your values?

Coaching Sessions 1: see schedule in [eLearning](#)

Week 6: June 30-July 3: Archer Principle 4: Humility

Read:

[What does Intellectual Humility Look Like](#)

View:

[Why do so many Incompetent Men Become Leaders?](#)

Consider:

In our contemporary political environment, we see no shortage of people with strong, unshakeable opinions. The [Dunning-Kruger effect](#) tells us that the more confident we are, the more likely we are wrong, yet [some research suggests](#) that overconfidence is not uncommon in the workplace and that some organizational structures intensify this trait among some employees.

This week, reflect on how to balance intellectual humility with confidence. What can you do to encourage personal and workplace humility and resist the confidence trap when evaluating yourself and others at work?

Coaching Sessions 2: see schedule in [eLearning](#)

Week 7: July 7-11: Archer Principle 5: Empathy

Read:

[What to Know When Five Generations Share an Office](#)

[The Economics Behind Quiet Quitting – and What We Should Call It Instead](#)

Consider:

The Great Resignation and Quiet Quitting are signs of dramatic discontent in the post-pandemic workforce. Underlying both phenomena is a discussion about the limits of empathy at work.

During this week, reflect on your position on the work-to-live versus live-to-work debate. How do you (or not) balance your passion for your work with the need to take care of yourself, your family, and your friends? What might you do differently, and why? How do you (or not) communicate your boundaries to your colleagues while still showing you care about your work? What might you do differently, and why? Are their individual and/or structural impediments to you practicing self-empathy and empathy for others in the workplace?

Coaching Sessions 2: see schedule in [eLearning](#)

Week 8: July 14-18: Archer Principle 6: Respect

Read:

[Who Pays Tolls at Work and Who Cruises on an Open Highway](#)
[Bystander Intervention](#)

Consider:

Respect in the workplace is essential for creating a healthy and productive work environment. It involves valuing diversity, active listening, effective communication, professionalism, recognizing boundaries, and constructive conflict resolution. Yet, some employees face additional hurdles at work, and some workplaces are structurally disrespectful.

During this week, reflect on what respect means to you, particularly in the workplace? How do you know it when you see it? How do you exhibit respect yourself in the workplace? Is your

workplace respectful towards all? What have you done, or will you do, when you encounter disrespect in the workplace?

Coaching Sessions 2: see schedule in [eLearning](#)

Week 9: July 21-25: Reflecting on Working in or with the Federal Government

Due: July 21: Final, Philosophy of Work, submit to [eLearning](#) by 11:59 p.m.

Read: [Man in the Arena](#)

Consider:

During this week, reflect on your experiences working in or with the Federal Government. What have you learned? What surprised you? What changes would you make to how the government works if you could (based on your experiences)? How do your values and the Archer principles affect our reflection?

Coaching Sessions 2: see schedule in [eLearning](#)

Week 10: July 28-August 1: Reflecting on Professional Development

Due: July 28: Selfie & Reflection, post to [eLearning](#) by 11:59 p.m.

Meet: July 30: National Archives (on Constitution Ave. steps) for Reflections on *On Work* and Philosophy of Work, 7-8:30 p.m.

Read:

[On Work](#)

[Designing Your Life](#): Chapter 3: Wayfinding (posted in [eLearning](#))

Consider:

Based on your experience this term as an Archer Fellow and an intern, can you identify your professional strengths and weaknesses? What are a few examples of each? As you look forward to your next professional experience, how would you like to proceed in mastering your strengths? Addressing your challenges?