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# Diplomacy Undergraduates Accepted into National Science Foundation Summer Program at Syracuse University

**Tuesday, March 21, 2023**

*By Jenna Leis*

This summer, two undergraduates from the [School of Diplomacy and International Relations](#) will be participating in a Social Sciences residential research experience at Syracuse University's School of Information Studies (iSchool) funded by the National Science Foundation.



A photo of undergraduate student Jasmine DeLeon.

Jasmine De Leon and Michael Manners, both juniors, will be joining ten other students from across the country in the nine-week NSF-supported Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program.

The program will give participants experience learning textual analysis, coding in Python, conducting a social science research project using data provided by professors, as well as provide opportunities for professional development and mentoring by iSchool faculty. Michael is a Diplomacy and Economics double major and Jasmine majors in Diplomacy with minors in Catholic Studies, Journalism, and Asian Studies.

Both were introduced to the program by Michael Murphy, the Politics, Policy, and Data Librarian at the Seton Hall Library, and Joseph Huddleston, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, in the School of Diplomacy. Both students say that it was because of support from Seton Hall that they applied. Michael said "It's great that Professor Huddleston connects his students to awesome opportunities". He also thanks Professor Matthew Escobar, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of French and Spanish and the Prestigious Fellowships Director, for assisting him in his fellowship applications, saying "he really does go above and beyond to help his students".

Professor Huddleston says Jasmine and Michael impressed the Syracuse program on their own; he merely coached them in their application and interview process. He says, "Jasmine and Michael very much impressed the Syracuse program on their own merits, especially their vision for themselves using research to serve a larger purpose". This NSF funded program had 150 applicants in total. Of the 12 finalists that were selected, two are from Seton Hall.

Furthermore, Professor Huddleston says in the program "they are going to study text analysis, which takes primary texts as the data source. It is useful for studying things like propaganda, misinformation, and processes of ideological radicalization, which both of them are interested in. I have not done text analysis before. They will return in the fall with more knowledge of it than I have, so maybe they can teach me and their peers something about it".

Jasmine says her participation in DiploLab helped give her "the tools and the confidence to navigate complex research subjects." The DiploLab was created by Professor Huddleston

and pairs students up with professors and have them work together to develop and advance ongoing and new research projects. This is where she was first introduced to Professor Huddleston and Professor Murphy.

The Syracuse program's goal is to encourage students to pursue their research interest and give them the experience and tools to do so. It aims to send students back to their home institutions with the ability to show others the new methods and tools they have learned.

Jasmine says she applied for the program because it aligned with her interests in security, journalism, and emerging technology. For her one of the deciding factors to accept was the involvement of Professor Jennifer Stromer-Galley, Ph.D., the Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility at the iSchool. Professor Stromer-Galley has taken part in social media, data ethics, and intelligence research and Jasmine asked to work with her after being accepted into the program. She is excited to learn from her.

Michael says that the iSchool does a lot of work on internet, or content, virality, which is the focus of Assistant Professor Jeff Helmsley's



A photo of undergraduate student Michael Manners.

research. He is interested in the practical skills that the iSchool will teach in textual analysis to analyze press reports and social media. Professor Helmsley is leading the REU.

Both Michael and Jasmine have advice for incoming students to the School of Diplomacy. Jasmine says to "be patient with yourself. The trajectory of what opportunities come your way is just the way that it's meant to be and make the most of what comes towards you". Michael recommends for those applying to

fellowships and internships to "just apply to everything that you can apply to if it piques your interest... because if there's any interest it means that maybe it's for you, even if it's not necessarily your major or your field of study".

Categories: *Nation and World*, *Research*

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