

Dear “campers”,

In addition to the other logistical and informational emails you are receiving, we wanted to send our own personal greetings and some information about the upcoming camp. We very much look forward to it, and hope it will be a good experience for you too.

Attached please find a tentative schedule of speakers. (The exact titles and order of speakers are subject to some change, but the time slots are likely the same.) We are also attaching a list of suggested readings.

We would like to prepare you for the ways the program is variously informal and formal.

Dress is entirely informal; in the White Mountains, temperatures may vary, and it can be either hot or cold. Please dress for comfort; shorts etc. are fine (weather permitting). Please immediately feel comfortable addressing the entire faculty by our first names. This includes visiting speakers. Really, you’ll see from the atmosphere that this is appropriate; it will help us get in the spirit of solid intellectual and social exchange.

There are, however, some ways in which we are rigid. As we will repeat verbally but mostly demonstrate by practice, the start times and end times of sessions are absolutely punctual. This isn’t a fantasy, aspiration, or ideal, but an actual reality in how we have always run the program. We start each session on the very minute the schedule says; please be seated and ready at exactly 9:30 a.m., each day, and for all subsequent sessions. We use the beginning of sessions for camp announcements and for outlines, etc. and will very much like to have 100% attendance from the very start of each session. We typically have four 70-minute sessions a day, which we hope is manageable. (Each day is from 9:30 a.m. to 4:40 p.m., with breaks and a long lunch.) The social contract is reciprocal: we don’t run over in sessions. Meals and other activities are voluntary. But for the 210 to 280 minutes of formal sessions, every day, we expect complete and full attendance. It is part of what makes the program work, and we feel strongly that it is a matter of fairness to all the speakers, to us, the Russell Sage Foundation, and all the applicants we were unable to invite that you take advantage fully.

We will also announce a procedure for signing up for “office hours” for one-one-one meetings with us, and visiting faculty. These will be completely organized and scheduled with an aim of good matches for topics and fair distribution of access for all campers. We urge you to think about meetings you would like to have, and to at least prepare a line of inquiry before the meeting, making the most use of the time you’ll have for these 1-on-1 (or small group) conversations. (And note that none of us will have time to read papers that you send us before the office hour.) We do ask you not to approach visiting faculty to schedule meetings beyond these office hours. We bring them all a long way and schedule them very heavily, and are protective of the little free time they have. They won’t be hiding – much of the draw for them (like us) of this program is the great conversations we have with you. The entire camp is set up for lots of informal exchanges, during breaks and meals, and the visiting faculty are almost always quite enthusiastic and pleased with these discussions.

See you soon!

David and Matthew