<div align="center">**Successful Applicants to the SNaPP Lab**</div>

Substantive Focus
Prof. Settle's research interests are related to political behavior broadly defined: public opinion, ideology, partisanship, political knowledge, participation, campaigns, the media (including social media), and polarization. You can find out more about her research on the lab webpage. If your research interests are completely unrelated to political behavior, you are likely better served by exploring the many other wonderful opportunities available for W&M undergraduates. The exception to this would be if you have sophisticated neuroscience, computer science or econometrics skills and are looking to put those toward an applied use helping Prof. Settle with her research.

SNaPP Lab members have the following things in common:
>A strong sense of why the opportunity to be involved in the lab would help you get the most out of your experience at W&M

>At least an inkling of an independent research topic related in some way to political behavior.

>A desire to work with a group of people with varied interests and skill levels

>A commitment to prioritizing your work in the SNaPP Lab (i.e. regularly attending Wednesday meetings; completing your independent work on time and to the best of your abilities; considering staying on campus for several weeks in the summer)

What makes for a successful applicant to the lab?
Prof. Settle is most interested in working with students who are looking for a semi-structured environment to facilitate them in taking the initiative to develop research design and data analysis skills. Incoming students are not expected to have completely formed ideas about what they want to study, but they do need to have solid answers to these four questions on the application:
1. Why are you interested in becoming a part of the SNaPP Lab? What do you hope to gain from the experience?
2. After looking at the SNaPP Lab website, which research project is most interesting to you and why?
3. Tell me a bit about what makes you tick, as it relates to the study of political behavior. This can be an observation or question you have from observing politics, a reading or unit in one of your classes you found especially interesting, or the motivation for what you want to do after graduation. While I don't expect you to have a fully formed research question, I do want to know about what interests you.
4. What skills or experiences do you have that would make you a valuable part of the SNaPP Lab?

Keep in mind that your application will be evaluated not only for its content, but also as a signal of your ability to think and write clearly. Incomplete applications will signal that you are not detail-oriented; sloppy applications with grammatical errors and typos will signal that you cannot communicate effectively.

There is no GPA minimum to apply for a position in the SNaPP Lab. However, in practice, a GPA lower than 3.4 signals that you need to prioritize your classwork, not take on additional research responsibilities.

While there is no one size fits all description of a successful member of the lab, members who eventually take on paid or leadership positions tend to shine in one or more of these areas:

Skill Set 1: The Analyst
Some students succeed in the lab because they have a strong desire to master the research design and data analysis tools necessary to conduct sophisticated independent research. They typically enter the lab with some ideas about their interests, and they commit to the coursework and independent work required to develop the methodological skills needed to ask creative and interesting research questions. Typically, these students also have the strong writing skills necessary to communicate their ideas clearly and persuasively. Students with one or more years of experience in the lab who fit this description are eligible to serve as team leaders for one of the research projects.

Skill Set 2: The Reader
It is always important to ground new research in what scholars already know about a particular topic. Some members of the lab excel at reading academic literature extensively and deeply in order to identify gaps in our existing knowledge and inform the research design of future lab projects. This kind of reading is a different skill than the kind of reading one does for a class assignment, and one of the major goals of boot camp is to train lab members how to read academic articles like social science researchers. Excellent analytical writing is imperative for this skill set. Prof. Settle will hire students who excel at this to help her with her ongoing research projects.

Skill Set 3: The Fixer
A major part of successfully conducting research is being sufficiently organized to execute the studies that you've designed. Some students shine in their ability to help Prof. Settle "get things done." These students are responsible, resourceful, and reliable. They take initiative and are professional and polished. They typically have demonstrated excellence in program management or leadership in student organizations. Students who fit this description with one or more years of experience in the lab are good candidates for serving as project manager for the lab experiments team, or in paid positions at the SSRMC such as Omnibus Director or Student Director.

Skill Set 4: The Computer Scientist
Much of the data analysis and visualization Prof. Settle uses in her research can be improved by collaborating with others who have computer science skills outside her expertise. In addition to mastering advanced computer science skills, students must be responsible, reliable, and able to meet quick deadlines. Paid positions related to this skill set include research assistantships, or positions at the SSRMC such as IT/Website Manager.