Criminology
Denise Boots, Associate Professor of Criminology and Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Urban Policy Research
Dr. Denise Boots is currently working on several research projects on topics regarding domestic violence and homicide, as well as conducting evaluations of problem-solving courts with agency and community partners across DFW. Her first project is a joint planning grant between UT Dallas and the Conference on Crimes Against Women, which is a 501C under the umbrella of Genesis Women’s Shelter in Dallas. This project was awarded a $530,000 planning grant in November of 2014 from the Communities Foundation. The project is creating the Institute for Coordinated Community Response (ICCR), which seeks to educate, train, and mentor selected fellows from the most under-resourced areas of Texas working in law enforcement, victim advocacy, and prosecutions. It is hoped that the outcome of this leads to a leveling of the playing field for victims of domestic violence. This 18-month planning grant is supported with staff and administrators in the Institute for Urban Policy Research (IUPR). Dr. Boots works closely with Dr. Timothy Bray, Clinical Assistant Professor of Criminology and Director of IUPR, and his staff in the center to develop curriculum and manage educational platform delivery.

A second current involves Dr. Boots spearheading data collection from Dallas-area government, criminal justice, and social service partners to write the first executive summary report of the City of Dallas Domestic Violence Taskforce. In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month this coming October, Dr. Boots and IUPR anticipate presenting the results of this summary report across the Dallas area with Councilmember and Taskforce Chair Jennifer Staubach Gates and Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings.

In addition to these projects, Dr. Boots has recently completed an original data collection project with the Dallas County Public Defender’s Office to evaluate the efficacy of the mental health court for all cases between 2010 and 2014. Dr. Boots is collaborating with Dr. Jennifer Wareham (Wayne State University) for this research study, as well as another study in process in neighboring Tarrant County which is evaluating high-risk gang offenders in the SWIFT Court. Both projects are producing empirical articles that are anticipated to be submitted for peer review this fall.

Economics
Daniel Arce, Professor and Program Head of Economics
Dr. Daniel Arce is investigating games that represent situations of international cooperation such as treaties, coalitions and protocols. About his research he says:
Even when cooperation is desirable, it does not always occur owing to uncertainty about each nations’ preferences, their actions, or the ultimate costs and benefits of the regime. Hence, there is a role for mediation to overcome cooperation failures that are due to these forms of regime uncertainty. By breaking the games up into their cooperative and competitive constituent parts, a mediator can use the cooperative component to identify the actions that are best for the nations as a group and use the competitive component to determine how the burden of reaching a cooperative outcome should be allocated. Such a method reduces the informational hurdles that are needed to reach an agreement.

**Political Science**

**Robert Lowry, Professor of Political Science**

Political Science professor Robert Lowry has been working on a number of papers about higher education governance, finance, and access. In a forthcoming journal article, he studies the different methods used by states to subsidize public higher education. While operating appropriations to public colleges and universities are the default method in all 50 states, there is great variation in the extent to which different states use grants and contracts for specific programs, or various kinds of student aid. Dr. Lowry finds that the basic explanation is institutional: States that provide more staff support for state legislators or have statewide higher education coordinating boards make more use of grants, contracts, and need-based student aid relative to appropriations. He argues that appropriations are a form of delegation where the state legislature allows higher education administrators to decide what specific outputs are produced and who benefits. State legislatures delegate less when they have the institutional capacity to acquire and process information, formulate specific objectives, and oversee implementation. Consistent with this, differences in institutions have no statistically significant effect on total money spent on higher education, only the form that spending takes.

A second paper to be presented at the American Political Science Association meeting in September looks at access to higher education by financially needy students. This is an important policy question where research is difficult because we lack good, publicly available data on the financial status of college students and the pool of potential college students. Dr. Lowry uses the number of state residents receiving federal Pell grants as an estimate of financially needy undergraduates. For the pool of potential students, he uses the state population ages 18-24 multiplied by the share of students in public school grades 4-9 eligible for free or reduced price lunches nine years’ previous. Both estimates are imperfect (for example, undocumented immigrants are not eligible for Pell grants; some undergraduates are not in the 18-24 age group), but they should allow us to study differences across states in access by financially needy students. Preliminary results indicate that state spending on both need- and merit-based financial aid matters. Less obviously, states with higher education coordinating boards have more Pell grant recipients, even after controlling for spending on student financial aid. The exact causal mechanism is not certain, but most coordinating boards have developed strategic plans for increasing student access, and some of the programs funded by state grants and contracts are designed to increase access by subpopulations that have traditionally lagged in education attainment.
These papers add to a growing literature finding that the manner in which states structure their higher education systems and the resources devoted to governing them have real effects. However, research on why different states have adopted different approaches suggests it is often the byproduct of a more general policy debate or power struggle or historical circumstances that may no longer be relevant. Policymakers would do well to focus more on the likely consequences of institutional design for higher education and its various stakeholders.

**Public and Nonprofit Management**

**Young-joo Lee, Assistant Professor of Public and Nonprofit Management**

Dr. Young-joo Lee’s primary research area is management of public and nonprofit organizations, focusing on employee motivation, workplace diversity, human resources management and volunteer management. Her contribution to the field was recognized by *Public Administration Review*’s selection of her article on comparing motivations in government and nonprofit organizations as one of the 14 most distinguished works answering big questions in public administration and one of the 75 most influential articles published in the history of *PAR*. In 2015, her work on the retention of event volunteers and on the link between public service motivation and volunteering has appeared in such journals as *Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Sciences* and *International Journal of Public Administration*. Her research on the unique employee motivation in nonprofit and public organizations is also appearing in such top-tier journals as *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *International Public Management Journal* and *Public Management Review*.

**Public Policy and Political Economy**

**Euel Elliott, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Professor of Public Policy and Political Economy**

Much of Dr. Euel Elliott’s academic work has involved understanding the dynamics of what are referred to as complex systems, and how individuals make decisions within these complex and inherently uncertain environments. One line of research has to do with the study of heuristics, which is one kind of decision making strategy. A paper, Dr. Elliott coauthored with colleagues Dr. Harold Clarke and Dr. Marianne Stewart, examines heuristic strategies in one specific instance of referendum voting on climate change policy. That paper is slated to appear in the *Journal of Political Science Research Methods*. Dr. Elliott is also working on another invited contribution to a book project that honors an important figure in the mathematics of computational complexity, Professor Newton da Costa. This particular piece explores in more theoretical terms how issues of computational complexity, Godelian incompleteness and the possible limitations of classical logic are related to our understanding of how decisions are made. Another research paper that reflects both the faculty member’s interest in science and technology issues with Dr. Elliott’s longstanding interest in complexity, and co-authored with professor Brian Berry, speculates on the evolution of technology over the next half century and the possible ramifications of technological evolution within complex and uncertain environments.
In addition to these more technical research efforts, Dr. Elliott is also completing a book-length project that examines American politics and history using various counterfactuals and alternatives. Many have wondered, for example, what would have happened if Lincoln had not been assassinated, or if Pearl Harbor had never occurred. How would the world be different? This book, tentatively entitled “What If...” tries to answer these kinds of questions in a series of chapters ranging from the question of what if the United States had never sought independence from England, to the very contemporary issue of a possible alternative outcome to the Bush-Gore election. A different book project that is coming to a conclusion is in large part based on Dr. Elliott’s interest in science and technology kinds of issues and a longstanding personal fascination with science education and his life-long addiction to science fiction. In an effort to combine both worlds, he has co-authored a small book that seeks to use science fiction to teach teens and pre-teens about science and encourage young people, and especially females, to consider careers in science and technology.