UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS CHICAGO

Center for
Financial Security
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Retirement & Disability
Research Center

# Social-insurance Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF)

# Policy Memo

Each SURF participant is required to write and present a policy memo. You will work in pairs.

**Requirements:** Pick a topic related to the social safety net. Write a report (minimum 3 pages, 12pt font, single spaced - excluding any tables or figures) about this topic. The memo must include at least 2 tables and/or figures.

Some potential policy topics will be provided, but each memo should look at a program, policy, or issue the fellow is interested in researching and finding answers to. For example, how has SSI participation changed during the COVID pandemic? How much would minimum wage workers in each state earn in Social Security benefits?

Each fellow should spend time learning more about the program or policy by reading program details (for example, from the Social Security website or academic articles) and finding data source(s) to help answer the topic/question. Feel free to ask instructors for guidance on finding appropriate data or readings.

We will have some SURF time dedicated to helping you work on the project. However, much of the work will need to be completed outside of the SURF time period.

**Due Date:** On the last SURF date (June 9th), each participating team will submit their written policy memo and give a 10-minute presentation to the Social Security Administration as to what they found.