Call for Participants:  
2015 Summer Institute:  
Standards in Society  
July 12-25, 2015  
Drexel University, Philadelphia  
Supported by Drexel University and the National Institute of Standards and Technology

The program in History at Drexel University invites applications from graduate students in all disciplines for participation in a two-week summer institute, “Standards in Society,” to be held in Philadelphia, July 12-25, 2015. Participation in the institute, which involves no cost to students and includes housing and meals on Drexel’s campus, is open to masters and doctoral students at any stage, working in all science, engineering, social science and humanities fields. Through seminars, field trips and conversations with scholars and practitioners, this innovative two-week course will support students’ critical inquiry around the performance, safety, and materials standards that have shaped industry and consumerism worldwide.

Standards have played a role in historical and contemporary debates on environmental risk, public health, economic competition, workforce preparation, and other emergent global concerns and this institute will enhance students’ understanding of the technical, legal and ethical aims of standards. Exploring a wide range of scientific and regulatory episodes, we will draw on international examples of standardization efforts in food-related, agricultural, infrastructural, biomedical, pharmaceutical, electronics and other sectors. Institute participants will learn to detect the legal and political interests that have shaped technical standards across different sectors and to trace the role of standards in broader patterns of global economic and social change. In a series of hands-on exercises students will analyze standards and policy documents and consider implications for practice.

Throughout, we will approach standards as building blocks of modern societies, helping students to frame future standards-related research inquiries in engineering, natural and social sciences, or the humanities.

Applicants should provide a letter explaining their interest in attending the institute, a CV, and the names of two persons who may be asked to provide letters of reference; materials should be submitted by email by December 31, 2014. Participants will be notified by February 1, 2015. Applications and requests for further information should be sent by email to Prof. Amy Slaton, Department of History and Politics, Drexel University, at: slatonae@drexel.edu