Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program

The Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship Program was established in 1988 in response to a nationwide concern with increasing the number of faculty members from underrepresented minority groups in higher education. In 2003, the Mellon Foundation renamed the program the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program, reaffirmed its commitment to the program, and broadened its mission.

The program aims to encourage underrepresented groups (for example, Native Americans, Latino/as, and African-Americans) and other U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are committed to eradicating racial disparities to develop their academic interests to the fullest, to pursue a Ph.D. and academic careers in the following fields: Anthropology, Area Studies, Art History, Classics, Computer Science, Demography, Earth Science, Ecology, English, Ethnomusicology, Foreign Languages and Linguistics, Geology, History, Literature, Mathematics, Musicology, Philosophy, Physics, Political Theory, Religion, and Sociology.

THE PROGRAM

The Fellowship Program provides students with faculty mentors who work closely with them for two years. Guided by his or her faculty mentor, each student works on developing an article-length project—from proposal to finished product—during the four semesters in the program. The program also provides the fellows with stipends while they pursue their projects, both during the academic year and in the summer. These stipends should relieve students of the need for non-academic employment during the school year and for most or all of the summer.

In addition, in an effort to remove the burden of debt that often prevents students from embarking on graduate study, the program will repay up to $10,000 of the fellow’s undergraduate or graduate loans upon completion of a Ph.D. in a Mellon-designated field.

In recent years, Cornell Mellon fellows have gone on to graduate school at Yale University, Princeton University, Columbia University, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Virginia, and the University of Michigan, among other institutions of higher learning.
1. Academic promise
2. Interest in pursuing an academic career in a Mellon-designated field of study.
3. Potential for serving as a mentor and teacher for a wide variety of students.
5. Demonstrated commitment to increasing opportunities for underrepresented minorities, breaking down stereotypes, increasing cross-racial and ethnic understanding, and enabling others to better understand persons of different races and ethnicities.
6. Commitment to participating fully and enthusiastically in all aspects of the MMUF program, including attendance at conferences and meetings.
7. Status as US citizen or permanent resident.

HOW DO I APPLY?
1. Consult with Senior Assistant Dean Chad Coates (G55 Goldwin Smith Hall) for an application.
2. Submit ALL of the following to Kelli Bucci, MMUF program assistant (172 Goldwin Smith Hall) by the application deadline, Monday, March 30, 2015.
   a. application form
   b. official transcript
   c. the names of instructors you have asked to write letters of recommendation
   d. 3-page essay (typed, double spaced) in which you propose a research project for next year. Describe as concretely as possible the question(s) you are attempting to answer and how you will go about answering it/them. You should also supply names of one or two faculty members who might be good mentors for the project.
   e. 1- to 2-page essay (typed, double spaced) in which you describe how you have demonstrated your commitment to increasing opportunities for underrepresented minorities, breaking down stereotypes, increasing cross-racial and ethnic understanding, and/or enabling others to better understand persons of different races and ethnicities.

THE SELECTION PROCESS
All applications are carefully reviewed by the coordinators and the advisory committee, which selects the fellows.

COORDINATORS
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MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:
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Chad O. Coates  
Assistant Dean, College of Arts & Sciences
Eric Cheyfitz  
Professor, Department of English
Vilma Santiago-Irizarry  
Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology
Dagmawi Woubshet  
Associate Professor, Department of English

SELECTION CRITERIA
Fellows are normally selected in the sophomore year. Up to five students are chosen each year.

loan debt assistance

march 30 deadline

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