MMUF
Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
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Benjamin Elijah Mays was born in 1895 in South Carolina and graduated from Bates College in Maine in 1920. While obtaining his master’s degree and doctorate from the University of Chicago, he was ordained into the Baptist ministry. He taught at Morehouse College and at South Carolina State College. From 1934 to 1940, Mays served as dean of the Howard University School of Religion and then moved on to the presidency of Morehouse College, a position he held with distinction for the next quarter of a century. He also served his community well, becoming the first black president of the Atlanta school board.

Mays spoke early and often against segregation and for education. He received nearly thirty honorary doctorates and other honors and awards, including election to the Schomburg Honor Roll of Race Relations (one of a dozen major leaders so honored). He was a model for one of his Morehouse students, Martin Luther King, Jr., and he served the young minister as an unofficial senior advisor. Mays gave the eulogy at King’s funeral. Among his books were the first sociological study of African-American religion, *The Negro’s Church*, published in 1933; *The Negro’s God*, of 1938; *Disturbed About Man*, of 1969; and his autobiography *Born to Rebel*, of 1971. These books reveal a combination of sharp intellect, religious commitment and prophetic conviction.
Mission Statement

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was established as a nonprofit philanthropic organization in June of 1969 with a mission to “aid and promote such religious, charitable, scientific, literary, and educational purposes as may be in the furtherance of the public welfare or tend to promote the well-doing or well-being of mankind.” In 1988, under this broad charter, the Foundation made a long-term commitment to help remedy the serious shortage of faculty of color in higher education through the Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) program.

In 2003, the Foundation reaffirmed its commitment and broadened the mission of MMUF. The name of the program was changed to the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program to symbolically connect the mission to the stellar educational achievements of Dr. Benjamin E. Mays.

The fundamental objective of MMUF is to increase the number of minority students, and others with a demonstrated commitment to eradicating racial disparities, who will pursue PhDs in core fields in the arts and sciences. The program aims to reduce over time the serious underrepresentation on the faculties of colleges and universities of individuals from certain minority groups, as well as to address the attendant educational consequences of these disparities.

The program serves the related goals of structuring campus environments so that they will be more conducive to improved racial and ethnic relations, and of providing role models for all youth.

MMUF aims to achieve its mission by identifying and supporting students of great promise and helping them to become scholars of the highest distinction.
Mentoring Philosophy

Mentoring embodies the core principles of the MMUF program, and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation recognizes the faculty/student relationship as the driving force beneath the sustainability and success of this program. Only a consistent commitment to this relationship will enable us to achieve the goals of the program and bring greater diversity to the academy.

As mentors, faculty members have the knowledge and responsibility to demystify the formal and informal aspects of earning a doctorate. Mentors also give fellows insight into the fulfillment and rewards of a career in scholarship and teaching.

In the mentoring relationship, the sharing of personal experience and the transmission of knowledge intersect in a trusting learning environment that provides opportunities for both mentor and student to stretch beyond their boundaries.
The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program is the centerpiece of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s initiatives to increase diversity in the faculty ranks of institutions of higher learning. The MMUF program is administered by over one hundred campus coordinators at 42 institutions and a consortium of 39 historically black colleges and universities within the membership of the UNCF.

As of November 2009, approximately 3,300 undergraduate students representing 24 cohorts have been selected as Mellon fellows. The student constituency has the distinction of high academic achievement with a 98% retention and graduation rate. To date, approximately 60% of MMUF students continue on to graduate school shortly following the baccalaureate, of which about 35% directly enter PhD programs. Many students elect to take time off before entering graduate school.

MMUF has been highly successful. To date, over 322 fellows have earned their PhDs and are now teaching around the country. Thirty-seven of these young scholars have achieved tenure. An additional 150 graduate students are at ABD level and are expected to complete their degrees within the next two years. There are approximately 540 students at various stages of graduate study, and MMUF continues to attract the best and the brightest undergraduates.

In December 2009 The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation renewed its support of MMUF, continuing its steadfast commitment to increasing the diversity of higher education.
Program Structure & Components
Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program

Program Structure

The MMUF program began with eight participating members in 1988 and has grown to its current membership of 42 colleges and universities, plus the 39 UNCF member institutions.

Faculty members and/or academic administrators coordinate the campus-based programs. A director administers the UNCF project with the assistance of a five-person advisory board. Undergraduates are typically identified in the sophomore year and funded through the junior and senior years. Fellows with demonstrated academic ability and aspiration to pursue a doctorate degree are selected according to their research interest in specified fields, with recommendations from faculty, staff, and administrators. The fellowship provides students with many forms of support, including structured programming, faculty mentoring, term-time stipends for research activities, support for summer research, and repayment of undergraduate loans of up to $10,000 provided that the student pursues doctoral study in specified fields.

Although program structures vary from institution to institution, they follow a common set of general guidelines. It is expected that fellows will meet together regularly with scheduled forums, colloquia, and social opportunities for students and mentors to mix and mingle. Activities that help students to understand the academic environment and culture, and provide opportunities for them to develop their intellectual and social skills, are important for success in higher education careers. Cohort development in the form of occasions for students to share their aspirations and scholarship with each other and with wider communities is one of the key factors of MMUF’s success. The Foundation strongly encourages regional meetings for undergraduate fellows and institutional reunions for MMUF alumni as ways to keep students connected, motivated, and on track. MMUF’s success is a synergy of commitment and effort among students, faculty, mentors, and coordinators working together to change and diversify teaching and scholarship in higher education.

Moreover, the Foundation supports post-collegiate programs that complement and sustain the undergraduate initiative, and aid in the retention and persistence of graduate fellows. Graduate Initiatives administered by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) include conferences, program seminars, and pre-doctoral grants; those administered by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (WWNFF) consist of dissertation grants and travel and research grants. Postdoctoral opportunities include the PhD Retreat and the Preparing for the Professoriate Seminar hosted by the SSRC, as well as the Junior Faculty Enhancement Fellowship Program administered by WWNFF.
Core Components

**Research:** Each undergraduate fellow is required to conduct an individual research project under the guidance of a faculty mentor. Guided research is a foundation of MMUF and provides the opportunity to prepare for advanced scholarly work.

**Mentoring:** Each Mellon fellow is paired with a faculty mentor, with whom they are expected to meet on a regular basis. The mentor-fellow relationship is one of mutual respect and commitment. Students work with their mentors to develop their scholarly interests into research directions and design. Mentoring is a serious commitment of time and effort, and an integral aspect of the MMUF program.

**Meetings/Workshops:** All programs have regular meetings. Students come together to present their research, exchange ideas, and discuss various topics related to academic life and preparation for graduate school. Workshops are often conducted on topics such as taking the GRE, writing and research, public speaking, presenting at academic conferences, applying to graduate school and financial aid.

**Stipends:** Fellows receive stipends during the academic year so that they may have more time to focus on their academic work and research. Summer stipends are also awarded to conduct research and to travel.

### Mellon-Designated Fields

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<td>Art History</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>Political Theory</td>
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<td>Classics</td>
<td>Ethnomusicology</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>Foreign Languages</td>
<td>Musicology</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
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Students must formally apply to participate in the MMUF program. The application process generally includes a written statement of purpose, recommendation(s) from faculty member(s), an academic transcript, an interview with the selection committee, and other requirements according to institutional procedures.

The following criteria are weighed in selecting participants for MMUF:

- Academic promise
- Interest in pursuing an academic career in a Mellon-designated field
- Potential for serving as a mentor and teacher for a wide variety of students
- Race and ethnicity, in relation to their under-representation in designated fields of study
- 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
- Commitment to participating fully and enthusiastically in all aspects of the MMUF program, including attendance at conferences and meetings
- Status as a U.S. citizen or permanent resident (except for students at the University of Cape Town, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the University of the Western Cape in South Africa)
Online Survey

It is required that all participants in the MMUF program complete and submit an annual online survey to the Mellon Foundation. Campus coordinators must send the names and email addresses of all newly selected fellows to the Foundation, where they are entered officially into the MMUF central database. Students will then receive an email with their user ID, password, and instructions for completing the online Profile Form.

**All new fellows must complete and submit the Profile Form in order to become official members of the MMUF program.**

Continuing students in the program will receive an email reminder each year with instructions for completing the online Annual Update Form. **The Annual Update Form is required of all students, regardless of whether they pursue graduate school.**

For statistical and assessment purposes, it is imperative that the Foundation keep ongoing records of all students in the program. The web address for the online survey is [https://www.mmuf.org/survey](https://www.mmuf.org/survey).
Loan Repayment Summary

MUF students entering PhD programs in Mellon-designated fields are eligible for repayment of their undergraduate loans up to a maximum of $10,000. Only undergraduate debts accrued through Perkins, Stafford, or college loan programs qualify for repayment.

Procedures: Under the terms of the MMUF program, each undergraduate institution establishes its own procedure for facilitating the loan repayment process and record keeping. Coordinators work directly with their undergraduate financial aid offices. Generally, institutions require fellows to participate in an exit interview, during which time the undergraduate coordinators familiarize students with loan repayment procedures and provide them with necessary information to apply for repayment.

For each of the first four years of full-time graduate study, the Mellon Foundation, through students’ undergraduate institutions, will repay one-eighth (up to $1,250) of the fellows’ undergraduate debts. Thus, if students pursue full-time graduate study for four years, they will receive $5,000. When students complete the doctorate, they will qualify for an additional $5,000. Students are required to submit a loan deferment form and verify graduate enrollment when requesting payments.

If a student has undergraduate debt totaling less than $10,000, the remaining balance of loan repayment funds may be used to repay graduate loans. Graduate loans may only be repaid upon completion of the PhD. The total amount of loan repayment funds will not exceed $10,000 and may only be used toward designated educational loans from recognized lenders for graduate study.

Requirements: Loan repayment and other continuing benefits of the Mellon Mays program are available only to those students entering PhD programs within 39 months of graduating from college. Students entering PhD programs in Mellon-designated fields after being out of college longer than 39 months may write to the Associate Director of MMUF to be considered for continuing benefits on a case-by-case basis.
Graduate Student & Postdoctoral Opportunities for Mellon Fellows
A partner of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) administers the Mellon Mays Graduate Initiatives. Mellon fellows may participate in any of the events charted and described below.

**SSRC - Mellon Mays Graduate Initiatives - Eligibility Time Line**

**Summer Conference**
For first to third year graduate students, SSRC’s Summer Conference includes presentations and other activities that socialize fellows into the early years of doctoral training and into the national Mellon Mays community.

**Predoctoral Research Development Grant**
Available to second through fifth year students, this grant may be used for small scale, preliminary research and other activities that support the early investigation of data sources, field sites and archival materials.
Graduate Studies Enhancement Grant
Available to second through fifth year students, this grant may be used to defray the cost of conference travel, equipment, books, journal subscriptions, software and other necessary supplies.

Proposal Writing & Dissertation Development Seminar
Open to third to sixth year PhD students, this four-day seminar addresses common concerns arising in the process of preparing the dissertation proposal and in writing the dissertation itself. The seminar schedule includes a considerable amount of time for writing, a focus on individual projects in small group sessions, one-on-one consultations with Mellon faculty mentors, and training in the practice of collegial critique.

Preparing for the Professoriate Seminar
For fellows who have completed or are close to completing the dissertation, this three-day seminar focuses on preparing for the academic job market, and provides information about postdoctoral appointments, fellowships and other opportunities. There are presentations on the preparation of the CV, the composition of cover letters, and the drafting of an appropriate job talk as well as discussion about turning the dissertation into a book or a series of publishable articles, as appropriate.

Dissertation Writing Retreat
Open to advanced dissertation-stage fellows to assist them in finishing the writing process, this retreat is held twice annually and brings together 12-15 fellows for four days of independent work on the dissertation project. The Retreat supports the development of a structure for productivity with specific, self-defined marks of progress leading to dissertation completion.

PhD Retreat
Held in odd-numbered years beginning in 2007, the three-day PhD Retreat takes place in January during the academic winter break. It brings together Mellon PhDs to exchange ideas, network, and engage the key issues and challenges facing junior faculty. The program includes special sessions led by more senior Mellon PhDs, acclaimed editors, and leading researchers on teaching, publishing, doing research, transitioning into the administration, and attaining tenure.

Website: mellonmays.ssrc.org
Email: mellonmays@ssrc.org
A partner of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation administers the following opportunities to MMUF graduate students and/or PhDs:

**Travel & Research Grant**
Open to PhD candidates who have passed all comprehensive examinations, completed all course work for the degree, and selected a dissertation topic that has been approved by the dissertation advisor, this grant provides financial means to complete the research prior to the start of dissertation writing. Funding is for one summer or one semester of travel and/or research support.

**Dissertation Grant**
Open to PhD candidates who have completed all pre-dissertation requirements, this grant provides support to spend a year finishing the writing of the dissertation.

**Junior Faculty Career Enhancement Fellowship**
Open to junior faculty who have completed their third year of teaching and are preparing for tenure, this competitive program provides participants with a year-long sabbatical, a senior faculty mentor, and a three-day retreat.

Website: www.woodrow.org
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MMUF Contact Information

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www.mellon.org

www.mmuf.org
MMUF Participating Institutions

Barnard College
member since 1996

Bowdoin College
member since 1992

Brooklyn College
member since 1989

Brown University
member since 1992

Bryn Mawr College
member since 1988

California Institute of Technology
member since 1996

Carleton College
member since 1988

City College of New York
member since 1988

Columbia University
member since 1996

Connecticut College
member since 2008

Cornell University
member since 1988

Dartmouth College
member since 1989

Duke University
member since 1996

Emory University
member since 2000

Grinnell College
member since 2008

Harvard University
member since 1989

Haverford College
member since 2000

Heritage University
member since 2000

Hunter College
member since 1988

Macalester College
member since 2000

Northwestern University
member since 2008

Oberlin College
member since 1988

Princeton University
member since 1989

Queens College
member since 1989

Rice University
member since 1992

Smith College
member since 2000

Stanford University
member since 1989

Swarthmore College
member since 1988

UNCF
Allen University, Benedict College, Bennett College, Bethune-Cookman University, Claflin University, Clark Atlanta University, Dillard University, Edward Waters College, Fisk University, Florida Memorial University, Huston-Tillotson University, Interdenominational Theological Center, Jarvis Christian College, Johnson C. Smith University, Lane College, LeMoyne-Owen College, Livingstone College, Miles College, Morehouse College, Morris College, Oakwood University, Paine College, Paul Quinn College, Philander Smith College, Rust College, Saint Augustine's College, Saint Paul's College, Shaw University, Spelman College, Stillman College, Talladega College, Texas College, Tougaloo College, Tuskegee University, Virginia Union University, Voorhees College, Wilberforce University, Wiley College, and Xavier University.
member since 1989

University of California at Berkeley
member since 2008

University of California at Los Angeles
member since 2008

University of Cape Town
member since 2001

University of Chicago
member since 1988

University of Pennsylvania
member since 1988

University of Southern California
member since 1992

University of the Western Cape
member since 2008

University of the Witwatersrand
member since 2007

Washington University in St. Louis
member since 1992

Wellesley College
member since 1989

Wesleyan University
member since 1989

Whittier College
member since 2008

Williams College
member since 1989

Yale University
member since 1989