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. Established in 1988 by William G. Bowen, then the president of the Foundation, and Mellon program associate Henry Drewry, the MMUF program began with an initial cohort of eight member institutions.

A vibrant and dynamic democracy requires an educated, engaged, and informed citizenry. Much has been made of the pending demographic transition that predicts the rise of a majority-minority population in the United States by midcentury...yet demographic change alone is not sufficient. Rather, intentional programs designed to promote diversity are needed to maximize the development of talent, encourage full participation, and secure the benefits of democracy. We remain committed to both diversity and democracy.

--Earl Lewis, President, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Since then, the program has grown to include 48 member schools and consortia, including three South African universities and a consortium of historically black colleges and universities within the membership of the UNCF. As of 2016, nearly 5000 students have been selected as fellows, more than 580 of whom have earned the PhD and over 100 of whom are now tenured faculty members. The great majority of those who have completed the PhD hold or have held an appointment in the academy.
Mission

The fundamental objective of MMUF is to address, over time, the problem of underrepresentation in the academy at the level of college and university faculties. This goal can be achieved both by increasing the number of students from underrepresented minority groups (URM) who pursue PhDs and by supporting the pursuit of PhDs by students who may not come from traditional minority groups but have otherwise demonstrated a commitment to the goals of MMUF. The MMUF program is designed to encourage fellows to enter PhD programs that prepare students for professorial careers; it is not intended to support students who intend to go on to medical school, law school or other professional schools.
History

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was established as a nonprofit philanthropic organization in June 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, as it was then known. Henry Drewry, program associate at the Mellon Foundation and co-founder of MMUF with then-president of Mellon William G. Bowen, was MMUF’s first director.

MMUF began in 1988 with eight participating institutions: Bryn Mawr College, Carleton College, Cornell University, Hunter College, Oberlin College, Swarthmore College, the University of Chicago, and the University of Pennsylvania. The following year, eleven more schools joined the program: Brooklyn College, Dartmouth College, Harvard University, Princeton University, Queens College, Stanford University, the UNCF consortium of historically black colleges and universities, Wellesley College, Wesleyan University, Williams College, and Yale University.

Henry Drewry retired as program director in 1992 and was succeeded by Jacqueline Looney, formerly of Duke University. During Dr. Looney’s tenure, a total of ten new institutions joined the program: Bowdoin College, Brown University, City College of New York, Rice University, the University of Southern California, and Washington University in St. Louis, all in 1992; and Barnard College, California Institute of Technology, Columbia University, and Duke University, all in 1996.
Dr. Looney was succeeded as director in 1999 by Lydia English, formerly of Brown University. Dr. English brought fifteen new schools into the program: Emory University, Haverford College, Heritage University, Macalester College, Smith College, and the University of Cape Town in 2000-2001; and Connecticut College, Grinnell College, Northwestern University, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of the Witwatersrand, the University of the Western Cape, and Whittier College in 2007-2008.

Dr. Armando Bengochea, MMUF's current director, formerly worked with the MMUF programs at Brown University and Connecticut College during his 27-year career as a dean.

In 2003, the Foundation reaffirmed its commitment to, and broadened the mission of, MMUF. The name of the program was changed to the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program to symbolically connect the program's mission to the stellar educational achievements of Dr. Benjamin E. Mays. During Dr. English's tenure, the program produced its 100th PhD - and a few years later, its 200th PhD.

Dr. English retired in 2009 and was succeeded by Carlotta Arthur, formerly of Smith College. Dr. Arthur had previously been program officer for the Historically Black Colleges and Universities program area at Mellon. In 2009 the Mellon Foundation combined the HBCU program area and MMUF under the umbrella of a newly formed program area, Diversity Initiatives, of which Dr. Arthur became program officer and director. During her tenure, the program’s total number of PhDs produced reached and passed 300, then 400.

Dr. Arthur was succeeded as Diversity Initiatives program officer and MMUF director in 2012 by Armando Bengochea. Dr. Bengochea had previously coordinated or advised the MMUF programs at Brown University and Connecticut College. He brings 27 years’ experience working as an academic dean to the directorship of MMUF and the Diversity Initiatives program area. Dr. Bengochea's tenure has thus far seen the addition of four new institutions or consortia to MMUF: the consortium of Claremont Colleges, the University of California at Riverside, the University of New Mexico, and the University of Texas at Austin, all of which entered the program in 2014.
Dr. Benjamin E. Mays

Benjamin Elijah Mays was born in 1895 in Ninety-Six, a small town in South Carolina, to parents who had been born in slavery and freed at the end of the Civil War. Mays excelled as a student from an early age, and was driven throughout his youth by what he termed "an insatiable desire to get an education." In this he was in conflict with his father, who felt Mays' time would be better spent in working on the family's farm, but was steadily supported by his mother, who could not read or write. Beginning in a one-room rural schoolhouse, he absorbed all he could from a succession of local schools, graduating from the high school at Orangeburg's State College and entering college at Virginia Union in Richmond, Virginia. Determined to continue his university education outside the segregated South, Mays entered Bates College in Lewiston, Maine in 1917. Despite being one of a very few black students at Bates, Mays encountered little racial prejudice there and felt that his teachers and peers treated him as an equal. He wrote of his years at Bates, "For the first time...I felt at home in the universe."

Influenced by one of his high school teachers, Mays had set his sights on the University of Chicago for graduate study, and entered the Divinity School there in 1921. He interrupted his graduate studies multiple times to accept teaching jobs, including one at Morehouse College, and positions with the National Urban League and the YMCA, but he always returned to his chosen course, earning his master's degree in 1925 and his doctorate in 1935. During these years, he was also ordained into the Baptist ministry. 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. Mays spoke early and often against segregation and for education. 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 benediction at the close of the program at the 1963 March on Washington, as well as the eulogy at King's funeral in 1968. Among his many 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. Mays received nearly thirty honorary doctorates and other honors and awards, including election to the Schomburg Honor Roll of Race Relations (one of only a dozen major leaders to be so honored). He died in 1984 and is buried on the grounds of the Morehouse campus.
Eligible Fields of Study

To be eligible for selection as an MMUF fellow, students must be planning to study in one or more of the below fields:

- Anthropology and Archaeology
- Area/Cultural/Ethnic/Gender Studies
- Art History
- Classics
- Geography and Population Studies
- English
- Film, Cinema and Media Studies (theoretical focus)
- Musicology, Ethnomusicology and Music Theory
- Foreign Languages and Literatures
- History
- Linguistics
- Literature
- Performance Studies (theoretical focus)
- Philosophy and Political Theory
- Religion and Theology
- Sociology
- Theater (theoretical focus)

Interdisciplinary Studies: Interdisciplinary areas of study may be eligible if they have one or more eligible fields at their core, but must be approved by the MMUF staff at the Mellon Foundation on a case-by-case basis. Please note that interdisciplinary education graduate programs, even those that incorporate one or more eligible fields, are not eligible for MMUF graduate benefits.
Eligibility

In order to be eligible for MMUF, students must first be enrolled at one of the MMUF member institutions. The fellowship is not awarded directly to individual students; instead, the Mellon Foundation awards grants to the program’s member institutions, which then select fellows and administer the program on each campus.

Students must formally apply to their campus MMUF program to be considered for selection as fellows. The application process varies from campus to campus, but generally includes a written statement of purpose, one or more recommendations from faculty members, an academic transcript, an interview with the selection committee, and other requirements according to each institution’s procedures.

Fellows are generally chosen in the spring of their sophomore year after their majors have been declared, though there is some variation from institution for institution. In a few cases, fellows have been selected as juniors or seniors.

The following criteria are weighed in selecting participants for MMUF:

- Academic promise (some schools have a minimum GPA cutoff, others do not);
- Interest in pursuing an academic career in an eligible field (a list of the eligible fields can be viewed here);
- Potential for serving as a mentor and teacher for a wide variety of students;
- Race and ethnicity, in relation to their underrepresentation in designated fields of study;
- Demonstrated commitment to the goals of MMUF: to reduce the serious underrepresentation on faculties of individuals from minority groups, as well as to address the consequences of these racial disparities for the educational system itself and for the larger society that it serves. Examples of such commitment might include serious undergraduate research into racial disparities in higher education; a strong record of tutoring students from underrepresented groups; sustained mentoring of children from such groups; or other forms of community service or leadership activities in campus or off-campus organizations.
- Availability for, and commitment to, full and enthusiastic participation 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 Western Cape, and the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa).

All students are welcome to apply for MMUF, though applications are particularly encouraged from African-Americans, Latinos and Latinas, Native Americans, and other underrepresented minorities (URM).
Program at a Glance

The MMUF program is coordinated on each of its member campuses by faculty members and academic administrators who select their institution's undergraduate fellows, typically in the sophomore year. Fellows have demonstrated academic ability and an aspiration to pursue a doctoral degree in selected humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences. The fellowship provides fellows with many forms of support, including regular, structured programming; faculty mentoring; term-time stipends for research activities; support for summer research; and repayment of undergraduate loans up to $10,000 (provided that fellows pursue doctoral study in eligible fields).

Although program structures vary from institution to institution, they follow a common set of general guidelines. It is required that fellows meet together regularly with scheduled forums, colloquia, and social opportunities for students and mentors to interact. These events incorporate activities that help fellows to understand the culture and environment of academia and provide them with opportunities to develop their intellectual and social skills. Cohort development, in the form of occasions for students to share their aspirations and scholarship with one another and with wider academic communities, is a key factor in MMUF's success. The Foundation strongly encourages participation in MMUF's regional conferences for undergraduate fellows and institutional reunions for MMUF alumni as ways to keep fellows connected, motivated, and on track. The program'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.

MMUF builds its campus programs around the interrelated ideas of scholarly research, faculty mentoring, the cohort effect, and community support networks.

The MMUF program also includes post-collegiate programming that complements and sustains the undergraduate initiative, and supports fellows as they enter and complete graduate school. Through grants to the Social Science Research Council and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, two nonprofit organizations with proven track records in training graduate students and academics, the Mellon Foundation provides PhD-bound MMUF fellows with a targeted array of graduate initiatives, including conferences, writing seminars and grants designed to support fellows at critical junctures in graduate school. MMUF's support continues into fellows' postdoctoral careers with two events designed for MMUF PhDs: the SSRC's PhD Retreat and Woodrow Wilson's Junior Faculty Career
Enhancement Fellowship program.

In the service of its larger mission to strengthen diversity by addressing the problem of underrepresentation on college and university faculties, MMUF builds its campus programs around the interrelated ideas of scholarly research, faculty mentoring, the cohort effect, and community support networks. To put these values into practice, the MMUF program incorporates a number of strategically chosen program elements. While no one fixed set of practices would be universally appropriate across a program whose member institutions range from Research I universities to small liberal arts colleges to historically black colleges to New York City public institutions to South African universities, the below components are common to all MMUF campus programs.

**MMUF’s Core Values**

**Research**

The MMUF program is, first and foremost, a research program. Research lies at the heart of a professional academic’s work, and research experience and production are essential at each stage of the career of a professor-in-training, from the graduate school application process to the tenure process and beyond. As future academics, MMUF’s fellows require a thorough understanding of the principles and methods of academic research and a firm confidence in the practice of it; thus the MMUF program is designed to give undergraduate fellows intensive and ongoing research experience, beginning at an earlier point in their careers than is typical for most college undergraduates. During his or her undergraduate years, each MMUF fellow is expected to conduct an individual research project under the guidance of a faculty mentor, culminating in a final thesis paper or presentation during the senior year.

**Mentoring**

The MMUF program is built on the proven notion that mentoring is of critical importance in supporting the growth of future scholars of color and others committed to the program’s mission. Each undergraduate Mellon fellow is paired with at least one faculty mentor, with whom s/he is expected to meet on a regular basis. Fellows work with their mentors to develop their scholarly interests into research directions and projects. As mentors, faculty members have the knowledge and responsibility to demystify the formal and informal aspects of conducting research, applying to graduate school, competing effectively once in a graduate program, earning the doctorate and pursuing faculty careers. We also encourage undergraduate fellows to cultivate mentoring relationships with MMUF fellows who are advancing through graduate school and into academic careers - and we hope and expect that fellows will themselves become mentors to younger fellows as their own careers advance.

**The Cohort Effect and Building Support Networks**

MMUF fellows are typically chosen in cohorts of five students per campus per academic year (with the exception of the Claremont Colleges and UNCF consortia, which select 10 and 25 fellows, respectively, from across their member institutions each year), so that at any given moment there will be between ten and fifteen fellows on each member campus. The intention of this selection process is to build a sense of cohort and community among fellows who enter the program at the same time, so that fellows’ growth as scholars can be enhanced by the feedback and support of like-minded peers - a cohort effect that is mutually beneficial for all. We hope - and the program’s history has demonstrated - that the bonds fellows initially form within their undergraduate cohorts can be the basis of larger MMUF support networks that far outlast their undergraduate years.
MMUF’s Core Program Components

Meetings and Workshops

All MMUF campus programs are required to hold meetings at least twice per month. Meetings are directed by campus coordinators and others designated by the coordinators, who in some cases may include fellows’ faculty mentors. 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, working effectively with mentors, presenting at academic conferences, applying to graduate school and obtaining graduate funding.

Fellow Stipends
Fellows receive modest stipends during the academic year so that they may have more time to focus on their academic work and research. Fellows are also awarded summer stipends after the sophomore and junior years to conduct research that may include related travel.

Undergraduate Conferences
The regional MMUF undergraduate conferences, which in most cases take place annually, bring together MMUF fellows and coordinators from member institutions in the same geographic region. The conferences allow fellows to present their own research, critique the research of other fellows, make connections in the program outside their own institutions, and gain an early sense of what the academic conference experience is like. There are seven regional conferences in all; the member institutions that typically participate in each are listed below. In addition, some of the larger regions conduct mini-conferences which split the list of participating schools according to geographic proximity, and which alternate with the larger all-region events.

Northeast
Bowdoin College
Brown University
Connecticut College
Dartmouth College
Harvard University
Smith College
Wellesley College
Wesleyan University
Williams College
Wesleyan University

New York City
Barnard College
Brooklyn College
City College of New York
Columbia University
Hunter College
Queens College

Midatlantic
Bryn Mawr College
Cornell University
Haverford College
Princeton University
Swarthmore College
University of Pennsylvania

Midwest
Carleton College
Grinnell College
Macalester College
Northwestern University
Oberlin College
University of Chicago
Washington University in St. Louis

Southeast
Duke University
Emory University
Rice University
The UNCF Consortium
University of Texas at Austin

West Coast
California Institute of Technology
Claremont Colleges Consortium
Heritage University
Stanford University
University of California at Berkeley
University of California at Los Angeles
University of California at Riverside
University of New Mexico
University of Southern California
Whittier College

South Africa
University of Cape Town
University of the Western Cape
University of the Witwatersrand

The MMUF Undergraduate Journal

Every year since 1995, the Harvard University MMUF program has published the MMUF Undergraduate Journal, a collection of scholarly articles by undergraduate Mellon fellows from all member institutions. The aim of this rigorously edited journal is not only to serve as a showcase for fellows’ research and scholarship, but to provide undergraduates with an early glimpse into the processes and expectations of scholarly publishing.

Graduate School Preparation

In a larger sense, all undergraduate MMUF program activities further the goal of preparing fellows for graduate school. More specifically, however, each campus is tasked with incorporating into its program strategic lectures, courses or activities to assist fellows with the practical aspects of applying to graduate school. These may include GRE prep courses, guidance on writing personal statements, visits to nearby graduate schools or from graduate school recruiters, and connecting fellows with external graduate school preparation programs.
Each year, five new MMUF fellows are selected from among applicants in the rising junior classes at each of the 46 MMUF member institutions (with the exception of the Claremont Colleges and UNCF consortia, which select a total of 10 and 25 fellows, respectively, from across their member institutions). These newly selected cohorts of fellows join the previously selected cohorts of rising and graduating senior fellows in their institution’s campus MMUF program, where they are provided with mentoring and financial support as they prepare for entry into PhD programs and eventual careers as scholars and faculty members. While each campus MMUF program is provided flexibility to tailor its structure to its institutional needs, strengths and academic calendar, the timeline below gives a general sense of the program milestones and obligations undergraduates can expect to encounter during each phase of their college careers. While this timeline assumes a semester calendar, the general chronology of program milestones will be similar at schools on the quarter or trimester system.

### Undergraduate Program Timeline

**Sophomore year, spring semester**

At most member institutions on semester calendars, students apply to MMUF and fellows are selected in the spring of their sophomore year. For member institutions on the quarter system, the timing of selection varies but is generally slightly later.

**Sophomore year, summer**

At many institutions, newly selected fellows participate in structured summer programs designed to acclimate them to the research process and prepare them for their academic-year MMUF work. If fellows do not participate in structured programs on their own or other
campuses, they must design with their coordinator and mentor a program of independent research for the summer months.

**Junior year, fall semester**

The first full year of MMUF work begins. In addition to regular meetings with their coordinators, mentors and peer fellows, most fellows will attend the undergraduate MMUF conference for their region. Some fellows choose to study abroad for a semester or year while meeting their MMUF commitments via arrangements worked out in advance with their coordinators and mentors.

**Junior year, spring semester**

Regular program meetings and activities continue; fellows whose regional undergraduate conference did not take place the previous fall will attend it this semester. New cohorts of MMUF fellows are selected from the rising junior class, while senior fellows are preparing for graduation and graduate school. Many institutions build GRE preparation into their junior year MMUF programming.

**Junior year, summer**

Fellows generally participate in formal, campus-based research programs; others will travel to conduct research or receive language training pertinent to their fields. Many fellows begin work on an honors thesis.

**Senior year, fall semester**

Fellows check in with coordinators and mentors regarding the status of their summer research; seniors are working toward the culmination of their undergraduate MMUF research in a formal thesis paper, a presentation, or both. For those seniors applying to graduate school for the fall immediately after their college graduations, the application process begins or is already under way; others are taking the GRE and preparing applications for a later period.

**Senior year, spring semester**

Graduating fellows complete and submit their MMUF research projects; many institutions require formal, public research presentations by fellows. Seniors are also required to sit for MMUF exit interviews, in which they update their coordinators on their postgraduate plans and contact information. They also receive reminders about the graduate benefits available to them if they enter PhD programs in approved fields.
Graduate Students

Fellows at the SSRC’s annual summer conference for MMUF graduate students.

MMUF After the Undergraduate Years

Who are the SSRC and Woodrow Wilson, and what do they do for MMUF? After graduating from college, MMUF fellows enter PhD programs at so many different graduate institutions that it would be impractical for the Mellon Foundation to funnel program support to them through their institutions, as the undergraduate MMUF program does. Instead, the Foundation provides graduate school support for MMUF fellows on a national level by awarding grants to two nonprofit organizations with long experience in administering academic programs: the Social Science Research Council, headquartered in Brooklyn, New York, and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, headquartered in Princeton, New Jersey.

With supervision from the MMUF staff, the SSRC and Woodrow Wilson then administer a broad array of events and grants designed to provide targeted support to fellows enrolled in eligible PhD programs and to those who have completed the doctorate. The MMUF program staffs at the SSRC and Woodrow Wilson thus fill roles in the lives of MMUF graduate students that are similar in some respects to the roles played during their undergraduate years by their campus coordinators.
The MMUF-SSRC Graduate Initiatives Program

The Graduate Student Summer Conference

Since its inception in 1993, the Graduate Student Summer Conference has been the flagship event of the MMUF-SSRC Graduate Initiatives program. Mellon fellows in their first through third years of graduate school, along with graduating seniors who have been accepted into qualifying PhD programs, are eligible to attend; fellows may attend the event twice during their years of eligibility.

The conference provides a forum for skills exchange, cohort building, and the development of professional proficiencies such as delivering effective presentations and maximizing research support. The event exposes fellows to a broad range of institutional and intellectual issues and serves as a bridge between college and graduate school that strengthens fellows' dedication to pursuing a doctorate in one of the core arts and sciences, and supports their retention in the early graduate school years. For more than fifteen years, the conference has consistently proven itself to be an invaluable resource for early-stage graduate student fellows. Many past participants report gaining both a deep sense of renewal in their commitment to earning the PhD in the face of possible obstacles, and a scholarly community to which they may turn for support.

The conference provides tools and skills for navigating the early years of graduate school, for negotiating institutional and departmental politics, utilizing research resources at the graduate level, optimizing summer research opportunities, and identifying and working with mentors. Panel presentations of fellows' research, thematic roundtables, presentations by senior scholars, and other activities are also a part of the conference program. MMUF fellows who have completed PhDs contribute to the conference by serving as workshop leaders, panel discussants and moderators. The conference takes advantage of the intergenerational nature of the Mellon community, providing opportunities for younger fellows to interact with senior scholars. Such informal networking is crucial for allowing fellows to build peer and professional relationships that will serve them for years to come.

The Proposal Writing and Dissertation Development Seminar

Building on the institutional strength of the SSRC as a pioneer in graduate student training, and on the mentoring component that distinguishes MMUF, the MMUF-SSRC Graduate Initiatives Program implemented a series of programs that target the specific needs of fellows as they progress toward the PhD. The first of these programs is the Proposal Writing and Dissertation Development Seminar (PWDDS), which strategically supports graduate students in their third through sixth years.

The PWDDS offers fellows opportunities for intensive exchange and feedback on work at two critical stages of graduate training: firstly, during the proposal writing process when students focus on formulating intellectually sound proposals which lend themselves to completion in a reasonable time frame and are competitive in fellowship contests; and secondly, during the dissertation-writing process, when the quality of data organization, synthesis and analysis is most essential. The proposal-writing and dissertation tracks take place in parallel during the week-long seminar, and participants are selected through a competitive application process. Significant time is allotted for individual work, and fellows present their projects to their respective groups several times. Fellows find that this intensive seminar is an ideal setting in which to receive collegial critique and feedback. Each past participant reports making significant progress on the dissertation project as a result of the work completed during the PWDDS, with over 90% later reporting having successfully defended their proposals or completed their dissertations in a timely manner.
The Graduate Writing Seminar

The Graduate Writing Seminar (GWS) was developed specifically to advance the progress of fellows doing graduate studies in South African universities. Participants work on a range of graduate writing projects required for the South African course of study, engaging in peer review and consulting with Mellon PhD faculty. The structure and outcomes are parallel to those of the Proposal Writing and Dissertation Development Seminar held in the U.S. each March. Participants leave the seminar with concrete next steps to help them progress in their writing projects and move forward in their pursuit of the graduate degree.

The Dissertation Writing Retreat

A significant number of dissertation writers in MMUF report having created informal writing clusters of two, three or four fellows who maintained a regular schedule of contact and provided one another with substantive feedback on work according to a mutually developed calendar. The MMUF-SSRC Graduate Initiatives Program seeks to make a similar support network available to each dissertation-stage fellow in the sixth graduate year and beyond.

To that end, the SSRC has instituted Dissertation Writing Retreats to round out their step-by-step series of program offerings. Held each year on the campus of an MMUF institution and facilitated by a Mellon PhD, the Dissertation Writing Retreat (DWR) brings together 12 to 15 post-sixth-year graduate students for five days of intensive writing. Writing will be punctuated by structured time for each fellow to create an individual 12-month workplan with other Retreat participants. The primary feature of the workplan will be a structure for accountability to colleagues; participants will establish a calendar by which to exchange new or revised work by email and provide one another with feedback on progress.

The DWR directly reflects best practices learned from fellows who successfully completed the dissertation after an extended ABD period. Unlike the Proposal Writing and Dissertation Development Seminar, the DWR focuses support specifically on fellows who face challenges requiring high levels of self-direction to overcome. The DWR offers support for the development of a structure for productivity with specific, self-defined marks of progress leading to dissertation completion. Eligibility will be based on the viability of completing the dissertation within a 12-month period as determined by a committee of senior scholars and SSRC staff.

The Preparing for the Professoriate Seminar

The Preparing for the Professoriate (PFP) Seminar is designed to give fellows who have completed, or are close to completing, the dissertation the set of skills they will need to transition from being young researchers to being successful negotiators of their first faculty appointments. Rather than focusing on the presentation and critique of fellows’ academic work, this seminar hones the skills that fellows need to navigate the professional challenges they face in the years immediately following completing of the PhD.

While the major emphasis is on preparing fellows for the academic job market, the PFP also includes information about postdoctoral fellowships and other opportunities. Mellon PhD faculty members from a wide cross-section of institutions facilitate the Seminar. In addition to practical issues, such as presentation of the CV and job talks, they discuss a variety of intangible issues, including defining one’s academic identity, assessing the position you want and finding a proper fit, postdocs, interviewing, defining one’s scholarship for the job market, and the “view from the search committee.” Fellows get a level of attention far beyond what is offered by institutional workshops on the academic job market, and report being better prepared for the job search process because they’ve gained a sense of their individual next steps.
The Predoctoral Research Grants

The Predoctoral Research Grants offer modest supplementary financial assistance to Mellon fellows to help support the quality and timely completion of their doctoral work - particularly at benchmark moments in their graduate educations. Two predoctoral awards of up to $5000 are offered to fellows receiving fellowships and other institutional support during the second through fifth graduate years; a special award of up to $2,500 is available for fellows beyond the sixth graduate year who are writing the dissertation. We recommend that fellows carefully plan how they will use their grant opportunities, as they have been designed to allow maximum flexibility. Fellows should consider how to best allocate the available funds during their years of eligibility.

The SSRC offers three types of predoctoral research grants: the Predoctoral Research Development (PRD) grant, the Graduate Studies Enhancement (GSE) grant, and the Dissertation Completion Grant (DCG). The PRD grant is available to second- through fifth-year students and is subject to a $3,000 maximum. (South African fellows are eligible for this grant in their first year.) It may be used for small-scale, preliminary research and other activities that support the early investigation of data sources, field sites, data sets and archival materials. The PRD may be received once per fellow.

The GSE grant is available to second- through fifth-year students and is subject to a $1,500 annual maximum. (South African fellows are eligible for this grant in their first year.) It may be used to defer the cost of conference travel, equipment, books, journal subscriptions, and other necessary supplies. The GSE may be awarded to an individual fellow up to four times. The sum of PRD and GSE grants may not exceed $5,000.

The DCG is a special award available to fellows in the seventh year of graduate study or beyond who receive little or no institutional support. The DCG is subject to a $2,500 maximum and may be received only once. Fellows must provide a timeline reflecting their plans to complete the dissertation within twelve months of the award date.

The MMUF-SSRC Lecture Series

The most important tenets of the MMUF program are mentoring and network-building. The MMUF-SSRC Lecture Series brings together undergraduates, coordinators, graduate students, and faculty in each region for intellectual engagement and community-building. Each talk gives a Mellon PhD the opportunity to share current research, while other attending fellows may capitalize on contact made at these events to build on their peer and professional networks and to continue to stay in communication with each other. A directory of all attendees is provided so that they may keep in touch with one another. The Lecture Series strengthens and sustains the Mellon Mays network, builds speakers' CVs, and showcases the work of Mellon fellows. To date, lectures have taken place in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Boston, Atlanta and southern California.

Woodrow Wilson's Grants for MMUF Graduate Students

The Travel and Research Grant

The MMUF-WW Travel and Research Grants, administered by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, are available to MMUF fellows enrolled in qualifying PhD programs. The grants provide eligible graduate students with the financial means to complete their research prior to the start of dissertation writing. Funding is for one summer or semester of travel and/or research support. Awards are based on the scholarly merit of the individual applications received.
The Travel and Research Grants provide up to $5,000 for a period of one summer or one semester. Grants may be used to cover dissertation research, travel to/from research sites, and photocopying of documents and/or the purchase of access to databases for research purposes. The award may not be used to purchase computer software or hardware, and may not be used for general living expenses.

**The Dissertation Grant**

The **MMUF-WW Dissertation Grants** are available to MMUF fellows enrolled in eligible PhD programs. The grants provide graduate students at the critical ABD stage of their doctoral programs with support to spend a year finishing the writing of the dissertation.

The dissertation grant offers up to $20,000 for a 12-month period. Fellows are encouraged to apply for dissertation grants from their home institutions. Winners who do not receive dissertation support from their own institutions are eligible to receive the full amount. The grant will be reduced by funding from other sources to ensure that each awardee receives a maximum award from all sources of $20,000. Woodrow Wilson will ask graduate schools to waive tuition for winners of the Dissertation Grant. Candidates must arrange for their own health insurance coverage.

**Loan Repayment**

MMUF fellows who enter PhD programs in eligible fields are eligible for repayment of their undergraduate loan up to a maximum of $10,000. Only undergraduate debts accrued through Perkins, Stafford, Parent PLUS, or college loan programs qualify for repayment.

Procedures

Each undergraduate institution establishes its own procedure for facilitating the loan repayment process and record keeping; thus, fellows requesting loan repayment should contact the MMUF coordinator at their undergraduate institution to initiate the process. Each undergraduate coordinator works directly with their institution's undergraduate financial aid offices to disburse repayment funds. Generally, MMUF institutions require fellows to participate in an exit interview, during which time the undergraduate coordinators can familiarize student with their campus' loan repayment procedures and provide them with the necessary information to apply for repayment.

For each of the first four years of full-time enrollment in a qualifying PhD program, the Mellon Foundation, through fellows’ undergraduate institutions, will repay one-eighth (up to $1,250) of fellows’ undergraduate debts; thus, if students pursue full-time graduate study for four years, they will receive $5,000. When fellows complete the doctorate, they will qualify for an additional $5,000 payment, which must be requested within three years after their receipt of the PhD. Fellows are required to submit a loan deferment form and verify graduate enrollment when requesting payments.

If a fellow 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 may 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 MMUF program are available only to those fellows who enroll in PhD programs in eligible fields within 39 months of graduating from college. (Terminal master's programs are not eligible for loan repayment.) Fellows entering eligible PhD programs 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.