

Benefits /

Mellon Mays Fellows receive mentorship, financial support, and guidance on how to prepare for graduate work.

Program benefits include:

- ⇒ One-on-one mentorship from a faculty member
- ⇒ Experience with an independent research project
- ⇒ Close relationships with a cohort of like-minded scholars
- ⇒ \$3,600 academic year stipends for research
- ⇒ \$3,900 summer research funds
- ⇒ Funds to cover research-related travel and research expenses, including MMUF regional conferences
- ⇒ Eligibility for up to \$10,000 in undergraduate loan repayment if fellows pursue Ph.D.s in select fields
- ⇒ Personal interaction with professors, visiting lectures & scholars
- ⇒ Workshops on writing, presentation, and professional communication skills
- ⇒ Assistance with GRE and graduate school preparation

How /

The online application opens in the fall and is due in February. Plan ahead by getting to know your professors and other faculty who can write letters of recommendation.

Visit our website for more information or email one of the program coordinators to schedule a one-on-one meeting.

About /

The purpose of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) program is to help to increase diversity in the faculty ranks of institutions of higher learning by mentoring and preparing undergraduates for graduate school and academic positions in selected humanities and social science disciplines.

Established by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 1988, the program funds MMUF programs at 46 member institutions and consortiums. Its name honors Dr. Benjamin Mays who was dean of the Howard University School of Religion, president of Morehouse College, as well as president of the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education.

The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program reflects Dr. Mays' values in its commitment to fostering the academic aspirations of members of traditionally underrepresented groups and/or those with interests in studies aimed at eliminating racial and ethnic inequalities.

Contact /

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Mellon Mays
Undergraduate Fellowship Program
research / mentorship / cohort

What /

Q: What is the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program?

A: The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) is a two-year program that provides financial support, research mentorship, and assistance with graduate school applications.

Q: What is a fellowship?

A: A fellowship is not employment, but it is also not free money (like a scholarship). You can think of a fellowship as an agreement to conduct research and participate in a program. In exchange, fellows receive financial support, mentorship, and other benefits.

Q: What do you mean by 'conduct research'?

A: Have you ever been so curious about a topic or fascinated by a problem that you thought about it constantly, read books or articles, looked up resources, and/or wondered why no one had solved the issue before? That is what research faculty do: They pursue questions that intrigue them by reading, talking to experts, surveying people or by using other academic methods that help uncover new information or insights on an important topic. If this sounds interesting to you, then our program may be right for you.

Q: If I were selected, what would I have to do for the fellowship?

A: Fellows agree to participate in weekly meetings, meet twice monthly with their faculty mentor, and attend an annual conference and other events as requested. Fellows also agree to develop a research project with their mentor and to write a paper or produce a creative project by the end of two years in the program. Over the summers, fellows attend a summer research program and work on their projects. Also, fellows prepare documents for graduate school applications.

Q: What do you mean by 'graduate study'?

A: Students in a graduate program take classes and work with a faculty mentor to develop an in-depth research project that contributes new knowledge to a field of study. In a master's program, students write a thesis. In a Ph.D. program, students complete a book-length project called a dissertation. Many students obtain a master's degree at the same time they are studying for a Ph.D. and often go on to become professors or researchers at universities and colleges.

Q: What if I am not sure about going to graduate school?

A: We understand that graduate school can seem intimidating or too far in the future to worry about. Through workshops and mentorship, the Mellon Mays program helps fellows think through their options and explore the ways graduate study contributes to their goals. Fellows take the GRE and prepare a writing sample, personal statement, and other documents needed in order to apply to a graduate program.

Q: What if I am thinking about law school, medical school, MBA programs or other professional training?

A: Though professional training and certification are incredibly important, the Mellon Mays program is designed to help diversify the faculty in humanities and social science disciplines. This means that the program does not provide support for students intending to pursue law, medicine, or other professional degrees.

Who /

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: UCR students in their second year, incoming transfers or continuing students who will be enrolled at UC Riverside for at least two more full years are eligible to apply. Eligible students will have completed at least 90 units of instruction, have a 3.3 GPA or above, be interested in research, and be willing to consider graduate school in the fields listed below. Applications are particularly encouraged from African-Americans, Latino/a/x, Native Americans, and members of other groups traditionally underrepresented in academia. International students are not eligible for the program.

Q: Is the program open to undergraduates in any major?

A: Although students in any undergraduate major may apply, the program selects fellows who intend to pursue (or are strongly considering) graduate study in one of the areas of study listed below.

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