

# Optimizing Impact: Identifying & Advising Fellowship Candidates

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**Office of External  
Fellowships**



# Office of External Fellowships (@OEF\_UIC)

- ▶ OEF coordinates and oversees UIC's application and nomination processes for a set of highly competitive national and international fellowships.
  - ▶ Many of these awards require UIC to nominate students for them – i.e. students cannot apply directly but must first apply internally.
- ▶ I'm here to guide students (and recent alumni) to these wonderful opportunities, then to provide extensive advisement and support through the application process.

# Three sides to OEF mission

1. Student-centered, individualized, holistic advisement
2. UIC as an institution – nomination decisions, cultivating candidates
3. Foundation relationships and expertise

# Types of prestigious fellowships

1. For underclassmen to fund college or other experiences during college (e.g. study abroad, summer language study)
2. For rising/graduating seniors or alumni to fund graduate study in various fields, in the US or abroad
3. For rising/graduating seniors or alumni to fund independent research or experiential projects (could be a 'gap year')



# Office of External Fellowships

## Opportunities for University of Illinois at Chicago Undergraduates

If you are:	With a GPA:	Interested in Funding for:	Consider Applying for: (Details on back)
4th Year / Alumni	GPA 3.7+	Graduate Study	Rhodes*, Marshall*, Mitchell*, Gates Cambridge, Soros, Schwarzman, Knight-Hennessy, Fulbright*
		Science/Engineering	Also: Churchill*, NSF Graduate Research Fellowship
	GPA 3.2+	International / Language	Boren, CLS, DAAD*, Fulbright*, Gilman*, Rotary
		Foreign Service/ Diplomacy	Carnegie*(3.5+), Pickering, Rangel
		Science/Engineering/SocSci	NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, Fulbright*
3rd Year	GPA 3.7+	Graduate Study	Rhodes*, Marshall*, Mitchell*, Gates Cambridge, Schwarzman, Knight-Hennessy
		Science/Engineering	Goldwater Scholarship*, Churchill*
	GPA 3.2+	Public Service	Truman Scholarship (~3.5+)*
		Environment	Udall Scholarship*
		International / Language	Boren*, CLS, DAAD*, Gilman*, Rotary, Fulbright*
2nd Year	GPA 3.7+	STEM or Environment	Goldwater*, Udall*
	GPA 3.2+	International / Language	Boren*, CLS, DAAD*, Fulbright UK Summer (3.5+), Gilman*
1st Year	GPA 3.2+	International / Language	Boren*, CLS, Fulbright UK Summer (3.5+), Gilman*

\*University nomination/endorsement required.

For more information see: <http://oef.uic.edu/>

# Key aspects of OEF fellowships

- Merit-based
- 'Fit' between student and opportunity is crucial
- Terms (fellowship, scholarship, grant) often interchangeable
- Individual awards to current students or alumni to fund academic study and/or experiences (as per the previous slide)
- BIG – some awards are worth multiple years of tuition and living expenses, and the honor of receiving them is priceless
- Highly competitive – students applying for these come from universities around the US and sometimes the world
- Long application timeline
- Transparent selection criteria and formalized selection process
- The application process itself adds value

# Key myths to explode, i.e. None of these are true

1. You should send admitted students who are looking for scholarships/financial aid to OEF
2. You need a perfect GPA to be competitive
3. These opportunities are only for current undergraduates
4. Only seniors, or US citizens, can benefit from external fellowships
5. Activist students are too 'political' to have a real shot
6. Responsibility is the same as leadership
7. It's all about the money
8. It's a plus for students to graduate in less than 4 years

# What experiences make good candidates?

- Taking a challenging curriculum
- Doing academic research
- Developing strong mentoring relationships with faculty

- Studying abroad, or otherwise demonstrating openness and cross-cultural adaptability

- Demonstrating community service and engagement, i.e. “giving back”
- “Fighting the world’s fight”

- Demonstrating leadership in/for something that matters to them
- Showing creativity and originality

# What traits make good candidates?

- Ambitious
- Mature
- Process-oriented
- Leader

- Curious
- Perceptive
- Proactive
- Communicative

- Questions authority
- Altruistic/Activist
- Risk-taker
- Generous

- Open to criticism
- Collaborative
- Optimistic
- Patient

# What traits make good candidates?

THEY ARE DRIVEN BY SOMETHING  
BIGGER THAN THEMSELVES

THEY STAND OUT

1. Intellectual preparation
2. Creativity and originality
3. Leadership potential
4. Commitment to others
5. Self-reflexivity and humility

THEY ARE HUMBLE

# Challenges for Student Applicants

- They should take challenging courses, study abroad, and otherwise make the most of the opportunities available to them while they're in college
- They should develop their portfolio *beyond* what's expected, i.e. innovation, creativity, originality
- They should develop a passionate engagement and commitment to something beyond their own academic success and/or professional goals
- They should take leadership on issues and in communities they care about

# How Advisors Can Help OEF

- Notify OEF of high-achieving students early in their careers, especially those who demonstrate drive, leadership, and originality
- Help students connect with faculty and other mentors
- Encourage students to apply for competitive awards (internal and/or external)
- Encourage students to “think big” regarding their longer-term goals

# How OEF Can Help You

- Conduct outreach where you are – meetings or info sessions with students, staff, and/or faculty
- Revamp OEF website to include more and better info
- Provide handouts that advisors can use for reference and distribute to students
  - Happy to consult with you to customize handouts for your context
- Give you advice and guidance when you're asked for a reference for one of these fellowships
- Enable your best students to achieve at the highest levels

# It's never too early to refer students to OEF!

- Contact me directly to let me know about students who stand out – email is best, but any medium is OK!
- Tell your most promising students about OEF and send them to me – in person, via email introduction, whatever.
- Join the OEF listserv and follow us on Twitter/Facebook so you're in the loop about opportunities/deadlines.
- Visit our website to join the listserv and learn more:
  - <http://oef.uic.edu>
- Contact info: [oef@uic.edu](mailto:oef@uic.edu) or [kgermain@uic.edu](mailto:kgermain@uic.edu)
  - 312-355-2477

# Questions?

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