

Fulbright Grants for Students: Notes for Faculty Members  
16 April 2006

I. Introduction

Fulbright grants for university study and research--or teaching-- abroad are among the most prestigious and generous national scholarships available to recent graduates of U.S. universities and colleges.

The goal of the Fulbright program is to promote mutual understanding among nations through educational and cultural exchange while serving as a catalyst for long-term leadership development. Complete information is available at <http://www.fulbrightonline.org/us/home.php>.

With 6 Fulbright grant recipients since the year 2000, UW-Eau Claire has had more successful Fulbright applicants than any other UW-System Master's level institution.

II. The Application process

Please note: Students should ideally begin working on their applications during the spring semester of their junior year.

There are four stages to the application process:

- **Stage 1: Campus Review.** By October 1 of their senior year, students submit an application to our on-campus Fulbright Committee, which interviews the applicants, rates their applications, and forwards them to the Institute for International Education in New York.
- **Stage 2: National Screening Committee Review.** Specialists in various fields and area studies meet in November and December to review applications and recommend candidates for further consideration.
- **Stage 3: Host Country Review.** Applications of recommended candidates are transmitted to the supervising agencies abroad for further review, particularly as to placement at foreign universities.
- **Stage 4: Final selection for Fulbright Grants is made by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB),** taking into account the recommendations of the NSC, availability of funds, approval of the supervising agencies abroad, and other program requirements. Announcements are made between April and June.

The following is intended to help faculty members identify suitable students and mentor them through the application process.

III. Who should Apply for a Fulbright Grant?

Applicants for Fulbright study and research grants must compete with the best and brightest students nationwide. Students who apply should therefore number among the outstanding majors and minors in your program. Ideally, they should rank in the top 5% of all our students in

intellect, academic performance, GPA, maturity, independence, ability to carry out a research project, and long-term professional goals.

Students applying for a teaching Fulbright should rank in the top 10% in the same categories.

Note: Weaknesses in one area, such as GPA, may sometimes be compensated for by special strengths in others.

#### IV. Key Components of the Application

A. The most important part of the application is the two-page STATEMENT OF PROPOSED STUDY OR RESEARCH. Every applicant for a Fulbright grant must propose a research or educational project to be carried out during their Fulbright year. Applicants for university study and research should propose specific and fairly sophisticated research projects of a scope limited enough to be completed while pursuing 9 months of full-time university study. Recent finalists have proposed: "*Language Preservation in an Expanding EU*" (linguistics, Austria); "*19<sup>th</sup> Century German Emigration from Lippe-Deimold to Wisconsin*" (history, Germany); "*The Last Glacial Maximum in New Zealand*" (geology, New Zealand.)

Applicants for teaching grants typically propose pedagogical projects that can be pursued in their assigned schools. Recent teaching finalists/awardees have proposed: "*Introducing Early Language Learners to Accent Variation*" (Belgium). "*E-mail Pals as an Interactive English Teaching Tool*" (South Korea).

#### Important:

- Students should propose research projects within their major or minor areas of study.
- Students should already have studied and/or employed the research methodologies required by their proposed projects.
- Relevant work or course work is a plus.
- Course work or research that will be undertaken senior year can be included in the application.
- The project description must be well-conceived and superbly written. This is the part of the application where evaluators learn how applicants think.

B. Nearly as important as the Statement of Proposed Study or Research is the CURRICULUM VITAE, essentially an intellectual biography on one single-spaced page. Like the Statement, it must be the best writing that the student has ever done. It needs to be interesting, memorable, serious, and convincing. It should show, among other things, how the student has come to be interested in their field of proposed study. It should also set the student's educational, career, and life goals in the context of international understanding and/or service to others.

C. Finally, students applying for university study and research grants should obtain a LETTER OF INVITATION from a faculty member in their proposed project area at the university they wish to attend. The letter need not offer material support (although that would be welcome). But it should comment favorably on the student's proposed project and promise professional guidance and advice.

#### V. Roles for the Advising Faculty Member

Faculty members should:

- Identify and encourage potential applicants
- Direct students to Cheryl Lochner-Wright, Campus Fulbright Adviser, for help and advice
- Guide students in developing and researching a project idea
- Help students in making a connection with a foreign colleague and institution
- Critique/help in editing the C.V. and Statement of Proposed Study, usually more than once
- Help students to prepare for the campus Fulbright interview

#### VI. More Information

- Students and faculty advisers can find a wealth of information at <http://us.fulbrightonline.org/home.html>. The “Thinking of Applying” and “How to Apply” sections are particularly relevant.
- For more information on the campus process, please get in touch with Cheryl Lochner-Wright, Center for International Education, 111 Schofield Hall, [lochnecb@uwec.edu](mailto:lochnecb@uwec.edu); 836-441
- Informal mentoring is also available from the following members of the Campus Fulbright Committee:
  - Dr. Maria DaCosta, Economics, [dacostmn@uwec.edu](mailto:dacostmn@uwec.edu)
  - Dr. Helaine Minkus, Geography and Anthropology, [minkushk@uwec.edu](mailto:minkushk@uwec.edu)
  - Dr. Jefford Vahlbusch, Foreign Languages, [vahlbujb@uwec.edu](mailto:vahlbujb@uwec.edu)