Application for Dean's Student Summer Research Grant

Purpose
The purpose of the Dean's Student Summer Research Grant is to encourage students to engage in scholarship, research, or creative activity which furthers their academic interests and results in publication, performance or exhibition. The Grant gives students the opportunity to propose a project. Projects are expected to be eight weeks in length with the work done during the summer.

Faculty sponsorship and engagement are required. The research project must be the student's principal activity during the grant period.

Proposals are due in February, awards are announced in mid-March, and work usually occurs during June and July. In general, the project should be completed or in its final stages by the end of the grant period.

Grantees present the results of their work at a poster session usually held on Reunion Weekend in the Fall semester. Arrangements may be made for performances or exhibitions.

Eligibility
Current Muhlenberg students who are sophomores, juniors or seniors, who will be enrolled full-time in the Fall 2021 semester, are encouraged to apply. While there is no minimum gpa requirement to apply, successful candidates should demonstrate knowledge in their proposed area of research and clearly state how the research supports your academic aspirations. Students must be self-motivated and be able to work well independently.

Award
The grant is for a $3,000 stipend for eight weeks of research, paid to the student through the regular College payroll process. Students with these awards receive free shared housing in the dorm for their research time. A room deposit is required. The student also earns one course unit of academic credit (tuition free) as an independent study. If the award is for a less than eight-week project, then the stipend, housing, and course credit are adjusted accordingly.   We are planning to run the program on-campus in 2021 but plans may have to be adjusted due to concerns related to COVID-19. Students should consider how their research plans could be completed remotely if housing is not available or in person lab experiences are not an option due to COVID-19. If the College moves to remote learning during Summer 2021 and you cannot conduct your research off-campus, your award will be rescinded.

How to Apply

Complete the online grant application found online at
https://form.jotform.com/210035978458059 by 4 p.m. on Monday, February 22nd,
2021. Please start your online application early to ensure time for your faculty sponsor
to complete it, before the deadline. The form will be forwarded to your faculty sponsor
and then to Lori Flatto, Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Academic Life. Ms.
Flatto will add a copy of your transcript to your application. An application must include:

1. **Application:** Please add your name and contact information, the name and email of
   your faculty sponsor, the title of the proposed project, and upload your abstract,
   which summarizes the project, the work that will be performed, the expected project
   outcome, and the significance of this work to the student's academic
   development. The abstract should not exceed 200 words and should be based on
   the Proposal.
2. **Grant Proposal:** Upload your grant proposal, which should be from three to five
   pages double-spaced, 12-point font. It will be evaluated by a committee of faculty
   from across the College, in competition with other proposals. To help make the case
   that your grant should be awarded, please include the following information:
   A. Project Description: Provide a clear and succinct description of the project,
      the expected outcome, the impact on your future, and the scholarly value
      of the project. Describe the project in language that is comprehensible to
      faculty from various disciplines.
   B. Project Outcome: Provide details about the expected publication,
      presentation, exhibition, or performance which will result from this
      project.   Describe how the project relates to your major, career path, or
      interests. What courses have you taken that relate to the project?
   C. Project Requirements: Explain the resources and services you need
      What Muhlenberg College resources will you need to complete this project
      (library, laboratory, studio, etc.)? What arrangements have been made to
      secure the use of these facilities? If on-campus facilities are not available,
      please discuss research that can be completed.
      What off-campus facilities will you use to complete this project? What
      arrangements have been made to secure the use of these facilities? What
      material resources or services, if any, are necessary for the completion of
      the project? What arrangements have been made to secure these
      resources?
   D. Project Schedule: Provide a realistic tentative schedule for completing the
      project. If the project is not to be completed within this granting period,
      state the projected dates for completion of the project.
   E. Include additional information in Appendices, and refer to them in the
      proposal text. This could include awards or honors received,
      documentation of support or costs, or addition required documentation.
   F. See the "Guidelines for Applicants" section, below, for more information.

3. **Letter of Support:** Give the faculty sponsor, who will supervise your summer project, the sheet "Letter of Support: Guidelines for Faculty". When you submit the online application and enter the faculty sponsor's email, it will be sent to the sponsor for approval and a letter of support.

4. **Other Documentation when necessary:** The Faculty Development and Scholarship Committee (FDSC) reserves the right to request any other documentation deemed relevant to the student's project.

>   A. Students whose projects involve human participants must obtain authorization from Muhlenberg's Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have not already sought IRB approval, please provide a statement about when you intend to apply.   If you have approval, please state this in your application. Information can be found at https://www.muhlenberg.edu/academics/provost/committees/institutionalreviewboard/
>   B. An applicant for a summer research grant, which would take place outside the U.S. border, must meet with the Dean of Global Education to complete additional required forms. Such students will also be required to purchase international health and travel insurance.

Selection

1. Applications are reviewed by the Faculty Development and Scholarship Committee (FDSC).
2. In evaluating the grant proposals, members of FDSC place the highest priority on the quality of the proposals submitted and the potential impact on the student's academic goals. Incomplete, handwritten, and late applications will not be considered.
3. Joint applications involving two students may be submitted; however, adjustments to the stipend may be necessary.
4. The Committee submits a written recommendation concerning the application to the Dean of Academic Life, who makes the final decisions.

Student Responsibility

A successful project must aim towards a meaningful outcome. Examples of a meaningful outcome could be an oral or poster presentation at an academic conference or research symposium either on or off campus, a manuscript to be submitted for publication, or a public performance, installation or showing. Your proposal should explain how your research project will culminate in some outcome that can be seen, heard, and appreciated. Students are expected to present their work at a Research Fair, usually held on Reunion Weekend, in the Fall semester. Other Fall semester arrangements may be made for performances or exhibitions.

Guidelines for Applicants

Applicants should appreciate that the process is competitive, and a limited number of Dean's Student Summer Research Grants are awarded each year. While each project is different, here are factors and recommendations that will strengthen all proposals.

Proposals are read carefully by a committee of six faculty members from different disciplines. The committee has only your completed proposal with which to evaluate your research project. Make sure that it has all of the information and tools they need to give your proposal a strong review. Regardless of the discipline in which you propose to work, your proposal must make sense to all of the committee members. Provide sufficient background information so that they can understand the significance of the project.

1. Your proposal can address a research question or the opportunity to create new creative or artistic work.
    A. A successful research proposal addresses an original and specific research question or hypothesis that is to be tested independently. This means that, to your knowledge, the question has not been asked by anyone before and you are the person who is primarily responsible for performing the research and following up with an appropriate "research outcome."
    B. A successful proposal for artistic or creative work could include work in performing, visual, literary, media, or other genres. The student and faculty should provide adequate written information to inform the reviewers of the quality and character of the expected artistic or creative output.
2. Applications must be explicitly supported by a faculty member. Therefore, you should consult with your faculty sponsor early, and show drafts of your proposal as it develops, to receive feedback. Reference the sheet "Letter of Support: Guidelines for Faculty" in your discussion. It is very important that you demonstrate leadership, "ownership," and accountability for your project. A successful proposal will illustrate how you developed the project collaboratively with your advisor but cannot appear to have been written by the advisor.
3. Your final proposal should be very clear about what you propose to achieve and needs to demonstrate that the project is feasible, focused, and has a clearly defined strategy or methodology. The proposal should explain the steps by which the research or artistic/creative development process will be undertaken, written so a person unfamiliar with that field can follow and understand.
4. The project must also be financially feasible. Therefore, if your project will cost more than the $3,000 stipend, indicate the source of support you will obtain elsewhere.
5. Show that you are academically prepared to conduct the research project. Outline the courses and experiences that you have had that directly relate to your being able to complete the project.
6. If relevant, show any preliminary steps you have made to demonstrate the feasibility of your project.

7. To get strong reviews, pursue a substantial target. For example, proposing a reading list and a plan to discuss the reading on a weekly basis with an advisor would probably not be a fundable project. It does not seek to discover the answer to an original question that you have proposed and has not outlined a specific research methodology that is appropriate for your field of inquiry. Likewise, assisting a faculty member with her/his research project would not be a fundable project, because you are not the one who has posed the research question and you are not primarily responsible for the research outcomes. Artistic and creative projects should pursue similarly high standards of originality and reach.
8. Be sure to include confirmation or intent to apply, of any special authorizations and/or permissions, such as those required by the Internal Review Board or for international study.