**Mission**

The fundamental objective of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (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.

**MMUF Eligible Fields of Study**

To be eligible for selection as an MMUF fellow, students must be majoring, or planning to major in one or more of the following 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 and Ethnomusicology | Foreign Languages and Literatures | History | Linguistics | Literature | Performance Studies (theoretical focus) | Philosophy and Political Theory | Religion and Theology | Sociology | Theater (theoretical focus)

\* Includes Africana Studies; Comparative American Studies; East Asian Studies; Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies; Hispanic Studies; Jewish Studies; Latin American Studies; Russian and East European Studies; and individual majors related to those fields

**Award**

The fellowship includes a student stipend of $3,900 per summer, before taxes, for full-time research during the 2020 and 2021 summer programs and on-campus housing during those periods; an academic-year stipend of $3,600 ($1,800 per semester), before taxes, for ten (10) hours per week of research work during the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years; a per-term allowance for research-related supplies and travel; paid travel annually to MMUF regional conferences; and a book/research award for the student’s mentor.

**Fellows are required to be in residence in Oberlin for two months the first summer of the award** to participate in workshops and activities as part of the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) Summer Program from Saturday, June 8 through Saturday, July 31, 2020. **The first summer especially, mentors are expected to be available on campus on a weekly basis (with some flexibility, of course), to provide the student with regular in-person guidance and feedback.**

A Mellon Fellow who continues on to pursue a PhD in an MMUF-eligible field of study, within thirty-nine (39) months of graduation from college, is also eligible for additional research support during graduate school and up to $10,000 of repayment of undergraduate loans upon completion of the graduate degree.

**Selection Criteria**

* Academic promise and intellectual curiosity
* Second-year status at Oberlin College or Conservatory
* Undergraduate major and interest in conducting research in an MMUF-eligible field of study
* Interest in pursuing a PhD in an MMUF-eligible field 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.
* Commitment to participating fully and enthusiastically in all aspects of the MMUF program, including two summers of mentored research as well as meetings, conferences, workshops, and presentations
* Status as a U.S. citizen or permanent resident

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

**Application Materials**

The components of your application together should demonstrate clearly your fit with the selection criteria above.

1. **Application Form**Complete the attached form. You and your proposed faculty mentor must each type your own name in the relevant fields at the bottom of the form as an electronic signature, or, when you have finished filling in the other fields, select the “Developer” tab above, click the “Protect Form” button to turn off fields, and add an electronic signature.
2. **Statement of Purpose**Provide a **statement of purpose** (up to 500 words or 2 double-spaced pages) articulating your commitment to the aims of MMUF as indicated in the mission statement above. Your statement should be written as a cohesive narrative essay that addresses *all* of the following:

* how have your experiences in college been shaped by underrepresentation of certain groups in academia?
* what are your goals for the future?
* in what specific ways do you hope to change higher education by way of those goals?
* what is your understanding and interpretation of the life and legacy of Dr. Benjamin Mays, after whom the program is named?
* how is the work that you want to do, in your research and in your life, in conversation with the values he espoused?

1. **Research Proposal**Submit a **research proposal** (up to 500 words or 2 double-spaced pages, not including work plan) clearly addressing *all* of the following:

* The purpose of the project;
* Why you are interested in this research;
* The academic fields or disciplines into which the project fits and how it will contribute to those fields;
* Why this research may have significance even for those outside of those fields;
* What research questions are underlying or animating your project;
* What methods you plan to use and why those methods are appropriate for your research questions;
* What preparation or skills you have that make you well suited for this research;
* Whom you have selected to be your faculty mentor, how the mentor’s expertise aligns with your research, and how your mentor will contribute to your development; and
* A detailed work plan that includes a schedule of how your research will be divided over two summers and two academic years, and what you may need (supplies, books, travel, etc.) to complete that research successfully (*NOT INCLUDED IN WORD LIMIT*).

1. **Writing Sample**A **sample of your strongest academic writing** (up to 1,500 words or 5 double-spaced pages). The writing may contain creative elements, as long as it also demonstrates analysis and argumentation with a thesis statement and supporting evidence. The writing sample need not be on the same topic as your proposed MMUF research, and there is no need to write anything new. Instead, you can use a clean copy (without instructor’s comments) of something you already submitted for a class.
2. **Unofficial Transcript**  
   Include your current unofficial **transcript** from PRESTO saved as a PDF.
3. **Proposed Mentor Statement**A key component of MMUF is mentored research, and mentors are required to meet in person with their mentees at least weekly. The proposed MMUF faculty mentor must provide a **letter** clearly addressing *all* of the following:

* The soundness of the proposed research project;
* The contributions the applicant’s research stands to make to the field(s) or discipline(s);
* The knowledge and research skills necessary to complete the proposed research project (*e*.*g*., reading literature on the use of African American Vernacular English in 20th-century literature, survey design, ethnographic interview methods, etc.);
* The applicant’s current knowledge and research-skill base for the project;
* The mentor’s plan for providing structure, accountability, and training on the methods needed to complete the project;
* Why the chosen mentor is best suited to serve as the research mentor for the proposed project;
* The dates and amount of time the mentor will be away from campus during summer 2020 and the mentor’s plan for supporting the student during these absences; and
* The mentor’s leave plans for academic years 2020-21 and 2021-22 and availability in summer 2021.

**The applicant should share this application packet with the proposed mentor so that person can be well-informed about the MMUF program structure and requirements when writing the Mentor Statement.**

1. **Faculty/Staff Recommendations  
   Two letters of recommendation.** Recommenders should be members of the Oberlin College or Conservatory faculty or staff who know you and your academic work well enough to comment, in an informed way, on your potential for independent research and ultimately for an academic career.  
     
   **If the proposed faculty mentor of your research project fits that description, she/he/they should be one of your recommenders.** In this case, the proposed faculty mentor can **combine the mentor statement and letter of recommendation into a single document**.
2. **Peer Recommendation (Optional)  
   One letter of recommendation** from a peer, not necessarily at Oberlin, who can comment on your intellectual curiosity and how you work both alone and in groups.
3. **Personal Interview**  
   After receiving your completed application, we will contact you to schedule an **interview**.

**Deadline and Submission Guidelines**

All application materials, including letters of recommendation, must be received **by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, February 5, 2020.** Incomplete applications will not be considered.

**Student applicants must submit the first five (5) items above, saved as PDF files, in a single email to the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) at** [**undergraduate.research@oberlin.edu**](mailto:undergraduate.research@oberlin.edu)**. Faculty, staff, and peer recommenders should email their letters in PDF format directly to OUR at that same address, with the name of the student applicant indicated clearly in the subject line of the email.**

Application Form 2020

*PLEASE TYPE INFORMATION INTO THE FIELDS.*

##### First/Preferred Name

##### Last Name       Preferred Gender

Email Address      OCMR #      Telephone Number

Campus Address

##### T Number       Birthdate       Are you a U.S. Citizen? YES NO

##### If you answered “NO,” are you a legal permanent resident of the U.S.? YES NO

Permanent Mailing Address: Street       City           
State or Province       ZIP Code       Country       Home Phone

Current or intended major(s)            

Current or intended minor(s):            

Research area(s) of interest:            

Name of faculty mentor for proposed research project       Phone

Faculty mentor’s department(s) or program(s)            

Names of faculty or staff members who will submit letters of recommendation for your application

#1       #2

**I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge that the information furnished on this application is true and complete without evasion or misrepresentation. I understand that if found to be otherwise, it is sufficient cause for rejection of my application.**

**Student applicant signature:** **Date**:

Please type your full name above as an electronic signature, or add an electronic signature.

**I have reviewed the application materials and agree to serve for two years as a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Mentor should this applicant be selected.**

**Faculty mentor signature:** **Date:**

Please type your full name above as an electronic signature, or add an electronic signature.

###### **Application deadline: Wednesday, February 5, 2020 by 11:59 pm via email to** [**undergraduate.research@oberlin.edu**](mailto:undergraduate.research@oberlin.edu) **Only complete applications will be considered.**