Fellowships Office Advisory Committee Meeting
12.2.14

Fall & Winter 2014 Application Seasons
The Fall 2014 application season has come to a close. We experienced some unprecedented success by having a Rhodes and a Mitchell finalist in the same year. Although neither student was ultimately selected, we hope that their success in reaching these levels of competition is a sign of more to come in the future for MU students.

We had 26 Fulbright applicants. We worked with roughly ten additional students through August and September who for various reasons did not submit a final application.

Because the Critical Language Scholarship and NSF Graduate Research Fellowship do not require campus nominations, we cannot be entirely sure how many MU students applied for these awards. After inquiring with the students who had contact with our office, eight-nine students applied for CLS and ___ for NSF. NSF numbers appear to be rising, as more students than last year have already responded saying they submitted applications.

Beginning this fall the Fellowships Office also now houses the Rhodes Scholarship and the Goldwater Scholarship. Ted Tarkow oversaw these programs for many years, and we thank him for greatly supporting MU students who have pursued these opportunities. Our office will prioritize growing these programs and the Udall Scholarship in the coming years.

Schwarzman Scholarship
The Schwarzman Scholarship, recognized among fellowship advisors as the Rhodes Scholarship of China, will begin recruiting its inaugural class in April 2015. This new program funds one-year of Master’s study in Public Policy, Economics and Business, or International Studies at Tsinghua University in Beijing: http://schwarzmanscholars.org.

Spring Nominations
As food for thought, we raised the question of moving fall campus nomination processes for Fulbright and Truman to the spring. Some schools around the country have changed to this timeline for a couple reasons. They believe it motivates students to begin working on applications earlier, therefore, they have more time to develop competitive application packages. It also spreads out the fall’s condensed workload for fellowships advisors.

On the flip side, we currently treat the spring as a time to recruit students to submit applications in the fall. If we move the campus nomination procedure to the spring, we discussed the possibility of attracting fewer applicants. We would lose students
who learn about fellowships in the summer or early fall unless we make special accommodations. Overall, we felt that moving nominations to the spring would be less advantageous than our current procedures.

**Award for Academic Distinction**
Alana Simpson, a junior Finance major, enthusiastically shared that nominations for the Award for Academic Distinction are open until December 21. This award program began last year to fill a need for recognizing students who have greatly contributed to the academic atmosphere at the university. Follow this link to nominate a student:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1GXQ4kGixHQEafxXdTIWxrPmNVgk_gcWb-L6neceSY/viewform?c=0&w=1&usp=mail_form_link

**Student Travel Support**
This fall a student approached a few of us in Undergraduate Studies about wanting to attend a conference in Boston but not having the resources to go. From his request we recognized that a centralized travel support fund could be advantageous for undergraduates who might be discouraged from pursuing educational enhancement opportunities for financial reasons. Linda, Nancy, Dr. Spain and the Fellowships Office are working together to pool some resources to establish such a fund.

**Office Budget & Long-Range Planning**
We didn’t spend as much time talking about the budget as we allocated, so we mainly shared that the budgeting assumptions for FY16-FY18 lead the Fellowships Office into a deficit each year. We have enough in our beginning balance (i.e. “savings account”) to cover the deficit for the next two years but will have a negative end balance in FY18. These budgeting concerns only speak to maintaining the office’s current operations and do not account for growth.

Knowing the Fellowships Office will not be able to maintain current operations without additional funding, Dr. Spain asked that we create an aspirational budget to reflect our long-term goals. Ideally we will bring on a Faculty Fellow in Fall 2015 and hire a full-time staff member to replace the graduate assistant in Spring 2016. Bringing in additional support at these times will also allow for a more effective transition to a new Fellowships Office Director when Tim retires in Spring 2018 or 2019. We are waiting to hear the result of Dr. Spain’s budget meetings to see if these aspirational goals will be possible.

**Student Panel**
We had three students – Fares Akremi, Andrew Allee, and Kiersten Kuc – join us bright and early to discuss their experiences with the Fellowships Office.

Fares is a senior dual major in Political Science and Geography who was selected as a Rhodes Finalist this Fall. Although not ultimately selected for a Rhodes, Fares has taken a positive attitude toward the application process. He will submit a reflection
of his interview experience to the office so we will be able to reference it for future applicants. Fares also applied for Marshall and Fulbright Scholarships.

Andrew Allee is senior studying biochemistry. He conducted bioenergy research at the Techniccal University of Kaiserslautern, Germany through the DAAD Research Internships and Engineering program. Andrew aspires to use bioenergy to bring energy sources to third world countries. This fall he applied for a Fulbright to study at the University of Nottingham and a NSF Graduate Research Fellowship.

Kiersten Kuc, a sophomore studying journalism, shared her experience participating in the 2014 US-UK Fulbright Summer Wales Institute. Kiersten studied at three Welsh universities over six weeks. Kiersten cited that the Institute strongly encouraged its participants to consider post-graduate Fulbright grants to the UK.