

Fellowships Nomination Committee (FNC)

Midyear Report Fall 2021

Membership

Chair: Meredith Malburne-Wade

Members: Alysia Davis, Mike Davis, Jared Diener, Phil Frana, Susan Halsell, David Hardy, Nusrat Jahan, Shraddha Joshi, Tomás Regalado-López, Dymphna De Wild, Trevor Stokes, Eric Stark, Virginia Trovato, Laura Ryman, Kevin Molloy, Amanda Sawyer

Charge

To evaluate and select student and alumni nominees for fellowship, scholarship, and award competitions requiring JMU nomination, and to contribute to the growth of the Office of Fellowships and Awards (OFA).

Summary of Current Semester Activity

Meeting 1: September 2, 2021

The Fellowships Nomination Committee (FNC) met on Zoom on September 2, 2021 at 11AM for its first meeting of AY 2021-2022. The following members were in attendance: Mike Davis, Trevor Stokes, Dymph De Wild, Eric Stark, Laura Ryman, Virginia Trovato, Amanda Sawyer, Phil Frana, Nusrat Jahan (early departure for class), Alysia Davis, Shraddha Joshi, Tomás Regalado-López, Susan Halsell, and Meredith Malburne-Wade (chair). Kevin Molloy, Jared Diener, and David Hardy were unable to attend due to conflicts.

We reviewed our basic agenda: introductions for new members, a review of our two candidates each seeking nomination for three awards (Rhodes, Marshall, and Mitchell), a discussion of upcoming meetings, and a task for the next meeting.

A brief discussion, including questions and answers about the awards, followed. Subsequently, for each candidate, we discussed their academic strengths and weaknesses, leadership strengths and weaknesses, and service strengths and weaknesses. Following discussion, a vote was taken for each candidate for each award, and ultimately both were unanimously approved for each of the three awards. The FNC provided responses, reactions, and feedback to Meredith Malburne-Wade to share with the candidates. Several members also sent additional feedback via email.

The committee reviewed likely upcoming meetings for the remainder of the year, including possible mock interviews for the two candidates discussed on September 2 (should they advance). The tentative schedule for future meeting follows:

- First week of fall classes (nominations for Rhodes, Marshall, Mitchell, Knight-Hennessy, and Schwarzman) (with a preference for a late Spring meeting in future years when the process is more integral to JMU); **Complete as of 9/2/2021**
- Late September/Early October (mock interviews for scholarships listed above); **Complete as of October/November 2021**
- Late Fall and/or early Spring (nominations for Gaither and Truman); **Complete as of December 13, 2021**
- January through mid-February (mock interviews for Truman; interviews for Boren)
- Annual Fulbright celebration (currently held in February)

- February: selection of Udall nominees

Finally, the committee was tasked with brainstorming at least one way to enhance, encourage, or further develop knowledge of fellowship opportunities in their department, area, or college before our next meeting (late Fall). Possibilities may include (but are not limited to) working with Meredith to develop handouts, working with Meredith for targeted information sessions, presenting ideas at a faculty meeting, setting up recruitment strategies for particular awards, etc. Committee members are encouraged to talk with Meredith about ideas to advance understanding--for students or for faculty or for both--in their areas.

Mock Interviews: Mitchell Scholarship

One of our Mitchell applicants was named a semi-finalist and then advanced to the finalist stage. The committee supported this applicant through six mock interviews (three to prepare for the semi-finalist interview and three to prepare for the finalist interview) in October and November 2021. Tomás Regalado-López, Phil Frana, Nusrat Jahan, Eric Stark, Trevor Stokes, Alysia Davis, Mike Davis (twice), Dymph De Wild (twice), Jared Diener, Shraddha Joshi, Laura Ryman, and Susan Halsell were able to participate in mock interviews. Several members of the JMU community, including Jennifer Coffman, John Hulsey (twice), Sean McCarthy, Ruairi Walsh, and Steve Grande kindly joined the mock interview efforts and deserve special recognition. Meredith Malburne-Wade chaired all mock interviews.

Meeting 2: December 13, 2021

The Fellowships Nomination Committee reconvened on Zoom on December 13, 2021 at 1PM. The following members were in attendance: Dymph De Wild, Virginia Trovato, Phil Frana, Alysia Davis, Tomás Regalado-López, Susan Halsell, Jared Diener and Meredith Malburne-Wade (chair). Kevin Molloy, David Hardy, Mike Davis, Trevor Stokes, Eric Stark, Laura Ryman, Nusrat Jahan, and Shraddha Joshi were unable to attend. Our goal was to review our three Truman and one Gaither Junior Fellows Program applications.

We began with a brief discussion of our Gaither nominee, followed by a review of each Truman candidate, including strengths and weaknesses. Following discussion, we reached consensus on nominating all candidates with significant revisions to their current drafts. The FNC provided responses, reactions, and feedback to Meredith Malburne-Wade to share with the candidates. Several members also sent additional feedback via email.

Because of the small meeting size (due to exams, illnesses, and unexpected end-of-semester challenges), we tabled our discussion of suggestions for advancing awareness of the Fellowships and Awards Office until Spring 2022.

Future Work

The committee will need to interview Boren applicants in January 2022. We will provide mock interviews to any Truman Finalists. We will also convene to determine Udall nominees in the spring. Finally, Meredith will reach out to all members in January 2022 to develop methods for advancing awareness of the OFA in each committee member's home college or department.