



# SCHOOL *of* PUBLIC AFFAIRS

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY • WASHINGTON, DC

## **2016-17 UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES SUMMER SCHOLARS AWARD CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**

### **OVERVIEW**

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Advanced undergraduates in the School of Public Affairs are invited to apply for an American University Undergraduate Studies Summer Scholars Award. Summer Scholars will be awarded \$4,000 to conduct full-time summer research that leads to a significant scholarly or creative work.

Each scholar will work closely with a faculty mentor. Faculty mentors will receive a \$1,000 stipend to guide Scholars through their scholarship apprenticeship.

The faculty mentor must actively mentor the Scholar throughout the application process, scholarly endeavor, and final presentation. The faculty mentor will aid the Scholar in all phases of development, design, implementation, analysis/interpretation and presentation of the scholarly or creative work. During the summer, the faculty mentor will remain in frequent contact with the Scholar and provide timely feedback. Finally, faculty will help the Scholar find appropriate venues for sharing the results of his/her scholarship.

Projects may be conducted jointly with professors or other students, but must show evidence of significant original work by the Scholar. For example, if the Scholar is directly involved in a faculty research project, he/she must have his/her own area of intellectual inquiry to investigate and participate in all phases of design, development, execution, analysis, and conclusions. In essence, the relationship will be one of apprenticeship, rather than research assistance.

Scholars will be required to work 35 hours/week on their research for a period of eight (8) weeks in the summer. The \$4,000 award is expected to cover the Scholar's living expenses during this time.

Scholars are encouraged to participate in workshops on scholarship sponsored by the University Honors Program, Center for Teaching, Research & Learning (CTRL), the Academic Support Center, or the University Library, and may be asked to attend information sessions or workshops after receiving the award.

### **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & DEADLINES**

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Applicants must have a minimum 3.3 GPA in their major and a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA. In addition, applicants must have earned at least 60 credits and registered for classes in the subsequent fall semester.

The application will include:

- The proposal for scholarly activity. The proposal is limited to 1500 words, not including references. It should include:
  - a description of the project, including proposed research methodology;
  - an explanation of the project’s significance;
  - a brief description of academic preparation (coursework, etc.) that will enable the applicant to undertake this proposed activity; and
  - a proposed timeline for the 8-week period of proposed research
- A current transcript (unofficial is fine).
- A letter of reference from the intended faculty mentor. The letter should speak to the quality of the proposed research, to the Scholar’s preparedness for conducting a methodologically sound research project, and to the preparations made for maintaining a close mentor-mentee relationship over the course of the proposed research. (The letter should be sent separately by the faculty member to protect confidentiality.)

**Applications should be submitted via email to Melissa Blanco (mblanco@american.edu) in the SPA Dean’s Office by February 16, 2016. The subject line should read “Summer Scholars Award.” The faculty mentor should send the letter of support to Melissa Blanco separately. Awards will be announced in late March 2016.**

## **CONDITIONS OF THE AWARD**

Scholars must be degree-seeking undergraduate students pursuing a major in SPA. Scholars must also be registered for Fall 2016 classes, which may be at AU or abroad through AU Abroad.

Scholars and their mentors should be aware that their awards are taxable.

All Scholars will be expected to publically present their completed work at both the SPA Undergraduate Research Conference and the University Sophomore Pathways Event. Scholars are also strongly encouraged to present their work at additional conferences on or off campus.

Scholars will be required to provide a summary of their project to the Dean of SPA and to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies by no later than the last day of classes for Fall 2016. This 1500-word summary should include the following:

- Summary of the research conducted under the auspices of the fellowship
- Statement of proposed next steps in the research project (including plans for future coursework, independent research, presentations, or publication)

Should any events prevent Scholars or mentors from starting or completing the project, both the Scholar and the faculty mentor must return the funds to the School of Public Affairs. In cases in which reimbursement is not prompt, the University will place a stop on the student’s account.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The intention of this program is to give talented students an opportunity to explore an intellectual

interest in depth and at length. The eight weeks of scholarship are understood to be the beginning of a process that might take six months or a year from conception to final product. As the student's thinking matures, his/her scholarship might find its final form in an independent study the following year. The selection committee will keep such issues in mind as a decision is made regarding which project to fund.

The selection committee will be composed of faculty and staff representatives from the SPA Dean's office and SPA departments.

The committee will grant one award.

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