Previous Grant-Winning Projects

Advanced Study Grants to Boston College undergraduates have funded a wide array of summer projects during the past few years, but these grants have shared certain features in common. In every case, the applicant was able to persuade the review panel that the project built upon past academic accomplishments and laid the foundation for things that the student had in mind for the future, such as study abroad or a potential senior project. In many cases, successful proposals had more than one dimension. For instance, a proposal that combined intensive foreign-language study with a research project, or an internship, or community service in that language was more likely to succeed than one that proposed only language study. The review panel also favored proposals that showed sparks of originality and prudent ambition.

In sum, what succeeds are imaginative, unusual, and yet feasible proposals that are clearly explained.

Students are encouraged to discuss potential project ideas with a faculty mentor. This is an excellent way to develop a grant-winning proposal.

Here are some examples of projects that were funded in recent years.

*The Way of Words*: To support research on the converging narratives of pilgrimage in Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.

*The Vicious Cycle of Contaminated Water, Poor Health, and Poverty*: To support research on the community health benefits of household water filters in Nicaragua.

*Computing the Experimentation of the Mind*: To support the acquisition of computer skills for data analysis in cognitive neuroscience.

*The Other Colony*: To support research on the Portuguese colonization of northern Brazil and its effects on slavery and race.

*Tied to the Land or to the Market*: To support research on the balance of market forces and environmental commitment among New England organic farmers.

*The Molecular World of Science*: To support intensive study in advanced physical chemistry.

*Islam and the French Secular System of Education*: To support research on the implication of laïcité in education for France's Muslim population.

*Women’s Empowerment in Honduras*: To support research on women’s empowerment through micro-loans and the transcendence of traditional gender roles.

*De Recuperatione Ptolemaiae*: To support analysis and translation of a poetic narrative in Latin of the Third Crusade.

*Fitting Care to Culture*: To support a research internship with a disease prevention education program in Uganda.

For More Information

Additional examples of previously funded projects, as well as other fellowships opportunities, can be found at the web site for the University Fellowships Committee: [www.bc.edu/fellowships](http://www.bc.edu/fellowships).

Questions can be directed to the Faculty Coordinator for the Advanced Study Grants, Prof. Alice Behnegar at behnegaa@bc.edu.

Nominations by faculty members should be sent to asgrants@bc.edu. Faculty letters of recommendation should be given to students in a sealed and signed envelope, to be included with their applications.
The Advanced Study Grant Program

The Boston College Advanced Study Grants support and give recognition to Freshmen and Sophomores who have the special spark of scholarly initiative and imagination. Students with these qualities should also be thinking of themselves as prospective candidates for national fellowships, such as the Rhodes, Marshall, Fulbright, Goldwater, or Truman. An Advanced Study Grant can be an important step along the way.

Advanced Study Grants are for student-designed summer projects. They are not awarded for projects in which students propose to work on a faculty member’s research. (For such faculty-designed projects, Boston College has Undergraduate Research Fellowships.)

Advanced Study Grants are awarded for “skill acquisition” projects that promise to accelerate the recipient’s progress in the major field of study. They encourage undergraduates to acquire skills that will make more sophisticated research and study possible during their Junior and Senior years. Consistent with these goals, preference is given to proposals from Freshmen and Sophomores, although proposals from Juniors are also accepted and given full consideration.

“Skill acquisition” might mean improving foreign-language competence, learning archival research skills, or improving proficiency in lab techniques. It also might mean becoming knowledgeable about methodologies within, or across, academic disciplines. Examples are provided in this brochure, and the University Fellowships’ website has a complete list of previously-funded projects (www.bc.edu/fellowships).

Number of Grants and Amounts

The University Fellowships Committee makes every effort to provide partial or full funding to as many worthwhile projects as it can. In previous years, grants have typically been in the range of $500 to $2,000, and roughly one out of every four nominated applicants has been awarded a grant.

Nomination and Application

To be a candidate for an Advanced Study Grant, a student must be nominated by a faculty member.

Hence, students interested in these awards should take the initiative, persuade a faculty member to submit a nomination, and then devise a project in close consultation with a faculty member. Ideally, the faculty member who submits the nomination will be willing to offer the student continuing guidance on the project. However, this is not required. The nominating faculty member may be in the student’s major department, or the faculty member may be someone from another department who knows the student well enough to be willing to provide a nomination.

Students who are nominated will then be sent application materials and invited by the University Fellowships Committee to submit a proposal, specifying the goals of the project, the contribution it will make to the applicant’s long-term intellectual development and the level of funding requested. Preference will be given to projects that draw together important elements of the applicant’s academic preparation and lay the groundwork for important achievements in the future.

Evaluation of Applications

All applications will be read and evaluated by a panel composed of Academic Deans and Boston College faculty members from across the disciplines.

Grant Writing Workshop

The University Fellowships Committee will conduct a workshop to answer questions and to give guidance to all candidates for Advanced Study Grants who wish to take advantage of the opportunity. Applicants are advised to have a rough draft of their project proposals in hand when they attend this workshop.

Details of the date and location of this workshop will be included in the application materials sent to nominated students.

Grant Deadlines

On January 16, 2013, notice will be sent to faculty inviting nominations of student candidates for Advanced Study Grants. The period for nominations will close on Friday, February 1, 2013.

Application materials and invitations to submit proposals will be sent out to nominated students soon after the nomination period closes.

All completed applications, plus the supporting materials, must be submitted to the University Fellowships Committee Office in Stokes Hall, no later than Wednesday, March 13, 2013 at 4PM.

The winners of Advanced Study Grants will be posted on the University Fellowships Committee website on Wednesday, April 12, 2013.