MELLON SCHOLARS

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholars Program in the Arts and Humanities promotes students’ intellectual engagement, within and across the disciplines, through original research that combines traditional scholarly methods, creative production, experiential education and the digital liberal arts.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Working independently or in teams, with the support of faculty mentors, students build the skills needed to plan, develop and undertake significant projects of research or artistic creation, and carry them through to completion. Mellon Scholars emerge from the program with knowledge and experience that will serve them well in postgraduate study, professional school (e.g. law school) and meaningful employment. They also should be prepared to enter a workforce that expects a combination of critical thinking, research, writing, speaking, initiative, creativity, collaboration and the ability to work effectively with digital technology. Students are trained to apply academic skills to real-world problems, and to acquire experiences that will enable them to see how their values, skills and interests can be well-suited for a variety of career opportunities.

Admission to the Mellon Scholars Program is competitive. Applications from prospective Mellon Scholars are solicited from first- and second-year students at the beginning of the spring semester, and admission to the program is announced prior to fall registration.

The Mellon Scholars Program formally begins with the two-semester, Interdisciplinary Seminar, taken in the sophomore or junior year. Following the seminar, Mellon Scholars engage in intensive academic research in the arts and humanities, which may include individual:

- Study with a faculty mentor
- Upper-division courses enhanced with some individual study
- Participation in a faculty-led team research project
- Off-campus study at The Newberry Library
- Course that supports the integration of technology and the liberal arts

Through these experiences, Mellon Scholars complete significant works of scholarship or creative performance grounded in academic research that may serve as examples of the student’s capabilities in applications for awards, graduate programs and other opportunities. Throughout the program, Mellon Scholars seek ways to adopt new and emerging digital technologies for the development, dissemination and preservation of their work. They also present their projects at public events such as the annual Celebration of Undergraduate Research and Creative Production, the Arts and Humanities Colloquia, Posters on the Hill and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research.
The Mellon Scholars Program offers support for student-faculty collaborative summer research projects, conference travel and other student-faculty development opportunities.

For more information about those opportunities and the program, please contact the director or the website.

COURSE OF STUDY

The Mellon Scholars Program consists of 24 credits. Normally, work undertaken for the program coincides with General Education and required coursework for an arts or humanities major or minor. In the first year of the program, the sophomore or junior year, students take 8 credits (4 credits each semester) of IDS 180-181 – the Mellon Interdisciplinary Seminars. Normally, participation in IDS 180 and IDS 181 confers Fine Arts I and Cultural Heritage II (IDS 174) General Education credits, respectively; however, students who have taken courses for those credits prior to enrolling in the program may petition the director for alternate arrangements. In addition to IDS 180-181, Mellon Scholars must complete four additional 4-credit experiences from the following menu of options:

- **“Mellonized” course.** Students enroll in an upper-division course, meet with the professor regularly in order to engage more deeply with the topic and produce a substantial final project (i.e., a 20-page research paper or the negotiable equivalent in writing and digital or creative production).

- **Team project.** Two to four students enroll in an individual study in the most appropriate discipline (by permission of the chair) or an upper-level arts and humanities course and work on a collaborative project under the mentorship of the course faculty. Such projects may be original to the team or be a significant contribution to an on-going Mellon or faculty project.

- **Individual Study.** Students register for an individual study in the appropriate discipline and produce a substantial final project (i.e., a 20-page research paper or the negotiable equivalent in writing and digital or creative production). Students may complete up to 8 credits of IDS 390 – the Junior Tutorial and Project (4 credits per semester in the junior year) and up to 8 credits of IDS 590 – the Senior Tutorial and Project (4 credits per semester in the senior year). Students may apply for departmental credit for IDS 390 and 590; however, Mellon Scholars may not substitute the IDS 590 for other departmental capstone courses without the permission of the appropriate department chair.

- **A Digital Enhancement Course.** A course in any department that supports the integration of technology and the liberal arts (e.g., “Web Design”). For Mellon credit, the course must be approved in advance by the program director.

- **The Newberry Library, Chicago.** Students receive credit for two 4-credit Mellon experiences for the development of a substantial project in the context of a major research library.
Students entering the program as juniors may enroll in one of those additional experiences concurrently with the Mellon Interdisciplinary Seminar. In all cases, the submission of a completed project is necessary for the conferral of Mellon credit.

Mellon scholars are expected to present their work at the Celebration of Undergraduate Research, as a condition of continuation in the program, unless they are studying off-campus or have a bona fide conflict. Students are encouraged to participate in undergraduate conferences, such as NCUR, and other public venues and symposia. Participation in the program is indicated by the “Mellon Scholars” designation on academic transcripts.

FACULTY & STAFF

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Assistant Professor and Director of Mellon Scholars Program (2017)
Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, 2012
M.A., University of Wisconsin, 2006
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