

# **Undergraduate Research Travel Fellowship Program Guidelines**

## **University of Houston**

### **2008-2009**

#### **Purpose**

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The Undergraduate Research Travel Fellowship Program is designed to assist undergraduate students from the University of Houston enhance their academic development and disseminate their research results. Moreover, the program aims to increase the visibility of the institution by supporting undergraduate student travel at national or international conferences. The travel funding is intended for undergraduate students presenting the results of their research or creative activities at meetings for a national or international audience. This funding is part of a broader Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) - the Learning through Discovery Initiative at the University of Houston.

#### **Nature of Support**

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- The maximum amount of each individual Travel Fellowship award will be \$750.00. There is not an exception to this amount for foreign travel. Only the most economical fares are eligible for reimbursement under this program.
- Applications for the 2008-2009 Travel Fellowship program will be accepted until all available funds have been disbursed. Announcements and guidelines for the 2009-2010 academic year will be posted on the Discovery website at [www.uh.edu/discovery](http://www.uh.edu/discovery).
- Since this travel award will most likely not fund all the costs incurred through traveling, applicants are encouraged to seek additional funding through research grants, conference travel award programs, and inquire through their faculty mentor and department chair about other potential funding resources that may be available.
- Eligible travel expenses include registration fees, airfare, ground transportation, lodging, and meals.
- The award is not intended to replace support for undergraduate student travel from existing sources (e.g., contracts and grants, and current policies or practices for travel support within colleges or departments). The intent is to increase the number of students that are presenting, performing, exhibiting, or participating at national and international conferences.

#### **Qualifying Venues**

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- An application will be considered only if the student is presenting his or her research or creative work at a qualifying venue.
- Qualifying venues include regular or annual meetings of a national (U.S. or another country's national society) or international professional society; or quadrennial (or otherwise periodically occurring) international congresses that are sponsored by a number of national professional societies; this includes presentations at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) and at the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR). Professional societies are usually defined as those that collect dues, have elected officers, and may have published journals or other outlets for scholarly work. Qualifying venues may also include meetings sponsored

by a government agency or industrial society if the meetings are of an academic nature and take place annually or biennially; and juried competitions of a national or international scope that are held regularly.

- Awards will not be made for students to attend special meetings or meetings of special interest groups.

### **Applicant Eligibility**

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- Only undergraduate students at UH are eligible to receive funding from this program.
- Student must have already submitted their abstract to conference organizers prior to submitting an application for the Undergraduate Research Travel Fellowship Program.
- For presentation of collaborative research which involve multiple students, only the presenting undergraduate student may be supported. In special cases (e.g., duet performances), this limitation may be waived upon recommendation of the faculty advisor contingent upon available funding.
- A student may receive only one travel award from this program per academic year.

### **Application Process and Deadlines**

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- Applications must be approved by the appropriate department chair or equivalent, and will be reviewed for final approval by the committee appointed by the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Research. Applicants must download the application, complete it electronically, print a hardcopy, and then the student applicant, faculty mentor and department chair (or equivalent) must sign it.
- Documentation indicating that the student has been accepted as a presenter should be attached to the signed application. If the student has not yet received an acceptance notification from conference organizers at the time of application, then he or she may be awarded a Travel Fellowship *pending acceptance as a presenter*.
- The application must include the following supporting documentation:
  1. copy of student's conference submission including abstract;
  2. condensed 200-word abstract of research or creative project (if the conference submission is greater than 200-words);
  3. acceptance letter from sponsoring organization (if available at time of application);
  4. letter of recommendation from UH faculty mentor.
- Signed applications and supporting documentation may be submitted via one of the following methods: 1) hard copy to Karen Weber in Room 211 in The Honors College, 2) intercampus mail to Mail Code 2001, or 3) electronic PDF to [kweber@uh.edu](mailto:kweber@uh.edu).
- Applications must be received no later than 30 days prior to travel.

## **Approval Process**

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- A selection committee appointed by the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Research will review requests for support to ensure conformance to the guidelines and, if funding is available, will normally approve those applications that adhere to the guidelines. The Chair of this committee is the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Research. Note that the committee will not be reviewing the papers or posters themselves; the peer-review process of the appropriate meetings and the approval processes within the colleges are assumed to have completed that work. In case there are more qualifying requests than available funds, the committee will utilize more stringent criteria, such as funding them in the order received.
- If the travel award will not be used as intended, then the student must notify Ms. Karen Weber ([kweber@uh.edu](mailto:kweber@uh.edu)) so that the award can be voided and funds can be made available for other qualified applicants. Once an application has been approved, no substitutions will be allowed; if an undergraduate student wishes to use the program's funds to support a presentation other than the one for which the original application was submitted, he or she must submit an entirely new application. If the student applicant is unable to travel after the funding has been approved, substituting a new student for the same presentation is not allowed; a new application must be submitted.
- Students who are awarded a Travel Fellowship *pending acceptance as a presenter* must forward their acceptance notification from conference organizers to Ms. Karen Weber ([kweber@uh.edu](mailto:kweber@uh.edu)) as soon as it is received. In the event that the student is not approved as a presenter, he or she must notify Ms. Weber so that the award can be voided and funds can be made available for other qualified applicants.

## **Travel Arrangements and Reimbursement**

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Upon notification of an approved Travel Fellowship Award, the student is responsible for following the instructions outlined in **Appendix A: Instructions for Undergraduate Research Travel Fellowship Award Recipients**.

## **Two-Page Report Required Post-Travel**

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The student recipient is required to submit a two-page first person report upon return, which should include information on his or her experience presenting and traveling. This write-up may be used in marketing materials to publicize the Travel Fellowship program. This report must be submitted with the request for reimbursement as outlined in Appendix A.

## Appendix A

### Instructions for Undergraduate Research Travel Fellowship Award Recipients University of Houston

Student travelers must review the following university policies and procedures:

“Travel Paid from Local Funds” - MAPP 04.02.01B; <http://www.uh.edu/mapp/04/040201B.pdf>

“Student Travel” – MAPP 04.02.04; <http://www.uh.edu/mapp/04/040204.pdf>

Two options are available for processing travel expenses: 1) Students may choose to pay out-of-pocket for all expenses and submit itemized receipts for reimbursement upon return from the trip; or 2) UH will directly pay for registration fees, hotel, and airfare so that the student will not need to pay out-of-pocket for those expenses.

Upon receiving award notification, students must forward their contact information (full name, email, and phone number) to Ms. Averill Buchanan ([abuchanan@uh.edu](mailto:abuchanan@uh.edu)). Ms. Buchanan will assist the student traveler in completing an official university Travel Request form. The Travel Request form should be completed as soon as possible after the notification of award, but no later than 30 days prior to travel.

Those who prefer that UH directly purchases airfare, registration, and lodging should also submit the following details to Ms. Buchanan:

- Flight information for the most economical airfare for the trip
- Web address or instructions for conference/meeting registration
- Information on preferred hotel and check-in and check-out dates

Upon return from the trip, the student must submit the following to Ms. Averill Buchanan in Rm 317 E. Cullen. According to university policy, travelers must submit their request for reimbursement no later than 60 days after travel is completed in order to receive reimbursement.

- Completed Travel Expense Report:  
[http://www.uh.edu/finance/pages/AP\\_Travel.htm](http://www.uh.edu/finance/pages/AP_Travel.htm)
- **Itemized** receipts for out-of-pocket expenses related to the trip, including meals
- Acceptance letter or email from the sponsoring organization
- Abstract that was submitted to the sponsoring organization
- A two-page first person report, which should include information on your experience presenting and traveling. This write-up may be used in marketing materials to publicize the Travel Fellowship program.

Questions about the expense reimbursement process should be directed to Ms. Averill Buchanan at [abuchanan@uh.edu](mailto:abuchanan@uh.edu) or (713) 743-2841.