



EducationUSA Weekly Update

No. 24 March 19, 2007

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I. Scholarships and Fellowships

Pre/Post Doctoral Associate, Program on Democracy, Yale

Location: Connecticut, United States

Institution Type: College/University

Position Type: Post-doctoral Fellow

Main Category: Political Science/International Relations

Secondary Categories: General Social Sciences

Program on Democracy

Residential Research Fellowships

The Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale

The Yale Program on Democracy (YPD) at the MacMillan Center invites applications for residential research fellowships for 2007-08. Applicants for full- and half-year appointments will be considered, as will both pre-doctoral and post-doctoral applicants.

The YPD invites applications from scholars whose work is at the intersection of democratic theory and empirical research on democracy. We support research in which answers to the question, How should democracy work? are informed by answers to the question, How does democracy work? We are especially (though not exclusively) interested in research on new democracies. We invite applicants whose research addresses matters such as the impact of poverty and inequality on the functioning of democracy, institutional innovations in democratic practices, clientelism and patronage, political parties and representation, and democratization. Formal, statistical, archival, and qualitative research are all encouraged, as are applicants from the range of social-science fields.

Under the direction of Professor Susan Stokes, the YPD promotes an intellectual community at Yale through the Fellowship program, graduate and undergraduate training, workshops and conferences.

Fellows will be expected to be in full-time residence during one or two academic terms, beginning September 1, 2007 or January 1, 2008. During their tenure, Fellows are expected to work on their research projects, interact with graduate students and faculty, contribute to the intellectual life of the Program, and participate in its collective activities and development.

Postdoctoral Fellows are expected to teach one course related to their research. Ideally, they also will complete a significant publication during their residency. Predoctoral Fellows are expected to complete their doctoral dissertations.

In awarding fellowships, preference is given to: (a) recent Ph.D. recipients; and (b) graduate students who have made progress on their dissertations and are likely to complete them during their fellowship. Applicants for Predoctoral fellowships must have completed all coursework and general examinations at the time of application and are expected to have made significant progress on their dissertations. All candidates must be fluent in English.

Stipend and Resource Information

The Program offers academic-year stipends of \$40,000 (\$20,000 for one-term stipends) plus benefits to Postdoctoral Fellows,

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<http://www.educationusa.state.gov/>

and \$20,000 (\$10,000 for one term) plus individual health insurance coverage to Predoctoral Fellows. All Fellows appointed by the Program will have full access to the Yale University libraries and email. Normally, Fellows can expect shared office space, computer access and basic office supplies. Unfunded or partially funded pre- and postdoctoral fellowships may be available at the discretion of the Program. Interested candidates who have other sources of funding may apply with a clear indication of their funding situation. All applicants should indicate clearly whether they are seeking full or partial funding.

Application Process

Applications must include the following:

- (1) cover letter, including current e-mail address
- (2) current curriculum vitae, including publications
- (3) 1500-word description of the proposed research project. The description should include the background, nature, importance, specific objectives, and methodology of the proposed research project.
- (4) one sample of writing not exceeding 20 double-spaced pages pertinent to the proposed research project. (No books accepted.)
- (5) a syllabus of the proposed course (Postdoctoral Fellows ONLY)
- (6) an official graduate school transcript
- (7) two letters of recommendation. For Postdoctoral Fellows, referees should discuss the candidates teaching ability as well as other points. The letters may be sent directly to the MacMillan Center or included with the application materials. If recommendation letters accompany application materials they must be in a sealed envelope. Letters sent by e-mail with full title, institution and contact information of the sender will be accepted.

Do NOT include any additional materials (e.g., bibliographies, appendices).

Deadline for submission: March 26, 2007 (applications postmarked AFTER March 26, 2007 will not be accepted) Awards will be announced by late April.

For additional information e-mail larisa.satara@yale.edu or call (203) 436-4203.

Application packets must be postmarked by the deadline in order to be reviewed. Late or incomplete applications will NOT be accepted.

Do not send application materials via registered or certified mail. AA/EOE; applications from women and minorities are encouraged.

Contact Info:

Fellowships- -Program on Democracy
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Postdoc: Bioinformatics Virginia Commonwealth Univ

Postdoctoral Fellow in Bioinformatics A postdoctoral position is available in May or later in the Bioinformatics Laboratory at Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics, Department of Psychiatry, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine.

The successful candidate is expected to analyze the sequence and mutation pattern in mammalian genomes, especially focusing on the CpG island regions. He/she may also work on other ongoing research projects (e.g. bioinformatics analysis in psychiatric genetics or prediction of protein-protein interactions) .

The candidate will have the opportunity to involve in the expanding research program in the Center for the Study of Biological Complexity. The candidate will work in a dry lab environment.

VCU was recently ranked No. 1 in high impact papers in Psychiatry. The university is located in Richmond, the state capital of Virginia, within 90 minutes from the mountains, the beach, and Washington, D.C.

More information can be found at the website <http://bioinfo.vipbg.vcu.edu/>. Virginia Commonwealth University is an equal opportunity/ affirmative action institution. The qualified candidates should be highly motivated in research and have a Ph.D. in molecular biology, computational biology, or related when the job starts.

Some experience in one programming language (Perl, Java, or C/C++) is desirable. Applicants should send a CV, brief statement of research interests, and reference to: Zhongming Zhao (zzhao_at_vcu.edu). Zhongming Zhao, Ph.D. Bioinformatics Lab @ VIPBG Asst. Professor of Bioinformatics Dept. Psychiatry and Center for the Study of Biological Complexity Virginia Commonwealth University PO Box 980126, Richmond VA 23298-0126 Phone: (804) 828-8129 Fax: (804) 828-1471

II. News you can use

The Path Through Graduate School: A Longitudinal Examination 10 Years After Bachelor's Degree. Postsecondary Education Descriptive Analysis Report. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, February 2007. 119p Using data from the 1992-93 Baccalaureate and Beyond Study, this report by the National Center for Education Statistics examines the characteristics related to graduate degree enrollment, persistence, and completion among 1992-93 bachelor's degree recipients. The study shows that ten years after graduation, about 40% of bachelor's degree recipients had enrolled in a graduate degree program, and 62% of those students had earned at least one graduate degree by 2003. On average, Master's degree students took 3 years to complete their degree, first-professional students 4 years, and doctoral students more than 5 years. Overall, rates of persistence and completion were higher among students who entered graduate school immediately after earning a bachelor's degree, who attended full time and enrolled continuously, and who enrolled in multiple graduate degree programs.

Report at publisher's website:

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007162.pdf>

Davidson Eliminates All Loans

Davidson College is today announcing that it will change future financial aid packages so that students will no longer need to borrow anything.

While several elite private universities and flagship public universities have effectively eliminated loans for students from low-income backgrounds, these programs (except for the one at Princeton University, which applies to all) typically have income limits. Davidson would be out front of other liberal arts colleges, including some with much larger endowments.

The move comes at a time that many colleges are rethinking their aid and loan policies. Just last week, Hamilton College, for example, announced that it was eliminating all merit scholarships and shifting the funds to need-based aid. Among the reasons Hamilton cited was a belief that demographics in the years ahead would require greater support for need-based financial aid.

Demographic projections also influenced Davidson. "We are concerned by the faces not applying to Davidson because they don't believe that the college is affordable," said Christopher J. Gruber, vice president and dean of admissions and financial aid.

Gruber said that the college has noticed a shift in recent years among would-be applicants from the lowest income families. It used to be possible to get such students to apply, tell them about the availability of financial aid, and then at the time of admission explain how an aid package would make the college affordable, Gruber said. Then the admitted applicant would be comparing aid packages, and Davidson's was favorable, he said.

Now, he said, more would-be applicants — when they hear about the costs (total for next year will be close to \$41,000) — are not applying at all, fearing that the only way they could end up with an aid package would be with one that had lots of loans.

"These students weren't even applying to us," Gruber said. Indeed the latest data posted about the college at the Economic Diversity of Colleges Web site shows relatively low figures at the college for low-income families and Pell Grant recipients.

Looking ahead, more students in the age cohort for a residential liberal arts education are going to come from low-income families, he said, so the college wanted to position itself for them. Davidson is already among a small group of private colleges with need-blind admissions, meaning that need for financial aid is not a factor in admissions decisions and it has a policy of meeting the full need of admitted applicants.

Notably, Davidson had already taken steps to limit loans. Last year, the college adopted a policy of limiting the loan component of aid packages to \$3,000 a year. (The new policy cut student debt over four years by \$7,000. Previously, loan limits started at \$4,000 for freshmen, going up \$500 a year, so that after four years students graduated with \$19,000 in debt.) While the decision

to eliminate loans completely will cost the college an additional \$3.5 million, Gruber said it was worth it to take loans out of the equation entirely.

Gruber said that he thought there was a chance other liberal arts colleges might match the policy, and that it would be "beautiful" if that happened.

One aid expert, asked about the shift, questioned whether it made sense to completely eliminate loans, when some students and their families could afford modest loans.

But an economist of higher education said he saw the logic to the move. Michael McPherson, president of the Spencer Foundation and former president of Macalester College, said that many private colleges these days focus on "how to get more paying applicants," so it is commendable for a college to be thinking about ways to get more low-income students.

McPherson said there is evidence that a very simple message can have a big impact. In 2004, Harvard University announced that it was eliminating all expected contributions from the families of students with family incomes of up to \$40,000 (a level since increased to \$60,000). When the university adopted its policy, it saw an immediate increase in the proportion of new students from low-income families.

Before Harvard had its new policy, it was also giving very generous aid packages to students in this group, probably identically good, McPherson said, but applicants responded to the simplicity of the revised policy. "Anyone could have seen that if you got into Harvard, you would be able to afford it, but it seems true that when they publicly stated in a new way what they were already doing, they got a lot more of these applicants," McPherson said.

A straightforward message "can be effective," he said.

Robert F. Vagt, Davidson's president, said it was also important to send a message to those who enroll about their post-graduation options. In the last year, he said, he has heard from at least six seniors who told him that they wanted to be teachers or work for a nonprofit group or take some socially valuable, but financially not so lucrative, job. "They are telling me, 'I can't afford to do that,'" Vagt said. "Debt is affecting students' choice of careers," he said.

By combining the need to attract low-income students with the goal of encouraging all students to consider service-oriented jobs, Vagt said, "this is the right thing to do."

— Scott Jaschik