Policy Information: Fellowships and Scholarships

Application Deadlines
The Fellowship Advisor is available to assist any serious applicant for prestigious fellowships and scholarships. In consultation with each applicant, the advisor sets a reasonable schedule for the submission and preliminary review of application materials. Submissions and reviews must relate to the deadlines established for final submissions to the funding agencies, which categorically do not accept late applications.

Most agencies now require online submission; experience indicates that many submission websites are often overwhelmed and unavailable for several hours in the three or four days before a deadline. Applications that are not complete (including recommendations and endorsements) until the final deadline day sometimes can’t be submitted.

*Completed applications that require a University endorsement must be submitted (with recommendations) to the Fellowship Advisor at least seven days prior to the final deadline indicated on the fellowship website.*

Honesty in Fellowship Applications
All application materials that are submitted as part of a fellowship application are expected to comply with Texas State’s policies on academic honesty and plagiarism; these materials must be the student’s own work and must truly represent the student’s accomplishments and needs. The taking of another person’s writing without permission and acknowledgement of the source, or the submission of personal essays and other writing prepared or re-written by a “ghost” writer, is a violation of Texas State’s plagiarism policy. If you have a question about the extent of permissible editorial help, consult with the Fellowship Advisor or a Writing Center advisor. Use caution in using editing services and websites that offer to “tailor,” “re-write,” “edit,” or “fix” essays.

Letters of Recommendation
Letters of recommendation submitted for a particular fellowship competition cannot be copied and resubmitted for other competitions or applications. Unless general letters are allowed by specific application guidelines, a student applying for more than one fellowship or institution must request individual letters from recommenders; generic letters are discouraged as they are usually too general and consequently weak. Recommendation letters that are reviewed by the Honors Office are considered confidential and will not be released to students.

Should a recommender ask you to draft your own recommendation, diplomatically explain that you can provide supporting information, such as a resume, a list of points that you would like the recommendation letter to address, a factual narrative biography, and a list of key achievements. Ethically, you can’t draft your own recommendation. Astute reviewers can quickly discern the voice of the applicant in a “ghost-written” recommendation, which would result in a severely negative evaluation.
Multiple Awards
A student who has won and accepted a fellowship award should notify the Honors Scholarship and Fellowship Advisor of the award and of other fellowship applications that are still pending. In case of multiple awards or offers for the same project, the student should notify the Advisor and other appropriate offices to ensure that an equitable arrangement is made.

Academic Standing
Student recipients of competitive fellowships must remain in good academic standing at the end of the semester in which the fellowship is awarded. When a student withdraws from Texas State for any reason, the fellowship endorsement is subject to cancellation.

Archives
Copies of fellowship application materials submitted to the Honors Scholarship and Fellowship Advisor will be retained on file for one academic year after the year of submission. Materials for awards will be kept on file in the Honors Office for an additional year and thereafter in the Honors Archive or the Alkek Library Archives. All materials for unsuccessful candidates will be destroyed after one year. All applicants are responsible for keeping photocopies or digital copies of their application materials.

Federal Tax Considerations
According to IRS Publication 970 - Tax Benefits for Education
"A scholarship is generally an amount paid or allowed to, or for the benefit of, a student at an educational institution in the pursuit of studies. The student may be either an undergraduate or a graduate.
A fellowship is generally an amount paid for the benefit of an individual to aid in the pursuit of study or research."
Most fellowship monies and some scholarship monies are considered taxable income according to the Tax Reform Act of 1986. Certain fellowships and scholarships are "qualified," allowing specific portions of the awarded funds to be deductible for tuition in a degree program. Fellowship recipients should review the above referenced IRS publication and consult with a tax accountant about reporting fellowship and scholarship receipts.

For more information, contact:
Honors College Fellowship and Scholarship Advisor
407 Lampasas | honors@txstate.edu | 512-245-2266