

The Ralph George Berry Scholars Fund in Psychology



Overview of the George Scholar Program

The Ralph George Berry Scholars Fund in Psychology is part of the Berry Scholars Program. The George Scholars are supported through the generous gift of the George family.

The George Scholars Program is named after Mr. Ralph George who was a 1940 graduate of Berry College in the agricultural program. Mr. George completed his graduate education with a M.A. and Ed.S. in psychology from the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. After serving in the military during World War II, Mr. George's career included work with the Boy Scouts, a counselor working with boys and their families, a research assistant at the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University where he helped to develop the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test; an assistant professor of psychology at Austin Peay and Northeast Louisiana State Universities; and ultimately as the director of psychological services at Nashville, Tennessee's Clover Bottom Development Center from which he retired in August, 1980. He was a lifelong friend and advocate of Berry College and was a regular participant in numerous alumni workweeks at Berry. After his death in September 2002, Mr. George's wife, Virginia, and daughter, Lee Anne, continued their interest in and involvement with Berry College and generously

chose to endow a student research-based scholarship program in Mr. George's name.

A designated Coordinator within the Psychology Department is responsible for the direction and managing the George Scholars program.

Expectations of George Scholars

The George Scholars Program is designed for Berry psychology majors who are in their sophomore year (rising juniors). The goal of the program is to help students move beyond the excellent academic characteristics of many Berry students to a superlative level through a one-on-one working relationship with a psychology faculty mentor. George Scholars will be selected based upon their performance at Berry during their first 3 semesters and clear potential for an outstanding level of scholarship throughout their remaining career at Berry. Scholars will be expected to interact with and learn from the other George Scholars, to promote the program at departmental and campus events, and to deliver a paper presentation at the annual Berry College Symposium for Student Scholarship that takes place each spring semester. Scholars are expected to provide a project summary report to the George Scholar Coordinator after year one prior to the last day of classes in the spring semester. The report should include information regarding significant changes (if any) to the project, forward progress on the project, a budget of any expenses that are significant (e.g., travel to a conference). Scholars should note that this information must be as accurate as possible as it will be used to: 1) determine if the Scholars' progress is acceptable, and thus, worthy of year two funding, and 2) make budget projections for the George Scholars Fund. Scholars in their second year are expected to submit a complete APA formatted research report prior to the last day of classes of the spring semester toward their PSY 498 course grade.

Dissemination of research findings is highly valued by the George family. Project abstracts will be posted on the George Scholars website. Additionally, scholars are encouraged to publish and present their research at professional meetings. Scholars are expected to participate in events (e.g., meet-and-greets, dinners, lectures) connected with the George family visits to Berry

College and George Family Lecture Series and to share their experiences.

Eligibility Criteria

Full-time students with no fewer than 45 hours and no more than 67 hours are eligible to apply. Exceptions to the hour criteria may be waived if a student brought in AP credit or transferred to the psychology department. In addition, students must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and have completed at least one course in research methods and statistics or single case research design.

In all cases, the student's project should take four (4) full semesters (i.e., two fall, two spring) to complete. Students who are interested in becoming or who have become George Scholars that plan to graduate early must inform and discuss this with the George Scholars program coordinator. George Scholars must register for one semester of PSY 498 during the spring semester of their senior year unless they are enrolled in HON 451 (Honor's Thesis). The proposed projects should go beyond what is accomplished in the context of a research practicum or directed study.

Applicants are required to have obtained the endorsement of a faculty mentor who will assist the student in developing, conducting, and disseminating the research, and the endorsement of your research methods and statistics instructor (if not the same as your faculty mentor). The research methods and statistics faculty member should comment on the students' understanding of research design and statistical analyses and their capability of completing the George Scholarship (i.e., PSY 260, PSY 261, or ABA 353 for projects involving single-subject design if currently enrolled or completed).

Application and Selection Process

Students will submit a completed application presented below, a resume/CV, a recommendation letter from their faculty mentor, endorsement from your research methods instructor (if not the same as your faculty mentor), and signatures from the Psychology Department Chair and School Dean. *Note.* Students must allow at least one week for the Chair and Dean to review and sign the application form.

Applications must include a description of the research objectives and proposed project (with an understanding that details of the project may change), a timeline (including a projected date for IRB or IACUC approval), and initial plans for the use of grant funds.

Research proposals may be in the mentor's area of research, but must be student-generated; however, mentors may offer students guidance in refining their proposals. Additionally, applicants should address the educational value of their project and their evolving academic and career goals. There must be a clear statement about the likelihood of project feasibility and success of the mentor/student collaboration in the mentor's recommendation letter.

Faculty mentors must be able to demonstrate their ability to mentor successfully the research of the students in an extraordinary way—that is, beyond the usual role of faculty advisor. The proposal must go beyond the scope or expected outcomes of the academic major. The faculty mentor will continue to work with the Scholar throughout the project duration, which is expected to take four semesters. The Department Chair and School Dean must approve the initial plan, once developed by the Scholar with the faculty mentor's support.

Students will be selected based upon their GPA at Berry, psychology coursework GPA, campus activities, research proposal strengths, recommendation from faculty mentor, and endorsement from PSY 260, PSY 261, or ABA 353 instructor (if not the same as the mentor). Applications will be evaluated according to The George Scholars Evaluation Form, which may be used to guide students and mentors in preparing applications.

Students should consult the website and application form for the application deadline. George Scholars will be announced every spring. Scholars will be notified via campus mail with an award letter from the George Scholar Coordinator. Students must agree to the terms of the grant by signing and returning the grant acceptance form included in the award letter.

Stipulations of Use of Grant Funds

Each George Scholar will receive up to a \$4,000 grant to be used to conduct and present the

research. The Scholar is limited to using \$2,000 during year one, but may access any leftover funds during year two. Some exceptions to this policy may apply, for instance when a Scholar needs more than \$2,000 in year 1 to purchase materials or equipment critical to their project. Use of funds post-graduation (e.g., presentation at a conference) must be approved by the Psychology Department Chair and School Dean prior to the student's graduation, and funds may not be used once the next academic year has commenced. Any unused funds will remain as surplus in the George Scholars budget.

Funds may be used to pay for research-related costs such as computer software, testing instruments, materials and supplies, workshop or conference registration and expenses, and books/reference materials. If the project requires purchase of equipment (e.g., computer) defined as a durable good with a 2 + year longevity and/or cost of \$1,000 or more, the rationale must be articulated in the budget proposal. If it is deemed necessary to purchase equipment, the Office for Information Technology should be contacted to assist with purchasing. All equipment will become the property of Berry College once the project is completed. Grants cannot be used to cover tuition, fees, room, or board at Berry College.

Scholars should work with their faculty mentor to revise budgets as research costs incur and are advised to share major changes in proposed budgets with the George Scholar Coordinator. Scholars are expected to complete purchase orders and expense vouchers for all purchases and travel with the appropriate documentation. Completed expense vouchers should be submitted to the Departmental Secretary to

record in the Scholars' account within two weeks of returning from travel to a professional meeting. A typed itemized spreadsheet, listing expenses for each date of travel, and documentation of all expenses greater than \$10.00, should accompany the expense voucher. In addition, purchases made with a debit or credit card must have the George Scholar recipients name on the card. Reimbursement of expenses is dependent upon approval of the Psychology Department Chair and School Dean.

The Scholars' funds cannot be used to support faculty or guest expenses including, purchases, memberships in professional societies, or travel. Scholars' funds may be used for contractual services, such as translators, research facilitators, or research participant compensation. Funds may not be used to hire student research assistants or family members.

Mentor Obligations

The faculty mentor will receive \$1000 (\$500 after year one, and \$500 after year two) as compensation for supporting the Scholars' research and professional goals. There are no limitations on use of the stipend and no expense vouchers are necessary.

Mentors should meet one hour per week or as needed with Scholars to provide guidance and ensure forward progress on their projects. Additionally, they should encourage and assist Scholars in fulfilling their obligations of showcasing the George Scholars program to the George family, the campus community, and professionals in the discipline.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Research Project Title

- *Note.* Your title should reflect the variables of interest in your proposed project.

Abstract (250 words or one paragraph)

- Summary of the proposed research project (see Purdue Owl for APA 7th edition guidelines for writing an abstract and for examples)

Research Proposal (no longer than 2000 words or four, double-spaced pages)

- Introduction to your topic
- Background and rationale for your proposed study
 - Compose a brief history of work that has been done in the area that is *pertinent* to your project (cite at least 3-5 peer-reviewed sources).
 - Your literature review should provide motivation for your project. If you are using a new and different manipulation, predictor, or dependent variable, emphasize this in your review of earlier work. Indicate areas where the research may be lacking (gaps) or where there may be inconsistent findings across studies.
 - Present the rationale for the study – why is the project needed, what value will it add to the field over what is already known/been investigated?
 - State a clear, testable hypothesis that expresses a positive relationship between your variables.
- Proposed method for investigating research question (participants; sample materials, design, procedure)
 - Indicate who your participants will be (e.g., Berry College students, Berry elementary students in grades 3- 5) and what sample size you will need. *Note.* You will want to work with your faculty mentor to conduct a power analysis to estimate sample size (where applicable).
 - Operationalize the variables of interest (IVs, DVs).
 - Describe the design of the study and provide an overview of the general procedure.
- Expected results
 - State the expected outcomes in light of your literature review and stated hypothesis.
- Conclusions
 - Provide potential implications of your findings for the field of psychology.
 - Mention your plans to disseminate the work beyond the Berry campus.
- References
 - Cite sources used in literature review.
- Appendices
 - Provide an itemized budget proposal (see template below).
 - Provide a detailed timeline for completing the project (year one and year two objectives). Include a projected date for IRB or IACUC approval (usually end of the fall semester of first year)
 - List key personnel in the project besides the applicant and mentor. Provide titles and contact information if possible. Indicate if you plan to have undergraduate psychology majors assist with data collection.

ITEMIZED BUDGET PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

Cost estimates should be combined for years one and two of the project and should not exceed \$4,000 (Students should limit costs to \$2,000 for year one if possible). Also, for professional meetings, Scholars should visit the organization's website, which typically will contain future convention meeting dates, location, and lodging information. Scholars can use current airfare and hotel rates to estimate expenses.

Expendable materials/supplies. Please itemize.

Equipment (durable good with 2+ years longevity and/or cost equal to or over \$1,000). Please itemize after consulting CSEHS faculty member in charge of technical support.

Photocopy; Printing (e.g., purchasing a ream of paper, ink cartridge if doing a lot of printing)
Students can inquire with Department Secretary as to the cost of paper and ink.

Telephone; Postage (unless you are mailing a survey to a large number of people through USPS, this line item is usually \$0.00)

Other expenses (e.g., contractual services; compensation for research participants). Please itemize.

Professional society student membership fees; workshop tuition

Conference registration

Transportation (specify destination and method of travel; consult the Psychology Department Secretary for mileage costs)

Lodging (specify destination and cost per night)

Meals (specify number of days if away from campus; specify key personnel for meals provided at research meetings, the typical amount budgeted for meals is \$30-35/day)

RELEASE FORM

I have applied to be a George Scholar in the Department of Psychology, and I hereby authorize the faculty members on the George Scholars Selection Committee a) to review my Berry College transcript and research proposal, and b) to discuss my academic progress with Berry College faculty members on the selection committee.

Signature

Date

Please print your full name

Application check list:

Application form

Applicant's cover letter

Research proposal

Itemized budget proposal form

Resume/CV

Unofficial Berry transcript

Mentor's letter and RMs instructor's letter (if different from mentor)

Release form