

Fulbright Advisory Committee Spring 2023 Final Report

Membership

Chairs: Michelle Cude, Meredith Malburne-Wade

Members: Ed Brantmeier, Bud Clarke, Jennifer Coffman, Vesna Hart, John Hulsey, Sasha Kokhan, Erika Metzler Sawin, Holly Yanacek

Charge: Members of the Fulbright Advisory Board will provide ongoing guidance regarding Fulbright initiatives on campus, co-facilitate programs if available, and coach faculty and students through the Fulbright process as needed.

Summary of Current Semester Activity:

- On April 21, 2023, the committee convened for the FAC Spring meeting on Zoom.
- The FAC received the student Fulbright updates from Meredith Malburne-Wade. JMU has been named a Top Producer of Fulbright US Student Grants for the fourth year in a row. This is the first time JMU has achieved this honor in the research university category (including R1 and R2 institutions). In the most recent cycle (due October 2022), JMU had 46 applicants. From that pool, 20 semi-finalists were named. Ultimately, 8 were named Fulbright finalists (recipients) and 3 were named alternates.
- Michelle Cude provided the faculty Fulbright updates, noting that at least two JMU faculty have been named Fulbright Scholars for 2023-2024.
- Meredith Malburne-Wade provided an update on the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence process. JMU was selected to receive a Scholar in 2023-2024, but our Scholar was unable to come for the full year. At the time of this report, a compromise has likely been reached where he will come to campus in the Spring 2024 semester rather than for the full year. The School of Music will be hosting the Scholar. JMU will be ineligible for a Scholar-in-Residence until 2025-2026 as schools are only eligible every other year.
- Michelle Cude urged all FAC members to revisit the Outreach Lecturing Fund link she provided and to select 2-3 speakers to invite to campus next year. Bringing local Fulbrighters to campus is an excellent way to promote international exchange.
- The lack of housing for visiting scholars continues to be an important issue, and one that influenced (negatively) our Scholar-in-Residence when considering coming to Harrisonburg for a year. Committee members noted that JMU faculty who are on their own Fulbrights or who are away from the area short- or long-term may consider renting their homes, but there is no known centralized mechanism for sharing this information. The committee questioned if grant writing or other endeavors could help us build toward the funds necessary for permanent or semi-permanent space, whether ongoing apartment rentals or an "International House."

- The celebratory Fulbright Luncheon was cancelled this year due to lack of staffing. Turnover and staffing changes have made planning and executing a large event difficult. There is some interest in moving the event to Fall, directly after students submit their applications, but such a move will be staffing dependent given the high demands of fall fellowships applications (including, but not limited to, Fulbright).

Future Work Planned:

- We continue to work on sustainability efforts (creating a centralized Teams site for maintained important documents, guest lists, minutes, plans, videos, etc.).
- The FAC would like to advocate for a Coordinator for Fulbright Efforts. JMU sees increasing numbers of requests from foreign scholars looking to visit, departments requesting assistance, etc. Having a centralized coordinator who could also promote and mentor faculty applicants would be useful. Conversations will continue this summer regarding next steps.