

AHLSS Postdoc Plan

Everyone knows that the academic job market for scholars in the Arts, Humanities, and lettered Social Sciences is very bad. We are producing Ph.D. graduates at a far greater rate than we are retiring faculty. As undergraduate enrollment in these departments has decreased, colleges do not feel the need to grow or maintain faculty size. Although the market forces are pushing down on the graduate population, faculty and universities depend on a healthy grad student cohort. Faculty depend on grad students for promotion and job satisfaction; universities depend on grad students for teaching and other labor. As a result, the number of people accepted to grad school does not reflect the realities of the job market.

One way to face this challenge is to expand the training opportunities for “alt ac” careers for students. If we cannot survive on a fraction of the grad students we have now, we should multiply the pathways to careers open to the students we accept. Organizations like Modern Languages Association (MLA) have devoted energy and money to this endeavor, but ultimately it requires effort on the part of the faculty to find the time they don’t have to acquire the skills they don’t have.

Another way to address the challenges faced by grad students is to provide them support during the key stage of their careers when we usually drop them: immediately post dissertation defense. To be considered for a job, most candidates must have defended their dissertation; once they have defended, however, they are no longer eligible for GA/TA support. Further, they often lose the privileges of a university home: library access, office space, email. Students without financial reserves cannot wait, unemployed, during the long job search, and so they take jobs that then radically reduce their chance to successfully compete on the job market the following year. Students with a postdoc bridge year could compete for impressive jobs at peer or better institutions given a year between dissertation defense and the fall of their first academic position.

To address this issue, we propose altering the AHLSS program by splitting the funds into three groups of people: three faculty mentors, three current graduate students, and three Ph.D. students who have defended their dissertation in last 6 months.

Faculty mentors will be selected on the basis of demonstrated excellence in graduate mentorship and service toward the professionalization and/or career advancement of their students. The graduate students will be selected based on excellence in teaching and promise of their research. The postdocs will be chosen based on the excellence of their dissertation and their academic career promise. Faculty will receive a teaching release and be required to work together to come up with a College wide plan to improve career prospects for graduates in AHLSS. Graduate students will receive support and teach a course selected in consultation with the Department Chair. Postdocs will be invited to participate in their departments in a small (as-chosen) GA-type project and will also devote themselves to the job search.

Departments who receive one of these three types of honors (faculty mentors, grad students, or postdocs) will be required to present a plan for how they will support the winner(s) and mentor/monitor the work.

Budget:

\$60,000	stipends for three post-docs (\$20,000 each)
<u>\$60,000</u>	stipends for three graduate students (\$20,000 each)
\$120,000	Total

To Apply:

Graduate students, potential postdocs, and interested faculty should contact their Graduate Program Directors. Proposals should be submitted by GPDs with the approval/signature of Chairs.

For AHLSS postdocs, GPDs should submit names of potential postdocs, CVs, and a brief (250 words) argument for why this person should receive it.

For Graduate Students and faculty mentors, GPDs should submit the following information:

Name of graduate student and the name of the courses he/she will teach and how this will benefit the student and the department;

Name of the faculty mentor and the project he/she will work on with the course release, including measurable deliverable at the end of the year, and why/how the department will manage without the course the faculty will be relieved of.

*Graduate students do not need to teach the courses of the faculty member and they do not need to be mentored by the faculty member, but there must be a plan for how and by whom they will be mentored.

For web:

Postdocs, Graduate Fellows, and Faculty Service Program

The College of Arts and Sciences and the Humanities Institute is pleased to announce the call for nominations for the Postdocs, Graduate Fellows, and Faculty Service Program. Although modeled after the previous AHLSS Graduate Fellows and Faculty Research Program, we have altered it to take into account a different set of needs.

This program provides one year of funding, at \$20,000, to three doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy by April 20, 2020 and who have completed their department's allocated funding and three postdocs who have defended their dissertation by April 20, 2020. Grad Student Fellows will teach two courses during the academic year. Courses to be decided by the Chair based on the needs of the department. Postdoc fellows will not be required to teach but should be provided office space and faculty mentorship as they prepare for and enter the job market. Faculty should be nominated based on their interest in, and capacity for, mentorship and a proposed project for the department. Such projects could be graduate curriculum redesign, professional development seminars, graduate recruitment plans, etc. Associate professors and professors who have already received an AHLSS are eligible to apply.

Part One – Postdoc Nomination Procedures:

Graduate Program Directors should submit

- Candidate's CV
- Nomination paragraph by the Chair of the dissertation committee (250 words)
- Nomination paragraph by the GPD (250 words)
- Approval of the department chair

Part Two – Graduate Student Nomination Procedures

Graduate Program Directors should submit

- Candidate's CV
- Teaching evaluation by member of the department
- Nomination paragraph (~250 words) by the GPD
- Approval of the department chair

Part Three – Faculty fellows

- Graduate Program Director should submit
- Faculty CV
- Letter of nomination by GPD or Chair
- Brief description of the proposed service plan or project

All applications are due by end of day on April 20, 2020.

Additionally, the Graduate Program Director and the Department Chair will produce end-of-the-year reports detailing what was accomplished by the grad student, postdoc, and/or the faculty member. They are due Monday, May 28, 2021.

The selection committee will review the nominations from Tuesday, April 21 through Thursday, April 30 with winners announced on Friday, May 1. Winners will be invited to attend and be briefly acknowledged at the Graduate Awards ceremony on Wednesday, May 22.