

# THE LISSKA CENTER FOR INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

The mission of the Lisska Center for Intellectual Engagement is to support research and scholarship, to foster intellectual community and academic enrichment among all Denisonians, and to provide an interdisciplinary space for the open exchange of ideas, perspectives, and arguments.

## 1. Fellowships Advising

The Lisska Center staff assists students and recent alumni in applying for nationally and internationally competitive fellowships at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Fellowships fund summer programs, study abroad programs, service projects, and postgraduate study and research both in the U.S. and abroad. The Lisska Center provides intensive one-on-one support to those applying for any fellowship or grant opportunity, helping applicants identify appropriate opportunities, prepare their application materials, and write their application essays. The Lisska Center also coaches fellowship competition finalists preparing for interviews.

Examples of prestigious fellowships include the Rhodes Scholarship, the Marshall Scholarship, Fulbright awards, the Harry S. Truman Scholarship, the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship in Science and Mathematics, the Morris K. Udall Scholarship in National Environmental Policy, National Science Foundation Fellowships, the Boren Scholarship for International Study, DAAD (German Academic Exchange) grants, and many others. Denison is proud of the many students and alumni who have won such awards over the years.

While some fellowship applications require an institutional endorsement and have a minimum GPA requirement, many do not. All interested students are encouraged to schedule an individual appointment and/or attend group information sessions. Comprehensive listings of national and international fellowships can be found on the Lisska Center's MyDenison page (<https://my.denison.edu/node/44/>).

## 2. Summer Scholars Program

The Lisska Center coordinates Denison's Lisska Summer Scholars Program. Each year, more than 120 students across all disciplines receive funding to support independent research under the close supervision of a faculty member, or full-time collaborative work with faculty members, during the summer. The program gives students a unique undergraduate venue in which to experiment with ideas and artistic expression, pursue an intellectual passion, and focus intently on the resolution of a question over a sustained period of time.

Summer Scholars projects do not confer credit hours and are not graded. All students must produce a scholarly project (e.g., final poster, paper, performance, or equivalent) and present their summer's work at a fall Summer Scholars symposium at Denison.

**Lisska Scholars** work under the close guidance of a Denison faculty member between mid-May and the end of July. Lisska Scholars may be awarded funding for projects on campus (10 week or 5 week option) or off campus (10 week option only). Applications for Lisska Scholars awards are evaluated by the Student Research Grants Committee (SRGC), an elected committee of four faculty members (one from each division of the college), overseen by the Lisska Center for Intellectual Engagement.

Lisska Summer Scholars receive a stipend, free campus housing, and supplemental research funds.

**Faculty mentors** are expected to work closely with students as they develop their project proposals and must submit a detailed endorsement supporting each student's application for a Lisska Scholars award. Faculty mentors are expected to be on campus (except for short absences) and should meet at least twice weekly with each student during the duration of the project. Faculty members may not supervise more than three individual or joint projects. Faculty advisors also receive a stipend per student supervised. Complete program guidelines can be found on the Lisska Center (<https://my.denison.edu/node/44/>) MyDenison page.

Decisions on faculty eligibility to supervise, or share in the supervision, of student summer research, are made on a case-by-case basis by the Provost. In most cases, tenure track and non-tenure-track faculty who teach at least 75% of a full-time load, and who have a contract to teach at Denison in the fall semester following the summer research, are eligible to supervise summer research.

**Qualified students** who are rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors in all disciplines are eligible to apply for Summer Scholars awards. A qualified student is one who meets one of the following criteria:

- will be returning to Denison in the fall and has registered for classes;
- will be on an approved off-campus study program in the fall;
- is on an approved academic leave;
- is on an approved leave of absence and does not have to reapply to return.

Any student who does not fall into one of the above categories is not eligible. Projects do not necessarily need to be in the discipline of the student's major. Interdisciplinary projects may be proposed.

**Off-Campus Summer Scholars awards** from the Lisska Center provide support for students conducting a full-time independent research, scholarly, or creative project in any discipline (including the sciences) that requires some or all of the time to be spent off-campus. Projects typically last 10 weeks between mid-May and the end of July. (Some time may be spent on campus before and/or after the off-campus portion of the project.) A Denison faculty member must be the primary mentor, but a non-Denison mentor may help supervise the project on-site, as appropriate. Proposals must specify the role and time commitment of the Denison and non-Denison mentors; faculty stipends will be awarded accordingly. The student stipend and guidelines are the same as for on-campus awards, but also cover travel expenses and provide an allowance for off-campus housing. Applications for Off-Campus Summer Scholars awards are evaluated by the SRGC. For complete guidelines, see the Lisska Center (<https://my.denison.edu/node/44/>) MyDenison page.

The Lisska Center also works with the coordinators of the Anderson Summer Science Program, the Woodyard Scholars awards in the Department of Religion, the Ashbrook Summer Scholars awards, and the Battelle Summer Scholars awards.

**The Anderson Summer Science Program** provides summer research assistantships in the sciences. Current information is maintained on the Anderson Summer Science Program (<https://my.denison.edu/campus-resources/science-at-denison/anderson-summer-science-program/>) MyDenison page.

**Woodyard Scholars** awards provide students with Summer Scholars awards to carry out individual or collaborative projects in the area of

“Religion and Civic Responsibility.” Woodyard Scholars are supervised by members of the Religion Department for 10 weeks between mid-May and the end of July. (For projects involving other disciplines, other faculty members may also be involved.) For more information, contact the Department of Religion (<https://catalog.denison.edu/catalog/courses-of-study/religion/>).

**Ashbrook Summer Scholars** awards are intended to “foster and promote research and educational cooperation between faculty and students in exploring ways to improve the political and economic betterment of the underprivileged Licking County person.” The Ashbrook Scholarship is open to any student who has engaged in community service (broadly defined as including, but not limited to, DCA involvement, work with America Reads or as a Community Service intern, and service learning coursework). Scholars work under the guidance of a Denison faculty member as they carry out research and engage in service with an organization that provides some kind of assistance to the community. For complete guidelines, see the Lisska Center (<https://my.denison.edu/node/44/>) MyDenison page.

**Battelle Memorial Institute** awards support Denison students participating in science research projects throughout the world. Some awards for entire summer support may be given, whereas other awards may be for a student’s short stay at a remote location to carry out data collection. For complete guidelines, see the Lisska Center’s MyDenison (<https://my.denison.edu/node/44/>) page.

**Denison University Research Foundation (DURF)** awards support students working as research assistants for Denison faculty members during the summer. (Note: research assistants are only considered Summer Scholars if they are doing a piece of independent work, not just assisting with a professor’s project.) Denison faculty apply for DURF funds to support a Denison student assistant. Any qualified Denison student is eligible. Faculty may contact the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs for more information.

Student research may also be supported by **outside grants** received by faculty in various departments. Students receiving outside funding to conduct summer research (e.g., DURF Scholars, DAAD-RISE, etc.) may also be included as members of the Summer Scholars Program.

The Lisska Center will host an information session for interested students in November when the proposal guidelines become available. Applications are typically due in late January, with faculty endorsements due in early February.

### 3. Scholar-leader Programs

#### Exordium

Exordium is a two semester co-curricular leadership development program for students during their first year at Denison. This program provides a foundation of skills and experiences in preparation for leadership, scholarship, and service opportunities. Faculty intentionally facilitate student engagement with a variety of resources both on and off campus. In the first semester students participate in activities related to a successful first year transition, personal self-reflection, and early career exploration. During the second semester students focus more purposefully on developing leadership skills, early networking skills, and academic enrichment activities that support pathways to fellowships, internships, and research opportunities. Students earn 1 credit each semester in this program.

#### Studium

Studium is a three year co-curricular program that supports students as they plan for and pursue highly competitive post-collegiate pathways. Students can apply for Studium at the end of their first year at Denison. Studium students are introduced to professional exploration, leadership skills, and academic enrichment opportunities. They gain experience both on and off campus accessing resources and developing networks. The centerpiece of the sophomore Studium experience is researching and designing a community impact project in Licking County, Ohio. The intent is to create a sustainable project which will be implemented during the students’ third and fourth years.

### 4. Academic Funding Opportunities

The Lisska Center serves as a hub for funding student research and academic enhancement travel. Specifically:

- The Faculty Course Enhancement Fund provides small amounts of funding to faculty members wishing to take a class on a field trip or other class activity.
- The Student Academic Travel Fund provides up to \$750 per student for travel to academic conferences to present papers or posters. Requests should be made to the Program Assistant of the Lisska Center.
- The Student Research Fund provides up to \$500 per student for conducting senior research or other research during the academic year. The SRGC reviews and approves all awards.
- The Academic Enhancement Travel Fund supports students traveling individually or in small groups with a Denison faculty or staff member to conduct research, attend a conference or workshop (where they are not presenting a paper), or engage in similar activities not covered by other sources of funding (up to \$1,000 per student over their four years in college).

The Lisska Center also administers a number of other Denison scholarships and awards, including the A. Blair Knapp Award, the Kenneth Joseph Hines Memorial Award, the Reverend John and Arlena Hasel Endowed Award, the Megan Lisska and Elin Lisska Christensen Award in the Humanities, and the Provost’s Academic Excellence Award.

### 5. Intellectual Programming

The Lisska Center sponsors an array of programs and events designed to promote a culture of intellectual life on campus.

#### Minds Wide Open Series

This speaker series showcases a diversity of voices and perspectives on timely and important subjects through lively conversational programs featuring global and local thought leaders. The Lisska Center typically hosts three speakers per semester, and the zoom format allows for recording of events for future viewing by members of the Denison community. To access these recordings, as well as more information about these programs and topics, please log onto the Lisska Center’s MyDenison (<https://my.denison.edu/node/44/>) page.

#### All-Campus Debates

The Lisska Center and Denison Debates and Discourse hosts a monthly all-campus Braver Angels debate during the academic year, as well as a debate attended by all first-year students during Orientation. Topics for each of these parliamentary-style debates are voted on by Denison students. Once a resolution for a debate is formulated, students lead the

debates in making arguments on the affirmative and negative side of the resolution before opening the floor to input from all participants.

## **Research Tables**

The purpose of Denison's Research Tables is threefold: (1) to bring together faculty members from across the college and other institutions to explore various aspects of the liberal arts, using practices that sustain a strong academic community; (2) to create a forum for faculty members from different disciplines to learn from one another; and (3) to deepen the intellectual tone on campus by increasing opportunities for different disciplinary perspectives to intersect and new pathways among faculty and students to form.

Research Tables should focus on multidisciplinary issues of interest to participants who are committed to sustained intellectual exploration within the liberal arts. Research Tables may vary in scope, ranging from limited undertakings similar to reading groups (e.g., locally-based members, one-year time frame) to more ambitious projects (e.g., one or more outside faculty members, travel component, up to a three-year time frame). All Research Tables must culminate in a focused symposium that brings other scholars and practitioners to Denison. Research Table members must complete a final report summarizing the Research Table's focus, activities, and outcomes in terms of student learning and faculty research.

Students in good academic standing may be invited by faculty sponsors to participate in a Research Table. Calls for new Research Tables are put out intermittently so that there are no more than three Research Tables running at any given time. Proposals are reviewed by the SRGC.