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**EMERGING SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

The Presidential Emerging Scholar Grant is a unique and affirming grant, which may be bestowed upon a Montana State University undergraduate in recognition of their potential. Unlike other prestigious grants, selection is not based on academic performance or scholarly research, campus involvement or financial need. Rather, the Presidential Emerging Scholar Grant requires one simple criterion – **potential** – as identified by a faculty mentor.

1. **PURPOSE**

The grant is designed to target "students with exceptional talents and students who are on the brink of academic success" in need of inspiration and encouragement, or who could benefit from an opportunity to grow beyond his/her own expectations or those of others. Faculty mentors will be asked to identify candidates for this grant and also to mentor the student on their journey towards scholarly and professional achievement. The Emerging Scholar Grant could transform the life of a student, in terms of their own expectations of what may be possible for them to achieve. Key to the success of this initiative is the role of the MSU faculty mentor, who will identify, mentor and provide academic guidance to the student on the proposed project.

The decision making for granting of the Emerging Scholar Grants will reside solely with the offices of the university President and Provost based upon a nomination and supporting documents, committee review and recommendation process, and fund availability.

A confidential on-line nomination process is available for faculty to propose a student that in his/her opinion exemplifies the type of student the grant is intended to encourage. The administration and promotion of the nomination process will be facilitated through the egis of the Montana State University Alumni Foundation (Alumni Foundation). By facilitating the process, the Alumni Foundation will coordinate the receipt of nominations, the meeting schedule to convene the review committee, and the timely reporting of fund availability.

The review committee shall evaluate nominations and make recommendations to the President and Provost. The President is ultimately responsible for the approval of each Emerging Scholar Grant. All grants will be evaluated based on the criteria set forth in the fund agreement for Emerging Scholar Grants with transparency and consistency. Additionally, the Alumni Foundation will monitor and evaluate the Emerging Scholar Grant program to assure that donors to this initiative are able to clearly see the impact these grants are having on the students receiving them. As the intent of this grant is to promote experiences outside of the classroom, tuition and fees cannot be paid with Emerging Scholars Grants.

The Alumni Foundation will provide scholars’ final reports to the President, the review committee and donors, describing the resulting opportunities and impact on the students’ academic career.

* 1. **NOMINATION CRITERIA**
  2. The student nomination can be provided by any MSU faculty, tenured or adjunct, or Executive in Residence.
  3. All undergraduate students in good standing are eligible.

2.3 An individual undergraduate can receive only one grant.

2.4 The faculty mentor recommending the student must provide evidence of their ability and willingness to provide the oversight to mentor the student through the completion of the project.

2.5 The extra-curricular project, be it research, outreach, experiential or artistic endeavor, must be described sufficiently by the faculty mentor to provide evidence of value and impact to the overall educational experience and success of the student.

2.6 The nomination must provide evidence that the project would not otherwise be available without this grant.

2.7 Faculty must hold the nomination in confidence and not have informed the student.

2.8 Nomination check list:

* Student name, major course of study, academic year and current GPA;
* Letter of support from the faculty mentor describing:
  + - what makes this student stand apart from their peers;
    - what challenges does this student face or has he/she overcome;
    - attributes that identify the candidate’s potential;
    - evidence of the student’s motivation to succeed; and
    - how this project will add value to the students’ academic achievement.
  + Budget summary identifying what the grant is to pay for: stipend, equipment, hotel, travel, conference fees, food, and appropriate supplemental books; and
  + Evidence of financial need to pursue the project.
  1. There will be no bias or preference shown for or in opposition to a specific major, gender or residency of a student in the nomination process.

**3.0 REVIEW COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

3.1 Identified by the Provost’s office, a committee will be created to review the nominations. The committee will be convened twice per year to provide review and make recommendations on current nominations.

3.2 The committee will have an Alumni Foundation liaison, with no selection authority, to provide coordination, timeliness and the flow of information.

3.3 The committee will be representative of the following areas on campus and will serve in this capacity for one academic year.

At least two faculty members from different disciplines (selected through the Provost’s office);

One representative from the Office of the Vice President of Student Success;

One Academic Dean (selected through the Provost’s office); and

One former Emerging Scholar Grant recipient.

3.4 The committee will review each nomination that meets application criteria to identify candidates for further consideration. *(Attachment A: Evaluation Form)*

3.5 The committee will be responsible for providing the President’s office with the proposal(s) and candidate selection recommendation(s) for final decision.

1. **FACULTY AND CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1 Within two weeks of notification the candidate and his/her faculty mentor will submit a detailed proposal to the Alumni Foundation liaison.

4.2 The proposal will include:

* An explanation of the purpose of the proposed project with accompanying narrative to explain how this opportunity will impact the student’s academic and/or professional career.
* An itinerary if travel is required.
* Equipment and/or supplies that may be required.
* If not provided in the initial nomination, a budget summary identifying what the grant is to pay for: hotel, travel (air, ground) conference fees, food, appropriate supplemental books. *(Attachment B: Budget Form)*
* Time line; i.e. travel dates, projet completion date etc.

4.3 To allow flexibility for students to move forward with plans, funds will be managed through a university index number accessible by their faculty mentor.

* 1. Criteria as set forth in the MSU Student Trip Policy will be the responsibility of the student and faculty mentor to review and adhere too.
  2. Within twelve months of receipt of the grant, the student will complete the approved project with oversight provided by the faculty mentor.
  3. Within three months of completion of the project, the student will be required to submit a brief final report. *(Attachment C: Final Report)* Faculty mentors will be required to review the student’s final report and add their brief evaluation of the project. Mirroring the process used in major granting organizations, if a final report is not completed, the student could be responsible for refunding the full amount of the grant.
  4. The final report will be submitted to the Alumni Foundation liaison for distribution to the President, the review committee and the donor(s) detailing the results of the project, describing the opportunities derived and how this opportunity has enriched his/her academic career and the significance of the faculty mentoring.
  5. The students will be required to make a short presentation following the completion of their project/program. Ideally their presentations will be incorporated with the *Spring Undergraduate Scholars Program*, a well-established program which complements the mission of the Emerging Scholars program. Students unable to attend in person for their presentation will be asked to join and present during this program through electronic methods.
  6. **ALUMNI FOUNDATION RESPONSIBILITIES**
  7. The Alumni Foundation will provide oversight of the process by providing a liaison to the Review Committee.
  8. To address missing criteria during the initial vetting process, the Alumni Foundation liaison will contact the faculty mentor, inform them of the needed information and provide a window of opportunity to reach compliance.
  9. The Alumni Foundation liaison will coordinate meeting schedules with timely email and follow-up.
  10. Upon final candidate selection from the MSU President’s Office, the Alumni Foundation liaison will notify the nominating faculty of selection.  *(Attachment D: Faculty Notification, successful)*
  11. The Alumni Foundation liaison will be responsible for notifying faculty of nominations that were not named as Emerging Scholars. *(Attachment E: Faculty Notification, unsuccessful)*
  12. The Alumni Foundation liaison will work in collaboration with the MSU President’s office to produce award letters for each student. *(Attachment F: Presidents’ letter)*
  13. The Alumni Foundation liaison will coordinate with the faculty mentor and student scholar to collect supporting documentation as needed in awarding of the grant. *(Attachment G: Additional Documentation).*
  14. The Alumni Foundation liaison will be the conduit for providing Alumni Foundation leadership with the names and copies of the proposals of each successful candidate.
  15. A representative of the Alumni Foundation Accounting team will make funds available in a timely manner.

5.8 The Alumni Foundation in conjunction with University Communications will develop the protocol for public and private announcements.

* 1. The Alumni Foundation will maintain records to include nominations, grants funded, and final reports.
  2. The Alumni Foundation will steward and provide feedback to the lead donors annually providing evidence of the success and growth of the Emerging Scholars program.

1. **NOMINATION AND GRANTING TIMELINE**

With recognition for fluctuations of the calendar each semester, the nomination and selection process will fall generally within the following timeframe.

Nomination Period Review Period Grant Award Notification

08/15 – 10/15 10/15 – 11/15 11/20

01/01 – 02/28 03/01 – 03/15 04/01

1. **AWARD PRESENTATION**

With the unique nature of the Emerging Scholars Grants, an awarding ceremony to recognize the faculty mentors and the emerging scholars will provide inspiration and encouragement to others who seek to achieve this level of recognition.

It is of significant importance to recognize and acknowledge the role which MSU faculty members play in the success of student achievement. Of equal value in celebrating student potential, an award presentation provides the President the opportunity to recognize and affirm the commitment of faculty working to bring unique opportunities to their students.

Hosting one event each granting cycle (fall semester and spring semester) provides appropriate timing and planning for the attendance of the MSU President, the MSU Provost, the MSU Alumni Foundation President & CEO, and inspirational donors such as David Kem and Judith Raines (founders of MSU’s first Emerging Scholars Grants) at a ceremony recognizing these students and their faculty mentors.

1. **ACCELERATED PROCESS**

It is within the scope of the office of the President to accelerate an Emerging Scholars Grant review and award process for a unique, time-sensitive opportunity which is brought forward that meets the criteria and mission of the Emerging Scholars Grant but falls outside the strict timelines established within the process.

With an eye on student success and achievement, when a faculty member recognizes an opportunity for an emerging scholar outside of the identified timeline, nominations made through the use of the dedicated web site will be brought directly to the attention of the Alumni Foundation liaison to initiate an accelerated review process.

The Alumni Foundation Liaison will manage compliance to all criteria as required in the *Nomination Criteria* section of the process. Upon selection by the MSU President, notification of the successful nomination(s) will be made to the Alumni Foundation liaison initiating the established process of notification to the faculty and additional follow-through that will measure and monitor impact.

**9.0 ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Section 3.4– Evaluation Form

Attachment B: Section 4.2 – Budget Form

Attachment C: Section 4.5 – Final Report

Attachment D: Section 5.4 – Faculty Notification (successful)

Attachment E: Section 5.5 – Faculty Notification (unsuccessful)

Attachment F: Section 5.6 – President’s Letter

Attachment G: Section 5.7 – Additional Documentation