



MSP

University of Kansas

Multicultural Scholars Program

“Preparing Diverse Scholars for Leadership in the Future”

Program Director’s Handbook



2009-2010

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Multicultural Scholars Program

University of Kansas

Introduction and Background

The Multicultural Scholars Program (MSP) at KU is a special and unique opportunity for academically well-prepared undergraduate students. As a Program Director you join a community of other academic professionals and programs whose goal it is to ensure the academic and career success of their scholars.

Each academic program within KU-MSP addresses academic, social, personal, and career aspects of the university experience that is designed to assist and prepare scholars to receive the maximum benefit from their education. Each MSP academic program has a Program Director(s) who serves as a primary contact and mentor during the scholars experience in the program.

The mission of the MSP is to recruit undergraduate students from under-represented backgrounds into various academic majors as a means of increasing the diversity of the student body at the University of Kansas and to provide supports and opportunities that will assist them in their academic success.

The KU-MSP is open to undergraduate students from underrepresented groups at KU (e.g., African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Indigenous students, First-Generation College students, or students with high financial need as defined by Pell Grant eligibility). Students must be committed to rigorous academic work and be willing to be engaged in a variety of activities that are designed not only to support their academic aspirations but to develop other aspects of their undergraduate experience. Applicants must either be U.S. citizens or have been granted U.S. Lawful Permanent Resident status. The primary vision of the KU-MSP is to prepare diverse scholars for leadership in the future.

The following information is designed to provide Program Directors with information that hopefully will be helpful in making decisions and seeking clarification on current policy and practice, and a sample of forms that can be utilized.

Academic Programs

The following academic programs are currently participating in the KU Multicultural Scholars Program. (See **attachment I – Current Academic Programs and Directors**)

- School of Allied Health
- School of Business
- School of Architecture
- School of Education
- The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
 - Natural Sciences/Mathematics
 - Social Sciences
 - Humanities
- School of Journalism
- School of Nursing
- School of Pharmacy
- School of Social Work

Application Process & Scholars

Students who are interested in applying for admission should address their application to the Program Director in the area of academic interest. Application guidelines may slightly vary from program to program; however the following are the typical criteria to be submitted.

- A brief cover letter stating personal background as it pertains to KU-MSP and your academic area of interest
- A high school or community college transcript (if a newly admitted or transfer student)
- Two names of references (preferably teachers, instructors, professors) and their contact information
- A short 2-3 page word-processed essay answering specific questions -specific questions may vary for each program. **(See Attachment II – Application Essay Questions)**

Some programs are competitive in their number of applicants and therefore may be limited in the number of scholars admitted. In some programs, the number of students admitted may also be influenced by the level of scholarship support available. In most cases, admission numbers are determined by financial resources for scholarships and program director workload. The goal is to serve as many scholars as is possible with available resources.

Application deadlines vary by program and are established by each MSP academic program and the Program Director. Prospective Scholars will be encouraged to contact the Program Director to learn of specific timelines for applications and specific admission requirements.

Criteria for Selection of Scholars

Scholars who are accepted into your program should demonstrate a strong motivation toward academic achievement and an interest in their proposed studies, as expressed on their application essay, high school or college transcript/or ARTS form, on a possible phone or a personal interview.

There may be a minimum ACT or SAT criteria; or sub-scores levels or high school or college grade point averages for a given major these criteria will be determined by the program director. The program director makes the final decision (with consultation of the Executive Director – if appropriate) by examining the measures or indicators critical for each academic program. If appropriate, scholars can be admitted provisionally and mentored for one semester. If their academic performance demonstrates strong potential for success, they may officially join the program.

All scholars admitted to the KU-MSP will sign the Acceptance of Agreement form at the beginning of each semester. **(See Attachment III- Acceptance of Agreement)**

Program Directors

Selection of Program Directors

Ideally, program directors would be full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member or have the professional equivalency. However, in many academic units this may not be possible. As Programs increase in the number of scholars participating in a particular program a co-director may be appointed. Again, at least one of the co-directors should be a full-time faculty member. Clearly, exceptions will be made on a case- by- case basis. Program Directors should demonstrate a commitment to the goals of the KU-MSP; show an interest in diversity and be accepting, appreciative; and value cultural differences in students.

Prior to being appointed as a Program Director, each candidate will meet with his/her respective academic supervisor (department chair or dean or both) to make the appropriate arrangements about their expected load of teaching, research and service responsibilities – as appropriate to his/her academic appointment.

Each candidate will also meet with the Executive Director of the KU-MSP. All assurances of the appointment will be discussed in detail – time, resources, commitment, expectations, etc.

If appropriate, prior to accepting the position, program directors can attend a monthly meeting of directors or be allowed to shadow an experienced director to become familiar with the new Program responsibilities.

Finally, program directors should only accept this position when they are assured of the support of their unit supervisor – chair or dean or both- and being fully satisfied with all questions or concerns in the process.

Scholar/Mentor Meetings

Each scholar is expected to have one-on-one meetings with his/her Program Director(s) who serve as the mentor as well. It is the Program Director's responsibility to set-up these appointments and meetings with all scholars in their program. The expectation for each Program Director is that he/she will get to know each scholar on a personal level and vice versa.

These meetings initially will be more frequent at the beginning of a scholar's time in the program, and less frequent during the later semesters of program membership, depending on the scholar's needs and academic status. The purpose of these individual meetings is to assist the scholar with academic, social, or personal issues that will better ensure the student's success at KU. During one-on-one meetings, program directors should keep track of the obtained information. Subsequent meetings should review the student's information from the previous meeting. Any changes in the scholar's situation should be used in future planning. Toward the last third of each semester, grades for each class should be estimated, based on the obtained information from the previous weeks. (These grade estimates should be the basis for planning of end-of-semester study and tutoring, if needed).

The expectation for each program director is that he/she will get to know each scholar on a personal basis and use high a degree of patience and understanding as each scholar grows and matures. It is understood that our scholars do represent a wide range of backgrounds and bring a host of personal experiences with them and some may initially be hesitant to seek guidance and mentoring. However, the program director needs to gain the confidence and trust of each scholar and use positive reinforcement before turning into a disciplinarian. The overriding approach and philosophy will differ among the program director but the commitment, patience, respect and acceptance for each scholar must be paramount.

Finally, it is very important to adhere to the confidentiality and privacy rights for both mentor and scholar. Therefore, it is critically important that the mentor demonstrate their personal interaction and communication with the utmost professionalism.

(See Attachment IV – Individual Meeting Template)

Monthly Group Meetings

The Program Director is responsible for setting up monthly meetings (which must include all scholars in the program) during the academic year. All MSP scholars are expected to meet as a group on a monthly basis. Scholars are required to attend all of these scheduled meetings. It is therefore important to establish these meetings well in advance (with the scholars) so that they can schedule and plan accordingly. Ideally, the first meeting of the academic year can be designed to do so. Agenda topics can vary from program to program but may include the following:

- Academic group progress
- Group advising to build a support system among scholars
- Scholarship opportunities
- Internships, career placement or study abroad opportunities
- Leadership and professional development
- Community service opportunities
- Peer mentoring and recruitment
- Discussion and planning of upcoming events

Group Social Events

Monthly group meetings should include social or cultural events. These activities assist scholars to develop relationships with people from both similar and diverse ethnic backgrounds and acquire social skills and provide occasions to learn about a wide range of art forms. In the past, MSP groups have attended theatrical, operatic, ballet, and musical performances. MSP groups have also toured museums and local areas of interest, as well as attend lectures by professionals in their fields of study.

These group social events can be decided upon by the scholars with direction and guidance of the program director. Ideally, a consensus among the group will be attained as to the specific events scholars would like to experience during the academic year.

Scholarships

All KU-MSP academic programs are privately funded. Scholarships are based on academic merit or financial need. It is a goal of the KU-MSP to provide a scholarship to all scholars from their initial admission throughout the duration of the time they are in the program. However, this commitment will continue to depend on availability of donor contributions.

When a student is admitted to a program the award and level of scholarship will be initially determined and assessed at the end of each semester. The level of scholarship support is directly related to the scholar's adherence to program requirements, as outlined in the *Agreement of Acceptance*. In most cases, scholars must be enrolled in a minimum of 12-credit hours each semester to qualify for a scholarship (with the exception of the last semester prior to graduation/or study abroad). If a scholar reduces his/her credit-hours below 12 per semester – the scholarship level should be reduced as well.

All final decisions on scholarship levels for each scholar should be made based on available funding for the academic program and in consultation with the Executive Director when appropriate.

Thank-You Letters

Scholars who receive support are required to write thank-you letters to the donor(s) who provide their scholarships. Prior to sending the scholar generated letter, the Program Director should proof read the letter to ensure accuracy, format and free from errors. A copy of all letters sent out should be kept on file in each program director's office. It is strongly encouraged that these be mailed letters and not electronic email. The Executive Director or Administrative Assistant will provide the names, addresses of the donor(s) to the respective academic program director and scholar.

Reports and Documentation

Documentation

It is vitally important that program directors maintain accurate and up-to-date files on all correspondence related to the Multicultural Scholars Program. Each scholar in the program should have a file of his/her academic program, progress, etc., maintained by the program director. In addition, all activities, expenses and associated events should be recorded. It is strongly encouraged that in addition to files for those scholars admitted and participating in the program, a file of those applicants who were not admitted should be maintained as well. A good rule of thumb: document. With clear and accurate files, the annual review of the program is more readily available as are as any questions that may come your way as the program director. (Program Directors are required to communicate with all students expressing an interest in applying to program).

Annual Report

Each academic program director will be responsible for preparing an annual report of his/her respective program. A template of this report will be provided to each program director early in the spring semester of each academic year and will be due to the Executive Director by the first of June of the calendar year. (See Attachment #4 – Annual Report Form)

Frequently Asked Questions

Does the Program Director set up the individual meetings?

Yes, Program Directors should meet their scholars at least once a month (or as needed) individually. These meetings are to keep up-to-date with each scholar and to review academic progress, major projects, courses, and University life in general. When scholars are first admitted to the program, you may meet with them on a bi-weekly basis just to touch base and make sure everything is going well for them and as they begin in the program.

What is the purpose of the monthly group meetings?

It is important that you meet with all of your scholars at least once a month. This can be a dinner, lunch, etc., to allow your scholars to get acquainted and comfortable with one another. In addition, they can be designed to be a professional development opportunity, or a social or cultural event. Ideally, these meetings can be collaboratively decided upon by the scholars with guidance and suggestions from the program director.

How often do all of the KU-MSP scholars get together?

There have been three times during the academic year when all scholars gather. Once in the early portion of the fall semester – A Kick-off celebration and an early spring semester event. Also, all scholars are expected to attend the graduation ceremony in May.

Is the KU Lied Center the only option for our scholars?

In the past, we have attempted to identify the upcoming university sponsored events, and the Lied Center has been a viable option. However, there is no requirement that other venues may not be utilized and Program Directors are encouraged to take advantage of the wide array of University sponsored activities such as the Hall Center for the Humanities, the University Theatre or sporting events.

How often do the Program Directors meet?

The Program Directors meet once a month. In the past, this has been the 3rd Friday of each month (academic year only). The meetings are held from 11:30-1:00.

To whom do applicants send their application and questions about the program?

When a prospective student is interested in a particular program within KU-MSP, he/she should direct questions to the program director. (If the program director has questions about the process, he/she can direct them to the Executive Director/or Administrative Assistant).

Who makes the final decision on who is admitted to the MSP?

The Program Director makes the final decision. However, this may be in consultation with the Executive Director. There needs to be a clear understanding that scholarship resources will be sufficient to support the scholar during their academic program. And there needs to be some understanding regarding the total number of scholars that a single program director can manage as well.

What are the deadlines for applications?

This varies within programs. Each program director can establish and “advertise” a specific application timeline/deadline. (Some programs have once or twice a year deadline; while others have “open” timelines).

Can academic programs coordinate social events with other programs?

Yes. Program directors can share plans with others at the monthly meetings and/or solicit level of interest via email about possible collaboration.

How are the social events that the scholars attend divided between those open to all MSP scholars and those open to only one program or a few combined programs?

Except for the three times we all gather, they are decided in individual programs.

How is the transportation to events handled?

Thus far, the social and cultural events have been in Lawrence (campus or off-campus). For the local events, in cases where a student does not have transportation other scholars have volunteered to pickup their peers. If there is an out-of-town event there should be some assurance that the cost factor will be covered by the academic program or the KU-MSP. All arrangements should be made beforehand.

Are Program Directors required to attend monthly group meetings?

Yes.

Are Program Directors responsible for ensuring that scholars attend the all group mandatory meetings and also to keep track of their participation?

Yes. In addition, with the three all-event gatherings, there will be a request for an RSVP list from each director in order to plan accordingly.

Who pays for the monthly meetings with the scholars?

Currently, the KU-MSP will cover the expenses for each scholar at the level of \$20 average per student per monthly event. At the beginning of each academic year, there will be an agreement among all programs on the amount allocated for each scholar per monthly meeting, depended upon funding levels. The Program Director will typically pay for the expense (e.g., dinner/or lunch) and will submit an itemized receipt to the administrative assistant for processing. It is vitally important that the receipt be itemized and not just a total amount. In addition, an agenda of the meeting and a list of participants need to be submitted.

Are Program Directors responsible for submitting semester/or annual reports?

At the end or beginning of each semester, each program director will submit the names of those scholars who have graduated or who have opted out of the program and the list of current scholars for the forthcoming semester. An accurate accounting of all scholars is critical. At the end of the academic year, each program director will submit an annual report. The form to submit this annual report will be provided to each director.

What if a scholar is not in my personal academic area? How can I be a good advisor in that situation?

This can occur in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences more than most other programs. (Three general areas: Math/Science, Humanities and Social Sciences). It would be appropriate to make some contact with an advisor in a specific major if the program director is not comfortable providing advice – academic or career. However, the program director can keep abreast of progress, seek assistance when needed and be an advocate for the particular scholar. For example, the Program Director can invite an advisor from a field to a meeting or can make arrangements for the scholar to meet with a specific advisor. In either case, the Program Director should document a plan or strategy.

How are we to assess financial needs?

The number of scholars in a program determines the amount of scholarship money needed. Some of the funds come directly from the KU-MSP, and some may come directly from the academic program/or school. Each program director will know the budget at the beginning of each academic year.

If a potential scholar asks a Program Director the time commitment that is required by being in MSP, what do I tell them?

Generally, there are the individual meetings with Program Director – likely one to two per month one group meeting per month, and three all program gatherings for all scholars. Clearly, these are general guidelines and each program may require additional time and commitment from their scholars.

What is the procedure/timing for submission of scholarship information to the Office of Scholarships and Admissions?

Each Program Director should submit a list of anticipated scholars for the forthcoming semester so their scholarship amounts can be processed. Typically, for the fall semester the deadline to submit this information to the Administrative Assistant is: _____. For the spring semester the deadline is the first of January.

What is a realistic amount of financial support to start with per scholarship?

Each academic program may have different sources for scholarship support. There is no set policy on the amount that can or cannot be provided a scholar. Most programs do not have scholarship amounts less than \$500 per semester for their scholars.

Is there a maximum amount of scholarship support that can be awarded to a scholar?

No. However, Program Directors must be very cognizant of the amount they have available and to also be positioned to support their scholars throughout the program of study. So, it is important to keep in mind the long-term implications for the amounts being awarded.

Can a scholarship be completely withheld for poor academic performance/or non-compliance with policy and expectations?

Yes. If a Program Director believes that a scholar has not fulfilled his/her responsibilities – academically or otherwise – he/she can place the scholar on academic probation (at a reduced or eliminate scholarship support until the scholar regains regular status). However, the Program Director should do everything they can to ensure their scholars' success. When a decision is to be made that will reduce a scholarship level, it is strongly encouraged that this be communicated personally between the Program Director and the scholar in a timely manner.

If a scholar does not fulfill obligations (attending mentoring meetings, group meetings or social events etc.) the Program Director can reduce the scholarship amount for the forthcoming semester. When a decision is to be made that will reduce a scholarship level, it is strongly encouraged that this be communicated personally between the Program Director and the scholar in a timely manner

Do I cancel or reduce a scholarship amount when a scholar enrolls in less than 12 credit hours in a given semester?

This decision is up to the discretion of the Program Director. The only exceptions to this decision will be if a scholar is in their last semester prior to graduation or is in a study abroad experience.

How do I generate interest in making sure I get 100% attendance at our monthly meetings?

First, it is required for all scholars to participate in all activities. When a Program Director solicits suggestions from their scholars, plans ahead of time in a collaborative manner, the likelihood of high attendance is higher. However, if there is a lack of 100% attendance, the Program Director is responsible for contacting scholars and determining the reason for their absence.

Attachment I

Current Academic Programs and Directors University of Kansas 2008-09

MSP - Allied Health – Ken Davis and Lisa Van Hoose

MSP – School of Architecture Scholars – Bill Carswell and Hobart Jackson

MSP – School of Business– Bob Augelli

MSP – School of Education –Michele Casavant

MSP – Humanities in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences -Diane Fourny and Jenny Heller

MSP – School of Journalism -John Hudnall

MSP – School of Pharmacy – Robert Emerson and John Stobaugh

MSP - School of Nursing – Debbie Ford

MSP - Social Sciences in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences– Sharon O’Brien

MSP – School of Social Welfare – Lori Messinger

MSP - Natural Sciences/Mathematics in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences – James Orr

Executive Director: Fred Rodriguez

E-Mail: fredrod@ku.edu

Phone: 785-864-9655

Administrative Assistant: Mary Ann Traiger

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University of Kansas
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Lawrence, Kansas 66045

Attachment II

Application Essay Questions

The application essay questions will vary from program to program: (These are illustrative; not exhaustive examples of questions that may be used).

- What do you want out of life, and why is a college education important to you?
- How did you choose your current major?
- Who has influenced you the most in your life?
- What does your cultural background mean to you, and how involved are you in your ethnic heritage?
- The reason(s) you have decided to go into the _____ related field.
- The population you'd like to serve or work with upon graduation.
- The setting in which you imagine working as a professional.
- What does it mean to you to be a KU multicultural scholar?
- What would you like to contribute to the KU-MSP?
- What community service projects have you been involved with?
- One of my strongest personal attributes is _____
- An area of academic or professional growth I would like to improve upon would be _____.

Attachment III
Acceptance of Agreement



Multicultural Scholars Program

“Preparing Diverse Scholars for Leadership in the Future”

An Agreement of Acceptance
2009-10

Dear Multicultural Scholar:

The Multicultural Scholars Program at KU is a special and unique opportunity for all students who are either newly admitted or returning students. It is very important to understand that successful completion of your academic program is meant to be a collaborative effort among you, your Program Director(s) and with the MSP at KU.

This acceptance of agreement serves several purposes. First, it is an acknowledgement and a signed agreement that you will adhere to the guidelines and high expectations that your specific MSP has established. Second, that it acknowledges that you clearly understand that the academic component is only a part of the overall emphasis of the program to your success. There is a social and professional leadership emphasis which is also integral to your personal growth. Third, you will be expected to demonstrate what it means to be a role model and leader in your professional field of study. You are expected to conduct yourself with the utmost respect for others as a member of the KU-MSP. In essence, you have a role and responsibility to make every effort to fulfill your obligation to be the best student possible.

However, equally important to me is that you know the administration, faculty and staff of the Multicultural Scholars Program at KU stand steadfast in their commitment and support to ensure that you will be provided every opportunity to succeed in my chosen program of study.

On behalf of the University, the Program Directors, donors and friends of MSP, we wish you the very best. We look forward to working with you. You have our very best wishes for a successful semester.

Please read the following carefully and return as soon as possible one signed and dated copy to your Program Director at: -----.

The _____ Program

The Multicultural Scholars Program in the _____ is a comprehensive program of mentoring and social activities that requires my participation and involvement. In order to be eligible for a scholarship and to remain in good standing, I agree to follow the guidelines, as described below: Note: Each program can add/delete criteria below but there should be some uniformity across programs.

1. Full class attendance. If I need to miss a class, I will call or email my professor before the class meets, if possible, or as soon as possible thereafter.
2. I will attend all required group meetings. My scholarship may partially depend upon my attendance at these meetings. Excused absences will be permitted only under highly unusual circumstances, i.e., illness or an unforeseen occurrence. Work schedules are not an acceptable excuse for absences. If working I am expected to change my schedule as soon as I receive the dates for the required meetings*. While important my other class commitments, studying or exams that are scheduled for the next day is not an excused absence. (*Program Director will let everyone know the dates and times of meetings well in advance so students can plan accordingly and eliminate potential conflicts).
Optional: The sanction is \$ ___ per unexcused absence.
3. I will be on-time and prepared for my individual meetings with my Program Director(s). (This may include providing the director with my completed academic forms, course-related materials such as syllabi, recent exams, projects and papers).
4. I will establish a KU registered email account and frequently check for any MSP related information and messages. E-mail is the agreement medium for MSP and frequent communication is to be expected between the overall KU- MSP to all students; as well as between my Program Director(s) and my peers in my specific MSP.
5. I will be honest and forthright about my academic progress and standing. I understand this information will remain confidential between me and the Program Director(s). The MSP Program Director(s) have my permission to contact my instructors regarding academic performance issues that may arise. I also agree that I will discuss with the Program Director(s) and obtain his/her signature before making any changes to my current enrollment, including class additions/or drops.
6. I am expected to obtain a minimum GPA of 2.50 per semester. Failure to maintain a 2.50 GPA will result in my being placed on academic probation for the following semester and perhaps not receive/or have my scholarship reduced – which will be at the discretion of my Program Director(s).
7. If I receive tutoring through MSP, I will attend, be on time, and be prepared for each scheduled session(s).
8. Upon receipt of my scholarship, I will write a thoughtful and professional thank-you letter to the donor(s). I will also provide a copy of this letter to my Program Director(s). (Scholars will be notified who the donor(s) of their specific scholarship and their contact information).
9. I will participate in all data collection conducted by KU-MSP. This may include but not limited to: on-line surveys, written surveys, phone interviews, small groups. (I also understand that all information is to benefit the future of KU-MSP and my specific data will never be used other than in a general terms/or data).

10. I will participate in an exit interview with the Program Director(s) prior to completion of my tenure with the program. **(Optional)**

Optional
Scholarship Amount
for
200_-200_

\$ XXX per semester (or \$XXX per academic year)

I agree to follow these guidelines established by my program.

Name (Please print)

Signature

Date _____