

Revised Guidelines for Environmental Research Grants

September 9, 2003

Environmental Research Grants seek to encourage and support environmental research projects by Hobart and William Smith student through small grants (\$250-\$1000) that can pay for supplies, research materials, or transportation. To apply for funding, a student must have a faculty advisor willing to oversee an HWS independent study in Environmental Studies or an environmental topic in a related department or program, or they must be enrolled (or expect to enroll) in an Environmental Studies Senior Integrative Experience. Awards will be based primarily on the anticipated educational impact of the project on the student(s); students earlier in their career, especially sophomores and juniors, are particularly urged to apply. While applicants must be in good academic standing, a high GPA is not necessary to receive funding. Students who receive Environmental Research Grants may also be eligible for an additional award to support presentation of project results at regional or national conferences.

Procedures

General Administration: This fund will be administered by the chair of the Environmental Studies program in consultation with Environmental Studies faculty and current students who have received past Environmental Research Grants. The responsibilities of the chair include encouraging Environmental Studies faculty to nominate students for funding, reviewing proposals, convening a review panel of Environmental Research Grant alumni, awarding funds, tracking the expenditure of funds, and summarizing fund activity to the Associate Provost. The chair will also maintain a list of funded projects and amounts. The Associate Provost will provide oversight of the fund and report on fund activity to donors.

Recruiting participants: Participants will be recruited in several ways:

- Faculty teaching Environmental Studies courses or departmental courses cross-listed with Environmental Studies will work to identify students working on interesting class projects, papers, or student-generated discussions which the faculty believe merit additional study. These students will be informed of the availability of funds to support such projects and asked to consider undertaking independent work on the topic of interest. The identifying faculty member may agree to serve as the advisor for this independent study, or may assist the student in finding an appropriate faculty advisor for this work.
- Faculty approached by students interested in independent studies in Environmental Studies or environmental topics in related departments or programs will urge students to consider applying if the project involves expenditures or if the project could be enhanced or broadened with \$250-\$1000 in funding.
- Students who have successfully completed a funded-project may be encouraged to apply for additional funding to support presentation of their results at regional or national conferences if such funding is available (e.g. is not needed to support other research proposals).
- Faculty overseeing Senior Integrative Experiences will urge their students to consider applying for funding if a) funds are available and b) the project or experience could be enhanced with funds to support additional materials, supplies, or transportation.

Application: To apply for research funds, students must submit a one-page description of their project, the research methods to be used, projected outcomes, a budget and a schedule. Support may be requested to support research supplies, materials and transportation to research sites. In rare instances, support for travel to conferences or meetings deemed crucial to a planned research project may be funded. (Support for presentation of funded research is also possible; see below). In addition to a project description, applicants must submit a letter of support from a faculty member who has agreed to serve as advisor on the project. Applications will be accepted on a continuing basis with initial funding decisions for any semester announced during the last week of classes in the preceding semester. Students who have completed funded research projects and wish to apply for conference travel funds must show that they have had a paper or poster accepted for presentation at the conference and submit a letter of support from the faculty member who advised them on the original project.

Awards: Awards will be made by the chair of Environmental Studies in consultation with program faculty and a review panel of current students who have received past Environmental Research Grants. In considering an application, the chair will apply the following criteria, listed in decreasing order of importance:

- Relevance and environmental significance of the project.
- Faculty advisor's estimate of the student's motivation, and the likely educational impact of the project on the student.
- Students earlier in their career will have precedence over students in Senior Integrative Experiences.
- Feasibility of the project.
- Student's academic record.
- Awards to support conference travel and presentations will be made only in cases in which the funding would otherwise go unspent.

The intent of these criteria is to emphasize the likely educational impact of the project on the student, both in the immediate and the long term. Students will be notified of their selection during exam week of the preceding term. Failure to register for the proposed independent study will result in forfeiture of funds. In this case the Chair of Environmental Studies may either provide the funds to a runner-up proposal or return the unused funds for future allocation.

Disbursement: Faculty advisors of successful applicants will approve and submit requests for reimbursement or purchase orders up to the award amount to the Chair of Environmental Studies for processing.

Grantee Responsibilities, Acknowledgement and Tracking: All students receiving Environmental Research Grants must submit a final report in .pdf format or a web page describing their project. These will be archived on the Environmental Studies home page. All students receiving Environmental Research Grants agree to serve on student review panels considering future Environmental Research Grants. Grant recipients will formally acknowledge funds in their final project or report.

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