CLA Freshman Research and Creative Awards Program Description

The CLA Freshman Research and Creative Awards Program is a unique recruitment program among peer institutions in its focus on early mentored experiences for first-year students. The program offers a stipend of $2,000 for highly talented new freshman across the liberal arts. Each student is matched by interest areas with a faculty member who will engage the student in some aspect of the faculty member's ongoing scholarly work. The goal is not necessarily for freshmen to pursue individual research under the guidance of faculty but rather for faculty to share the sense of discovery, scholarly passion, and intellectual challenges they experience through research and creative work. We want students to experience the excitement of creative scholarly inquiry; we want to inspire and engage them by providing an opportunity to join in the work that inspires and engages our faculty. We recognize that research and creative opportunities will vary widely in nature, reflecting the richness of disciplines and faculty interests in CLA, and we welcome that variety.

In Brief:
- The Office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs will match up to 150 outstanding admitted students in the incoming freshman class on a one-on-one basis with CLA faculty.
- Students participate in the research or creative opportunity during the spring semester of their freshman year and receive a stipend of $2,000 to be paid during that semester. Faculty members will receive up to $250 for related expenses.
- Students should expect to devote up to 10 hours each week in the research or creative experience.
- Students are required to submit a poster presentation, short report (3 pages), or other agreed-upon outcome to the faculty member (with a copy to the Office of Undergraduate Programs) at the end of the semester. Students have the option of registering for 1-2 credits in order to engage in research work beyond 10 hours/week, or to complete a more substantial report. Faculty members cannot require that students engage in additional work or register for credit. If a faculty member agrees to a student registering for credit (which will appear on the student’s transcript), the faculty member is responsible for relevant and timely grading, etc. of the student work as for any other student registration.

Program Goals:
- To showcase CLA’s wide range of scholarship and highlight exceptional faculty members
- To expand opportunities for talented first-year students to engage with faculty members
- To recruit highly talented and diverse students to the liberal arts

Learning Outcomes for Students:
- Exposure to methods of identifying, defining, and solving problems
- Experience in gathering and critically evaluating information
- Introduction to a new body of knowledge and a mode of intellectual and creative inquiry
- Insight into the role of innovation and discovery in a particular discipline
- Experience in communicating results through poster or paper presentation