



UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND SOCIETY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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CSRS Undergraduate Religion Research Fellowship Grants

Summary. The Center for the Study of Religion and Society (CSRS) at ND invites applications for year-long Undergraduate Religion Research Fellowships for the academic year 2014-2015. The objective of this program is to foster undergraduate student involvement in the CSRS and to support their own research on a variety of topics involving religion. The Fellowships are also designed to encourage and equip promising ND undergraduate students to explore the possibility of becoming academic scholars of religion in a variety of disciplines and fields for their future careers. Undergraduate students at ND from any College or discipline are welcome to apply, including from the social sciences, humanities, the sciences, or the arts, as long as their research topic somehow relates to the social scientific study of religion. Rising ND seniors, juniors, and sophomores may apply. The CSRS expects to award 5-6 Fellowships.

Opportunities and Responsibilities. Being awarded a CSRS Religion Research Fellowship will entail the following opportunities and responsibilities:

- (1) Each Fellow will spend the year **conducting their own research project** of personal interest and writing a paper based on their findings; the paper may also be used for a senior honors thesis or another legitimate purpose. Papers will be presented in a public forum on campus at the end of the academic year.
- (2) Each Fellow will receive **\$1,200 for research costs** for their project, to be used for research expenses such as buying books, travel, data acquisition, and other expenses related to their research projects.
- (3) All Fellows will take a **3-credit research course** in "Social and Religious Research," which will meet across the full academic year, taught by a sociology faculty mentor who specializes in religion research; that course will focus on facilitating their personal research projects.
- (4) Fellows will be provided **desk space in a CSRS office** located in Flanner Hall, along with computing resources.
- (5) The Fellows' faculty mentor will work with each Fellow to apply for possible **additional research funding**, as needed, from on-campus and possible off-campus sources of support.

(5) Fellows will **participate during the year in common CSRS activities**, such as paper presentation colloquia, visiting speaker events, an awards dinner, and so on, with the intention that they will integrate themselves socially and intellectually into the CSRS. Fellows will thus have opportunities to **build ties with faculty members and graduate students** in the CSRS.

(6) Fellows will receive supplemental funds to support travel (along with other CSRS members) to the **annual conference** of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, held in October or November.

A sociology faculty member in the CSRS will be assigned to work for the year as a mentor for Fellows, similar to the way faculty thesis advisors work with honors students. This faculty mentor will meet regularly with, teach, and guide the Fellows to focus on developing, conducting, writing, and presenting their own research projects. The faculty mentor will also help to provide an orientation to and basic professionalization in the academic study of religion, debrief the Fellows on their experience in CSRS events, and work to obtain possibly needed additional research funding to conduct their own projects.

By the time the year-long Fellowship has been completed, Fellows will have had the opportunity to research a religion-related topic of personal interest in a supportive and resource-rich context, to participate in an intellectual community of scholars interested in religion and society, to learn more about what life as a religion-research academic scholar is like, and to prepare for possible application to top graduate programs that involve the study of religion.

For more information about the CSRS, see: <http://csrs.nd.edu/>.



Application. All application materials for CSRS Undergraduate Fellowships research for the 2014-2015 academic year are due March 8, 2014. Applications must be submitted through the Common Application: <https://urapply.nd.edu>. *Please include as your first sentence of your letter that you are applying for the CSRS Fellows Program.*

The required application components include the following:

(1) **Cover Page** – contact and other basic information.

(2) **Description of Proposed Research Project** (3 pages, typed, single-spaced) – *Please indicate in your first sentence that you are submitting the proposal for consideration by the CSRS.* All proposed projects need in some significant way to be about religion. Ideally, topics and questions should propose to investigate the relationship between religion and another issue or area (“Religion and _____”), such as religion and politics, religion and the environment, religion and poverty, religion and law, religion and business, and so on. Projects may be about any domain of social life and focus on any geographical region of the world. The proposal should clearly state the following:

- a. The specific *research question* and its relationship to religion
- b. Anticipated *methodology* and *goals* of the research project

- c. Proposed plan for how you will conduct this research (the content, data, or resources needed for the research project)
- d. Justification of the applicant's interest, background, and experience that *demonstrates his or her ability to conduct* the project successfully
- e. Statement about the applicant's larger interest in or motivation concerning the study of religion

(3) **One Letter of Recommendation from a Faculty Member.** In their letter of recommendation, the faculty member should discuss their knowledge of you as a young scholar and your promise, preparation, maturity, and potential to conduct significant research on religion. The Common Application will ask for the faculty recommender's email address and net ID. Please make sure you indicate the correct email and net ID so that the faculty recommender will be able to submit a recommendation for you on the Common Application.

Once applications have been reviewed, a short list of prospective Fellows will be invited to interview with faculty members in the Center for the Study of Religion and Society. Final Fellow awardees will be announced by April 1, 2014.

Funding. Funding for this Fellowship program is provided by the Dean's Office in the College of Arts and Letters and the Center for the Study of Religion and Society. Applicants may also be encouraged to apply for additional funding through the ND Kellogg Institute, Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP, College of Arts & Letters), the College of Science (Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship), the Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement (CUSE), and other funding sources. Deadlines for those grants are usually in February or March; please check the particular program's guidelines for information.

We will hold an information session about the Fellows program on February 19, 2014 at 2pm in 725 Flanner. We encourage applicants to attend.