

FENWICK SCHOLAR PROGRAM, CLASS OF 2020 Instructions for Application

As the first step in your application, you will need to secure a letter of nomination from your department chair(s). Remember that if you are a double major, you must be nominated by the chairs of both departments. This letter should be submitted directly by the department chair(s) by **Friday, January 31, 2020**, to Professor Ellen Perry, Director of Scholar Programs, at collegescholars@holycross.edu.

To receive a nomination, you should start thinking about your project and seek out potential advisors and readers as early as possible in your junior year. Try to get as much feedback as you can while developing your ideas. Ideally, you should approach your department chair(s) about a possible nomination by the last day of classes in the fall. That will give you enough time to submit a draft of your proposal before January 31, if your department requires it, and will give your department enough time for any discussions needed to decide whether to nominate you.

APPLICATION

As the second step, please submit the following materials by 4:00 pm on **Friday, March 13, 2020**, to Professor Perry at collegescholars@holycross.edu. All documents should be sent as PDFs (that is, in Portable Document Form).

- 1) the project proposal
- 2) the additional materials listed below (cover sheet, work sample, transcript)
- 3) letters of support from your prospective advisors and readers, as well as a letter of support from your department chair(s). (All letters should be sent by these professors directly to Professor Perry by the deadline.)

1. Project Proposal. This detailed proposal should include the following elements:

A. Project Title

B. Overview or “executive summary” of the project

C. Description of the project, including a review of relevant literature, which situates this endeavor within existing scholarship, and a discussion of the

methods and approaches you will use. The proposal should include a statement of the problem or research question that you want to pursue during the Fenwick year. Much of what you cover in the proposal will depend on your specific discipline or disciplines; no matter what the discipline, however, you will need to situate and contextualize the project through a (selective) review of relevant literature and to explain why the project is valuable and interesting. You should also have a section on the method or methods that you plan to use, in which you explain why they are appropriate to exploring these questions and issues.

The specific form and substance of your proposal will depend on the discipline(s) in which you are working. If you are doing a scientific project, it will probably be appropriate to discuss your hypothesis, as well as the feasibility of conducting the type of research you want to do. If your work will involve the use of an analytical framework or interpretive system, you should discuss that framework and why it is appropriate for this project. If you are proposing an artistic project—for example, a novel or a musical composition—you will still need to provide background and plans that are analogous to those discussed above, but you might also explain how this project has developed out of interests and challenges that relate to your development as an artist or performer.

D. Detailed Budget, with evidence of financial feasibility within the amount allowed. (Ordinarily, up to \$4,000 may be awarded to carry out the project.) A proposal does not need to require such expenditures to be competitive.

E. Academic Plan, with an explanation for any waivers for core requirements or course load that you are seeking. The Fenwick Scholar Award was conceived as a way to exempt talented students from the usual academic requirements so that they can devote the senior year to a special project. In this section, you should describe whatever courses you will take next year to fulfill any remaining requirements for a major, minor, or concentration. Also, please describe any courses you plan to take to complement your Fenwick project. Here, you should also make your request for a diminished course load and a waiver of any core requirements in order to devote more time to the project. You may ask to reduce your course load to a total of zero to five courses for the academic year (instead of the usual eight), not counting the Fenwick project itself. When you make this request, please specify the total number of courses you would take and explain how you might use the additional time from a reduced course load to support your project.

F. Study Plan, with goals and timelines. Here, you will describe the different areas (specific bodies of research, scholarship, art, theory, and so forth) that you will study under the supervision of one or more professors who have agreed to work with you on mastering these areas. This section will also include the timeline for your original research or creative work, along with all other activities associated with the project. It should also include a tentative timeline for when

you expect to have drafts of specific sections or chapters completed, as well as when you expect to have a full draft. One of your goals in writing this section should be to demonstrate that you have thought through what you want to accomplish and that you have a realistic and relatively detailed plan for how you will use the time available to you next year.

F. *Preparation, or work that you have done to date* (including coursework and any other intellectual experiences, accomplishments, or activities) that has prepared you to undertake this project. While the Fenwick year is intended to provide you with opportunities to learn and study in areas beyond those that you have already mastered, or that may be readily available in courses regularly offered at the College of the Holy Cross, you need to make the case that you have the necessary background and preparation to handle the project you propose. We strongly recommend that you consider proposing a project that grows out of work you have already done.

F. *Expectations, including your hopes for how the Fenwick year will promote your own development as a student, thinker, and person.* Here, you might reflect on questions such as: Why do you want to do this project? In what ways would this project be beneficial to your intellectual and personal growth and formation? Why would it make sense for you to spend your senior year pursuing these studies, and this project, instead of taking the full load of eight courses ordinarily recommended for students to complete their education at Holy Cross? Please bear in mind that your proposal will be read by committee members who are not necessarily familiar with your field. Thus, you will want to demonstrate not only that you have sufficient background and knowledge to embark on this project, but also that you can comprehend the meaning and value of your project—to you, as well as to the field or fields of which it is a part—and then communicate its significance in a way that is accessible to others.

Although there is no prescribed page length, most Fenwick proposals will be between 10 and 15 pages (including a tentative bibliography of the works you expect to study and use). However, the actual length will vary depending on your discipline and project. Your prospective advisor(s) can offer guidance regarding this and other matters.

2. Additional Materials. This application should be accompanied by:

A. Fenwick Cover Sheet with required signatures (scan of signed hard copy).

B. Work Sample. This should be a paper or written project—a research essay, lab report, or other substantive example of your work—that is relevant to the field(s) of the proposed Fenwick research, and that illustrates your writing ability as well as your background in the area. If you are submitting your own artistic work (for example, a musical composition, painting, or videotaped performance), you need to submit a writing sample as well, since the completed project will probably include a written element.

C. Unofficial Transcript. Please send your transcript to yourself, save it as a PDF, and forward it as part of your application.

3. Letters of Support. Please arrange for faculty to send the following letters, including completed recommendation forms, to Professor Ellen Perry, Director of Scholar Programs (collegescholars@holycross.edu) by **Friday, March 13, 2020**:

A. Supporting Letter(s) from the advisor(s) and reader(s) of your project.

B. Supporting Letter from the nominating department chair(s). In the case of double majors, who are seeking credit for the Fenwick project that would count towards both majors, you need to submit letters from the chairs of both departments. If the chair's letter of nomination (submitted by **January 31, 2020**) already spoke to the appropriateness of both the student and the project for the Fenwick, then in place of a second, redundant document, this can be a briefer supporting letter.

The deadline for completed applications is 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 13, 2020. Everything should be sent directly to Professor Ellen Perry at collegescholars@holycross.edu. Any non-electronic materials, such as works of art, may be delivered to Sue Finne, Program Administrator, in Smith Hall 325.

INTERVIEWS

On-campus interviews and Skype interviews for students abroad will be held in early April.

SELECTION

Ordinarily, the selection process is completed in late April, before the date when rising seniors register for the fall semester.