Apply to be a Clark Scholar for 2017-18!

Would you like to spend the upcoming academic year learning how to conduct research and pursuing an original research project of your own? Are you interested in receiving one-on-one mentoring by faculty and graduate students? Would you like to travel to either Australia or New Zealand to present your research findings and assist UT-Austin faculty with their research “in the field”? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then you should consider applying to be a Clark Scholar. For more information, view a description of the program here and download the application here.

About the Clark Scholar Program

The Clark Scholar Program is part of the Edward A. Clark Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies’ Undergraduate Research Program. Each year, the Clark Center selects two outstanding undergraduate students to be Clark Scholars. These students spend the year contributing to major data collection and coding projects that the Center manages as part of an international collaborative effort known as the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP). Using a common coding scheme, CAP research teams focus on a range of supranational, national, and local-level political systems and transform a wide range of government and media outputs into large datasets that enable longitudinal and comparative analysis of public policymaking processes. The Clark Center focuses on Australia and New Zealand.

In addition to assisting with research, Clark Scholars complete a series of three courses. They take Dr. Evans’ class on Australian Politics in the fall, and they enroll in the J.J. Pickle Undergraduate Research Fellow Program that is operated through the Department of Government. The Pickle Program’s two-course sequence teaches students the fundamentals of research methods and design, requires that they complete independent research projects, and culminates in April when students present their research posters at special forums held during the University’s Undergraduate Research Week. As part of the Pickle Program, the Clark Scholars undertake their own independent projects that focus on issues concerning Australia or New Zealand, and Dr. Evans serves as their faculty mentor. Each spring, the Clark Scholars participate in a trip to Washington, D.C. to advance their research projects, and each summer, they accompany Dr. Evans to either Australia or New Zealand to assist her with fieldwork.

Learn more about the Clark Center’s Undergraduate Research Program at https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/cas/.

Eligibility Requirements

Must be a full-time student at UT-Austin and be a junior (in terms of credit hours) or above. Students of all majors may apply, but special preference may be given to students in the College of Liberal Arts. Students must be able to enroll in three courses during the 2017-18 academic year: GOV 365 Australian Politics and Society (fall semester, unless they’ve already taken it); GOV 370M Research on the U.S. Congress (fall semester); and GOV 362L Government Research Internship (spring semester). A student with a GPA within his/her major of 3.5 or
above will be a strong candidate. Students who fall short of this requirement may nevertheless apply, but they will be expected to explain in their letters of interest why their GPAs do not accurately reflect their drive and abilities.

How to Apply

The following materials must be received by Dr. Rhonda Evans at revans@austin.utexas.edu by 21 April 2017:

- Application form (available on the website);
- UT-Austin transcripts;
- Resume;
- Letter of interest (600-700 words) that (1) explains why you wish to be a Clark Scholar and (2) lists and describes all other academic, extra-curricular, and work commitments that you will undertake for the 2017-18 academic year, including the number of hours per week that you expect each commitment to consume;
- Two letters of recommendation from faculty, at least one of whom must be at UT-Austin. These must be sent from the faculty member directly to Dr. Evans;
- A writing sample on any topic that is at least five pages in length.

A list of finalists will be selected by April 27 and invited for interviews. Finalists will be notified of the committee’s decisions by May 1.