

MEMO

To: Eric Leuschner, Chair

From: Lexey Bartlett

Date: 1 June 2017

Re: Report on Reassigned Time (Spring 2017)

For the Spring 2017 semester, I was granted Track II Reassigned Time by the Provost for the purpose of serving as the Nationally Competitive Scholarships Advisor.

I use this reassigned time to carry out the duties of the Nationally Competitive Scholarship Advisor, which are to identify potential candidates for these awards and to support students who wish to apply for them. In my application, I stated that my major objectives were to identify at least three candidates for such opportunities and to see them through the application process either for Spring 2017 or Fall 2017 deadlines. I reported that in Fall 2016, I had already assisted James Logan King, a Geosciences graduate student, in completing a Fulbright application for the October 11, 2016, deadline; Hannah Hanson, an Honors College freshman, on a Critical Language Scholarship application due November 16, 2016; and Morgan Mitchiner and Norelia Ordonez-Castillo, Honors College students, in beginning applications for the Truman Scholarship for February 7, 2017. I had spoken with other candidates about the Udall scholarship and the Goldwater competition, although those students decided not to apply. Thus, I have already exceeded my goal of working with three candidates over the 2016-2017 school year.

In January 2017, we learned that Logan King had been selected as semifinalist for the Fulbright award offered by the University of Bristol that he applied for. The UK is a highly competitive country for the Fulbright competition, so achieving semifinalist status is a significant achievement. They generally select twice as many finalists as they have awards to give, which meant he was probably one of two candidates for the University of Bristol's award. In April, we learned that Logan had not been selected for the award, but the faculty member at Bristol that he had been in contact with was so impressed that he was selected as a semifinalist that he arranged for Logan to receive one of just a few awards they have for full tuition costs for international students. I visited with Logan in May to talk about other opportunities he might apply for, and we reviewed the requirements for National Science Foundation grants that his supervising faculty in Bristol, along with a coordinating faculty member in the US, might apply for to get funds to pay him as a student researcher. While there was nothing he could apply for that I could help him with (these grants have to be applied for by institutions, with a faculty member as PI), it gave me some ideas for ways I can suggest to students to help fund graduate study if their supervising faculty are willing to participate in this way.

In January and early February, I also continued working with Morgan Mitchiner on her Truman Scholarship application. We reviewed her essays and talked about how to rewrite them, as well as which activities to highlight in less narrative sections. Morgan was very receptive to

suggestions, and she did a phenomenal job of writing about some delicate and difficult personal matters in her essays. She also worked with Dr. Farley on her research proposal related to antibiotic resistance in bacteria, since that topic was outside of my area of expertise. I helped Morgan coordinate her letters of recommendation, and after reviewing all of her materials and reflecting on our conversations, I wrote the institutional recommendation required for her application. Unfortunately, Morgan was not selected as a semifinalist for the scholarship, but she is an excellent candidate for a National Science Foundation Fellowship, which I will help her apply for in Fall 2017. The process of applying for the Truman will be very helpful to her in future applications, though, because of the process of reflection required for writing any such application.

I also continued working with Hannah Hanson on a multi-year plan for applying for a number of opportunities. We had worked together on a few of her application questions for the National Student Exchange, for which she was accepted to study at the University of Calgary as part of her plan to begin studying Russian. Hannah spends a lot of time researching opportunities for her interests, and she has shared many programs with me that I will add to my list of suggestions for future students. One of these was the Killam Fellowship, which is a Fulbright Commission award for study in Canada. In mid-February, Hannah was able to revise some of the material we had already worked on together for the Critical Language Scholarship application, and we consulted on some of the new material she wrote as well. I am pleased to report that she did receive a Killam award of \$5,000, which will help to fund her studies in Canada completely.

I also stated in my application that I had the additional objective of making more faculty and students on campus aware of these opportunities and that I am available to help them with the process. I have continued with my practice last semester of attending several of the Fort Hays Honor Society meetings, and meeting with faculty and staff on campus, including the Director of KAMS, the International Student Services Office personnel, Study Abroad personnel, and members of the Undergraduate Research Experience Committee, among others.

In the late fall, I had developed a plan for offering personal statement workshops to any interested FHSU students as one way to publicize what I do directly to students, as well as giving them some help with any kind of application they might be working on in a group environment, since students apply for a lot of opportunities that are outside of my particular area of responsibility, but they often have similar kinds of writing tasks. To that end, I developed a workshop and publicized it at the February 21 FHHS meeting, and although my flyers were all picked up, I didn't have any attendees at the workshop, which was on March 2. Unfortunately, between the search committee I was chairing and my responsibilities as Sigma Tau Delta sponsor and High Plains Regent, both of which required my full attention throughout the month of March, I wasn't able to get another workshop scheduled for the spring. However, I plan to begin the fall semester with a schedule of workshops set up, with a repeating schedule of a "Part I: Getting Started with Personal Statements" workshop and a "Part II: Revising Your Personal Statement" workshop, both offered on an alternating schedule throughout the semester. Since these workshops and my publicity materials for them are already prepared, an early start with them in Fall 2017 will be very simple.

Aside from advising students on the requirements and deadlines for the application process and working with them on their writing, many of these scholarships also require the campus representative to write a letter of institutional endorsement. This work takes considerable time because of the gravity of the task in forwarding the candidate's application, but it also requires learning to navigate a number of completely different computer systems. As a new advisor, it has been time-consuming for me to learn about these systems on top of all the scholarship requirements for the wide range of opportunities I am trying to support our students in applying for. As I gain experience, however, I expect that less of my time will be used for this kind of learning, although the task of writing institutional endorsements will always be part of my advising work.

I plan to attend the National Association of Fellowship Advisors Biennial Conference in Philadelphia from July 19-21, where I will have three days of workshops and information sessions with foundation directors and representatives and experienced advisors to help continue my understanding of this work. A little of my time this semester was spent making those arrangements and working on securing funding to support the necessary travel. Aside from some funding from the Honors College, which will cover about half the cost, I have also worked with the Graduate School and the Provost's Office for some funding, although I am still waiting on full confirmation from those sources because of personnel changes late in the spring semester.

Overall, I feel that my advising work has been successful, since I have reached my numerical objective in advising students for this year and have had an opportunity to work through the process for a few different opportunities. Since I already have some applicants that I will be working with over the summer and fall (Hannah Hanson, Morgan Mitchiner, and Shaelin Sweet), I anticipate a busy fall working those ongoing advisees while I recruit the next group, and I expect that trend to continue in future years as I work with some advisees on an ongoing basis while adding new ones each semester.