

# The Ralph George Berry Scholars Fund in Psychology

## Overview of the George Scholar Program

The Ralph George Berry Scholars Fund in Psychology is part of the Berry Scholars Program. The George Scholars are supported through the generous gift of the George family.

The George Scholars Program is named after Mr. Ralph George who was a 1940 graduate of Berry College in the agricultural program. Mr. George completed his graduate education with a M.A. and Ed.S. in psychology from the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. After serving in the military during World War II, Mr. George's career included work with the Boy Scouts, a counselor working with boys and their families, a research assistant at the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University where he helped to develop the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test; an assistant professor of psychology at Austin Peay and Northeast Louisiana State Universities; and ultimately as the director of psychological services at Nashville, Tennessee's Clover Bottom Development Center from which he retired in August, 1980. He was a lifelong friend and advocate of Berry College and was a regular participant in numerous alumni work weeks at Berry. After his death in September 2002, Mr. George's wife, Virginia, and daughter, Lee Anne, continued their interest in and involvement with Berry College and recently generously chose to endow a student research-based scholarship program in Mr. George's name.

Managerial aspects of the George Scholars program are the responsibility of the Department of Psychology and are directed by the coordinator of the Psychology Lab.

## Expectations of George Scholars

The George Scholars Program is designed to help Berry psychology majors in their junior and senior years. The goal of the program is to help students move beyond the excellent academic characteristics of many Berry students



Ralph George when he was a student at Berry

to a superlative level through a one-on-one working relationship with a psychology faculty mentor. George Scholars will be selected based upon their performance at Berry during their first 3 semesters and clear potential for an outstanding level of scholarship throughout their remaining career at Berry. Scholars must register for PSY498 Directed study for at least 3 hours during the course of their grant. Scholars will be expected to interact with and learn from the other George Scholars, to promote the program at departmental and campus events, and to participate in the annual Berry College Symposium for Student Scholarship that takes place each spring semester. Scholars are expected to provide a project summary report to the George Scholar Coordinator after year one. The report should include information regarding progress of the project and a budget of incurred expenses, as well as expectations for future expenses that are significant (e.g., travel to a conference). Scholars should note that this information must be as accurate as possible as it will be used to: 1) determine if the progress is acceptable, and thus, worthy of year two funding and 2) make budget projections for the George Scholars Fund.

Dissemination of research findings is highly valued by the George family, and scholars are required to provide a summary of their research in electronic format upon completion of the project. Project summaries will be posted on the George Scholars website. Additionally, scholars are encouraged to publish their research and present their research at professional meetings. Scholars are expected to participate in events (e.g., dinners, lectures) connected with the

Georges' Berry visits in order to share their experiences.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Full-time students with no fewer than 45 hours and no more than 67 hours are eligible to apply. Exceptions to the hour criteria may be waived if a student brought in AP credit or transferred to the psychology department. In all cases, the student's project should take four semesters to complete. Summer may count as one semester if the student is enrolled full time. Applicants are required to have obtained the endorsement of a faculty mentor, who will assist the student in developing, conducting, and disseminating the research.

### **Application and Selection Process**

Students will submit a completed application available from the George Scholars website ([http://www.berry.edu/academics/education/psychology/George\\_Scholars/George%20Scholars%20Program.pdf](http://www.berry.edu/academics/education/psychology/George_Scholars/George%20Scholars%20Program.pdf)), a resume/vita, and a recommendation letter from their faculty mentor.

Applications must include a description of the research objectives and proposed project (with an understanding that details of the project may change), a timeline (including a projected date for IRB or IACUC approval), and initial plans for the use of grant funds.

Research proposals may be in the mentor's area of research, but must be student generated; however, mentors may offer students guidance in refining their proposals. Additionally, applicants should address the educational value of their project and their evolving academic and career goals. There must be a clear statement about the likelihood of project feasibility and success of the mentor/student collaboration in the mentor's recommendation letter.

Faculty mentors must be able to demonstrate their ability to mentor successfully the research of the students in an extraordinary way - that is, beyond the usual role of faculty advisor. The proposal must go beyond the scope or expected outcomes of the academic major. The faculty mentor will continue to work with the Scholar throughout the project duration, which is expected to take four semesters. The initial plan,

once developed by the Scholar with the faculty mentor's support, must be approved by the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost.

Students will be selected based upon their GPA at Berry, psychology coursework GPA, campus activities, research proposal strengths, faculty mentor endorsement, and recommendations from non-mentor psychology faculty. Applications will be evaluated according to The George Scholars Evaluation Form, which may be used to guide students and mentors in preparing applications.

Students should consult the website and application form for the application deadline. George Scholars will be announced in the spring and honored at the Berry College Honors Night held each spring semester. Scholars will be notified via campus mail with an award letter from the Psychology Department Chair. Students must agree to the terms of the grant by signing and returning the grant acceptance form included in the award letter.

### **Stipulations of Use of Grant Funds**

Each George Scholar will receive up to a \$5,000 grant to be used to conduct and present the research. The Scholar is limited to using \$2,500 during year one, but may access any leftover funds during year two. Use of funds post-graduation (e.g., presentation at a conference) must be approved by the Dean prior to the student's graduation, and funds may not be used once the next academic year has commenced. Any unused funds will remain as surplus in the George Scholars budget.

Funds may be used to pay for research-related costs such as computer software, testing instruments, materials and supplies, workshop or conference registration and expenses, and books/reference materials. If the project requires purchase of equipment (e.g., computer) defined as a durable good with a 2 + year longevity and/or cost of \$1,000 or more, the rationale must be articulated in the budget proposal. If it is deemed necessary to purchase equipment, the Director of Educational Technology should be contacted to assist with purchasing. All equipment will become the property of Berry College once the project is completed. Grants cannot be used to cover tuition, fees, room, or board at Berry College (an exception could

apply to room and board should the Scholar remain on campus during the summer to pursue a research project).

Scholars should work with their faculty mentor to revise budgets as research costs incur and are advised to share major changes in proposed budgets with the George Scholar Coordinator. Scholars are expected to complete purchase orders and expense vouchers for all purchases and travel with the appropriate documentation. Completed expense vouchers should be submitted to the Departmental Secretary to record in the Scholars' account. Reimbursement of expenses is dependent upon approval of the Psychology Department Chair and Dean.

The Scholars' funds cannot be used to support faculty expenses including, purchases, memberships in professional societies, or travel. Scholars' funds may be used for contractual services, such as translators, research facilitators, or research participant compensation. Funds may not be used to hire student research assistants or family members. Scholars may utilize Berry student workers in the Psychology Laboratory to assist with data collection, data management, or other ancillary tasks.

### **Mentor Obligations**

The faculty mentor will receive \$1000 (\$500 after year one, and \$500 after year two) as compensation for supporting the Scholars' research and professional goals. There are no limitations on use of the stipend and no expense vouchers are necessary.

Mentors should meet regularly with Scholars to revise research plans and budgets as needed. Additionally, they should encourage and assist Scholars in fulfilling their obligations of showcasing the George Scholars program to the Georges, the campus community, and professionals in the discipline.

**GEORGE SCHOLARS  
APPLICATION FORM  
DEADLINE: MARCH 29, 2012  
NO LATE OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

NAME OF STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT I.D. NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL ADDRESS/CAMPUS BOX#: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ MAJOR: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF HOURS COMPLETED BY THE END OF THE CURRENT SEMESTER:  
\_\_\_\_\_

PSYCHOLOGY GPA: \_\_\_\_\_ BERRY GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

PSYCHOLOGY FACULTY MENTOR: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PROVIDE A ONE PAGE COVER LETTER THAT BRIEFLY ADDRESSES:

- reflections on your first years at Berry College
- your academic and career goals
- overview of your research proposal
- how the grant funds would support your project

COMPLETE THE APPLICATION, RESEARCH PROPOSAL, BUDGET PROPOSAL, AND RELEASE FORMS (please type your responses)

INCLUDE WITH YOUR APPLICATION MATERIALS:

- a letter of support from your psychology faculty mentor who will be supervising your research project, and obtain approval from your mentor (signature/date).
- Berry College transcript
- Resume/vita that includes work experience and volunteer activities

Please sign the release form and submit your application materials to the Psychology Department Chair.

Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Psychology Faculty Mentor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Psychology Department Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean, CSEHS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Provost

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

Research Project Title

Abstract of the research project (200-500 words), including:

- research topic and its significance to psychology
- research question(s)/design
- method (participants; procedure)
- expected results
- potential implications of findings to the field of psychology

Statement of intended objectives and outcomes as they relate to the student's academic and professional development (100-200 words).

Statement of plans to present the research project work beyond the Berry campus.

List of key personnel in the project besides the applicant and mentor. Provide titles and contact information if possible.

Timeline for completing the project (year one and year two objectives). Include projected date for IRB or IACUC approval.

## **BUDGET PROPOSAL**

Cost estimates should be combined for years one and two of the project and should not to exceed \$5,000 (Students should limit costs to \$2,500 for year one if possible).

Expendable materials/supplies. Please itemize.

Equipment (durable good with 2+ years longevity and/or cost equal to or over \$1,000). Please itemize after consulting CSEHS faculty member in charge of technical support.

Photocopy; Printing

Telephone; Postage

Other expenses (e.g., contractual services; compensation for research participants). Please itemize.

Professional society membership fees; Workshop tuition

Conference registration

Transportation (specify destination and method of travel; consult Department Secretary for mileage costs)

Lodging (specify destination and cost per night)

Meals (specify number of days if away from campus; specify key personnel for meals provided at research meetings)

## RELEASE FORM

I have applied to be a George Scholar in the Department of Psychology, and I hereby authorize the faculty members on the George Scholars Selection Committee a) to review my Berry College transcript and research proposal, and b) to discuss my academic progress with Berry College faculty members on the selection committee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Please print name

### **Application check list:**

- Applicant's cover letter
- Mentor's letter
- Application form
- Research proposal form
- Budget proposal form
- Resume/vita
- Berry transcript
- Release form

## George Scholars Evaluation Form

Please circle the number that best reflects your evaluation. There is space for comments below each of the 10 evaluation items.

1 = Strongly disagree    2 = Disagree    3 = Neutral or  
Not enough info. provided    4 = Agree    5 = Strongly agree

### Project Value

The project offers significant educational value to the student (e.g., the project offers the student a significant learning experience beyond what could be achieved through regular course work).    1    2    3    4    5

The project helps develop the student's skills and broaden his/her understanding of the research process.    1    2    3    4    5

The project contributes to the student's expressed professional development and career goals.    1    2    3    4    5

### Project Feasibility

The project has a clear, achievable objective.    1    2    3    4    5

The project methodology is reasonable.    1    2    3    4    5

The project has a realistic timeline.    1    2    3    4    5

The project has a reasonable and justified proposed budget.    1    2    3    4    5

### Student Preparation and Qualification

The student is well prepared to conduct research, present findings at a conference or other setting.    1    2    3    4    5

Based on the quality of the proposal, the student's experiences at Berry as stated on the resume, and GPA, the student is likely to follow through with the research project to its completion.    1    2    3    4    5

### Faculty Sponsor

The faculty mentor appears willing and committed to advising the student and helping the student succeed in scholarly endeavors related to the research project.    1    2    3    4    5

**Overall Rating**

**Score out of 10 items =**

**General Comments:**

## GRANT AWARD ACCEPTANCE FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (scholar's full name), acknowledge that I am a recipient of Ralph George Scholar funds in order to conduct my research grant, entitled \_\_\_\_\_ (proposal title) with \_\_\_\_\_ (faculty member's full name) as my faculty mentor for the period \_\_\_\_\_ (semester range).

I understand the expectations of receiving these funds as they relate to service to the Berry College Psychology Department, psychology majors, and the campus community. I understand the stipulations of use of the grant funds and the role of the mentor of my project.

I understand that failure to uphold these obligations may result in the termination of my grant funding and George Scholar designation.

\_\_\_\_\_ (print scholar's full name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (scholar's signature and date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (print faculty mentor's full name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (faculty mentor's signature and date)