Fellows Statement of Purpose

SNF PAIDEIA FELLOWS: MISSION ± VALUES

STAVROS NIARCHOS FOUNDATION Paideia Program UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

FELLOWSHIP MISSION

The SNF Paideia Fellows program exists to create an interdisciplinary intellectual community of diverse undergraduate students united by a shared commitment to dialogue across difference as a necessary and central component in the pursuit of holistic education, responsible civic engagement, meaningful professional work, and individual and community wellness.

FELLOWSHIP VALUES

By the end of their three years in the program, our hope is that Paideia Fellows will have internalized and learned to put into practice the core SNF Paideia values of intentionality, curiosity, humility and community. They will approach the work they are doing and the relationships they are fostering in their personal, professional, academic, and civic lives intentionally, in conscious alignment with their own values and sense of purpose. They will participate in and lead dialogue with deep care for themselves and others, balancing curiosity and a drive to learn with humility and the willingness to be transformed. They will see their own flourishing as mutual and interdependent with others' flourishing and act as responsible, engaged citizens in their communities, starting with the classroom and expanding to the campus, local, national, and global communities

MISSION/VALUES IN PRACTICE

SNF Paideia Fellows will develop these abilities through a few key venues:

- **SNF Paideia designated courses**, including the three Proseminar courses and a minimum of two additional courses of their choice;
- **Dialogue events, workshops, and trainings**;
- Opportunities to conduct **original research**, lead **original dialogue programming**, and gain **professional experience** with the support of Fellows funding;
- **Horizontal Leadership** that serves the SNF Paideia community through a semesterly term on the SNF Paideia Fellows Council (language developed by SNF Paideia Fellows):
    - The **SNF Paideia Fellows Council** brings together SNF Paideia Fellows from each cohort to put into direct practice the pillars of citizenship, service and wellness with the purpose of building a stronger community. This council seeks to shape and model both intra- and inter- cohort dialogue and acts as a bridge between faculty and students.
- **Community building events** such as the All Fellows Dinner, Cafe Paideia, summer Fellows lunches, and more.

SHARED CORE EXPERIENCE

While each Fellow will chart their own path through the program and choose to engage with the many opportunities the program offers to varying degrees, the three required Proseminars comprise the core universal shared component of the Fellows experience.

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THE PRO SEMINARS

STAVROS NIARCHOS FOUNDATION Paideia Program UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

Through three required proseminars, Fellows build community, deepen inquiry across disciplines, and prepare to apply dialogue beyond Penn.

PRO SEMINAR I: BUILDING DIALOGIC COMMUNITY

Proseminar I introduces the core mission, values, and opportunities of the SNF Paideia Fellows program. In the proseminar we will explore theory and practice related to dialogue and its relationship to individual and community wellness, holistic education, and civic engagement. Fellows will perform deep reflection and articulate individualized values, goals, and questions in these areas. This process will be supported by engagement with intentional course readings drawn from a range of disciplines and author positionalities, in-class dialogues and exercises, and multi-modal assignments. Ultimately, Proseminar I builds the foundation for a vibrant and meaningful interdisciplinary community of Fellows to be strengthened and sustained over the next three years.

PRO SEMINAR II: DEEPENING INTERDISCIPLINARY DIALOGUE

Proseminar II engages SNF Paideia Fellows in deeper exploration of the themes of dialogue as it relates to citizenship, wellness, and service, giving special attention to how these ideas connect with their chosen major. In dialogue with other Fellows, each Fellow will investigate engaged scholarship in their own academic discipline and reflect upon the ways their SNF Paideia designated courses influence their academic, career, and civic trajectories. Through readings, assignments, and guest speakers, Fellows will better understand the theoretical and practical concerns of their own academic disciplines. An aspiration of the course is to develop and refine "intellectual empathy" simply a desire to better understand the concepts as well as the tensions (both participatory and ideological) that are important to the disciplines of Fellows in the cohort. This will allow Fellows to enter into deeper dialogue with cohort members while gaining a better understanding of certain disciplinary discourses outside of each Fellow's own course of study. Encountering the work of other disciplines will likely contribute to each Fellow's understanding of their own academic work.

PRO SEMINAR III: THINKING TOWARDS A DIALOGIC FUTURE

Proseminar III engages SNF Paideia Fellows in a set of questions about how best – as scholars, as citizens, in their personal lives, and in their careers – they can apply the skills and habits of dialogue that they have acquired throughout their tenure as Paideia Fellows. As they work towards completion of their major, often tackling a senior thesis or comparable culminating academic project, Fellows will be given extensive opportunities to practice discussing the substance of their work with, and communicating its importance to, people outside of their discipline. And, as Fellows prepare for life beyond Penn, they will learn how the Paideia values of intentionality, curiosity, humility, and community can guide them as they make reflective choices of and within future jobs, relationships, and civic roles. Proseminar III continues to nurture, and reaps the rewards of, the diverse intellectual community that was forged in the first two proseminars (and through other programs of the SNF Paideia Program).