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## Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships Frequently Asked Questions

If you have further questions or suggestions for additions to this list, please contact the FLAS Coordinator, Eric Schmidt, at [ericjs@bu.edu](mailto:ericjs@bu.edu).

### Eligibility

#### **Who is eligible to receive a FLAS fellowship?**

FLAS Fellows must be US citizens or permanent residents enrolled as undergraduate or graduate students (or are accepted for and intend to enroll in a degree program during the award period). Boston University students must fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with Boston University selected to receive your FAFSA data. Specific requirements for each award type are available on the African Studies Center [website](#).

#### **Can I receive a summer FLAS if I will graduate in the previous spring?**

Possibly, though preference is given to students who are enrolled or accepted for enrollment during the fellowship period. See the FLAS Coordinator.

#### **May I apply for a FLAS if I am not a BU student?**

In some cases, students enrolled in degree programs at institutions other than BU may receive Summer FLAS awards for domestic or overseas intensive language programs. Non-BU students are not eligible to apply for Academic Year FLAS awards. Contact the FLAS Coordinator for specific guidance.

#### **Is there a limit on the number of FLAS fellowships I can receive?**

There is no limit on the number of sequential FLAS awards one person may receive, but no more than one concurrent award can be accepted.

### Application Process

#### **What happens after I submit my application?**

Recipients, alternates, and non-recipients will receive notification of their status within about a month after the application deadline. Award letters will contain more information about payment processes, registration, etc.

#### **Who will review/evaluate my application?**

The African Studies Center's Financial Aid Committee is responsible for all evaluations and is comprised of the Center's director, assistant director, Language Program director, program

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administrator and three African Studies affiliated faculty chosen to represent the center's disciplinary diversity.

The review committee comprises scholars adept at reading across disciplines, so do not be shy about referring to specialized literatures, theories, or methods as appropriate. At the same time, do not try to impress the committee with arcane vocabulary or references. The best statements are clear and written in plain English, show seriousness and purpose, and are true to the challenges in your field of study and to your current stage of training. The committee understands that beginning graduate students may have rudimentary plans, while more advanced students will be able to lay out plans for major research projects in some detail. Likewise, the evaluation committee understands that essays from applicants in professional schools or other non-thesis degree programs will be quite different from essays written by students planning theses or dissertations, which in turn will be quite different from those of undergraduate students. Therefore, respond to all questions to address your specific situation and do not try to tailor your application to fit some perceived ideal candidate.

**Do I need to submit a bibliography with my essay?**

Bibliographies per se are discouraged, but if you wish, you may mention important authors or works in your text or include relevant citations parenthetically.

## **FLAS Usage**

**Can a FLAS award be used to participate in an internship program?**

Generally not, because an internship program is neither a formal academic program of full-time study nor dissertation research. Contact your FLAS Coordinator about a specific internship if you feel it meets the full-time study requirement.

**Is a FLAS fellow allowed to work during the award period?**

In limited situations, yes. Remember that FLAS fellows are required to be engaged in full-time course work or dissertation research during the academic year, or in intensive language study during the summer award period. However, BU policy does allow up to 25% additional employment as a teaching assistant, research assistant or student hourly worker with prior permission. Contact your FLAS Coordinator for more details.

**Can I receive both a FLAS and another fellowship during the same period?**

Sometimes. Please consult your FLAS Coordinator.

**Can I get a single semester award during the academic year?**

No.

**Can I take a semester off and finish the award during a subsequent period?**

No.

**Can I request a Pass/Fail grade for my courses?**

No.

**Can I use my FLAS at a different U.S. institution?**

During the summer only.

**Can I use the FLAS for a reading knowledge course?**

No. FLAS is designed to give students proficiency in speaking and writing, as well as reading and listening.

## **Academic Year Awards**

**What can I use an academic year FLAS for?**

Academic Year FLAS fellowships are awarded for a full academic year to students engaged in:

- formal full-time coursework at BU that includes one area studies course and one African language course; or
- formal full-time coursework as part of a BU official undergraduate overseas program that includes one area studies course and one African language course; or
- full-time dissertation research abroad. The use of the African language in the dissertation research must be extensive enough to be able to consider the language improvement facilitated by the research equal to the improvement that would be obtained from a full academic year's worth of formal classroom instruction.

**Do I have to take specific classes?**

FLAS recipients must take at least one African language course and one African studies course each semester. An appropriate African studies course is one that has at least 25% Africa-related content, measured by readings, topical focus in the syllabus, case studies, and assignments. Please check with the FLAS Coordinator if you have questions concerning approved courses.

**How many credits do I need to take?**

FLAS Fellows must engage in full-time study during the tenure of the award as defined by BU. Awardees must take at least one course in the African language of the award and one African studies course *each semester*. FLAS Fellows must remain in academic good standing (satisfactory progress toward a degree, enrolled full time, attend classes faithfully, completing course requirements on schedule). The required language and African studies courses must be taken for a letter grade; pass/fail courses are not acceptable.

**Beyond classwork, is anything required of FLAS Fellows?**

All fellows will be required to fill out pre- and post-award reports for the US Department of Education and will be surveyed periodically in the years following their award. In addition, all fellows must take pre- and post-award language proficiency assessments.

## Summer Awards

Summer FLAS fellowships are intended to help students gain the equivalent of a year's worth of college-level language study. They support students enrolled in:

- formal domestic programs of intensive language study at the intermediate or advanced level;  
or
- formal overseas programs of intensive language study at the intermediate or advanced level;  
or
- formal overseas programs of intensive study for graduate students only at the beginning level of languages, if 1) appropriate equivalent instruction is not available in the United States and furthermore 2) the graduate student has achieved advanced proficiency in another language of the world area of specialization, and learning a second language of that world area is required for the student's overall training and expertise.

Intensive language programs must offer a minimum of 140 contact hours for instruction (120 for advanced level) and must be a minimum of 6 weeks in duration.

### **Does a summer FLAS include a travel award?**

Not always. Students may be eligible for a summer travel award of up to \$1,000, or the actual cost of travel to and from the program site, whichever is less. Travel awards may be made at the discretion of the African studies program and only with the permission of the US Department of Education. Contact your FLAS coordinator for more information.

### **May I switch programs and/or languages after I submit my application?**

Requests to change programs and/or languages are handled by the FLAS Coordinator and are rarely granted. Before students prepare an application for a Summer FLAS, they should thoroughly research available programs for their proposed language of study.

### **Beyond classwork, is anything required of FLAS Fellows?**

All fellows will be required to fill out pre- and post-award reports for the US Department of Education and will be surveyed periodically in the years following their award. In addition, all fellows must take pre- and post-award proficiency assessments.