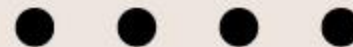


# Turning Toward & Forward: Disrupting the Scholarship Application and Selection Process

Angela Schaffer/Lyndsi Jones  
Stacy Benjamin  
Noelle Baldwin  
Kyle Rausch, EdD





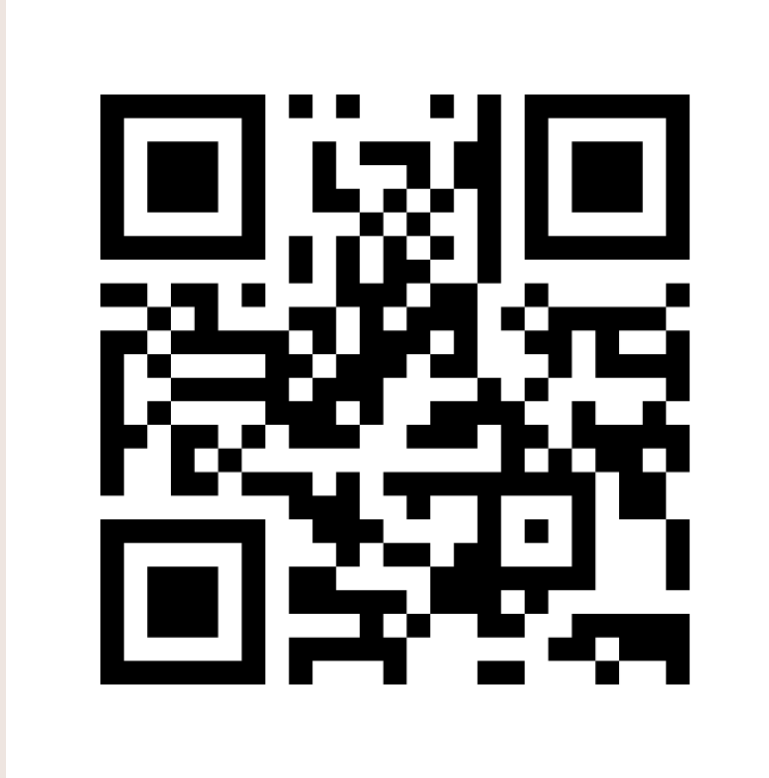
# Session Learning Objectives

What will attendees learn or gain from attending this session?

1. Attendees will consider and compare scholarship practices and models from institutional, nonprofit, fellowship, and provider perspectives.
2. Attendees will identify and explore concepts of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion that inform scholarship practices, and how the identities of students have been understood through those conceptual lenses over time.
3. Attendees will develop a toolkit of questions and rubric examples to inform their programmatic and scholarship practices to effectively reach their intended student audiences.



**Let's get to know each other...poll time!**



<https://www.menti.com/filmpi3iu8>



# Panelist presentations

- Who have we identified we're trying to reach and why?
- How have we restructured our funds to meet these needs?
- What barriers existed in our application processes and what are we doing to combat these?
- How are we handling our rubric/weighting/scoring?
- How are we supporting students beyond funding through innovative program design?



# University of Illinois Chicago

- Large, public research I university located in Chicago (some regional campuses)
- MSI
  - HSI
  - AANAPISI
- 31,747 students
  - 21,807 undergraduates
  - 7,798 graduate students
  - 4,142 professional students
- 16 colleges/schools

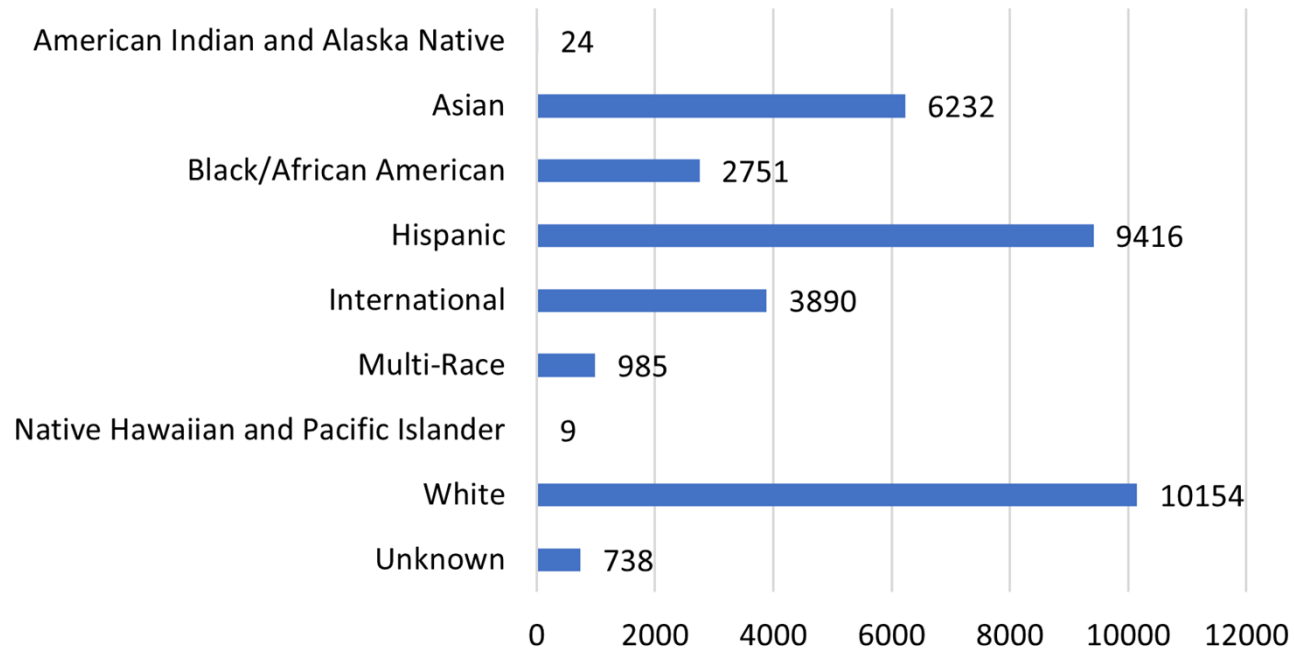






# University of Illinois Chicago

UIC Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (Fall 2021)



# University of Illinois Chicago

- 51% First-Generation (undergrad)
- 54% Pell Eligible

## Study Abroad Participation

- Prior to the pandemic sent >200 students annually
- Resumed study abroad on a large scale Summer 2022
- Total participation for AY21-22: 170



# Who are we trying to reach & why?

- Racial/Ethnic groups that are underrepresented in our SA rates as compared to the overall institution:
  - Asian American & Pacific Islanders (>6.1%)
  - Latinx/Hispanic (>4%)
- First-generation college students
- Students with high financial need

**Why?** This is our population.





# How are we doing it?

- **Targeted outreach and resources**
  - Workshops on incorporating diversity into scholarship essays in partnership with the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Engagement
- **Cross-campus partnerships**
  - African American Cultural Center
  - Asian American Resource and Cultural Center
  - Gender and Sexuality Center
  - Latino Cultural Center
- **Renegotiating funding from partners**
  - Simplifying application processes
  - Advocating for automatic discounts and Pell-match grants
- **Reconfiguring our funds, applications, and scoring/selection process**
- **Developing new funds and programs for our underrepresented populations**



# What barriers existed in our application process?

- **Multiple complex applications for our different funds**
  - Followed FEA's model of a single application
- **Traditional application requirements such as essays do not reflect diverse modalities of expression**
  - Students now have the option to submit a video response to questions
- **Limitations of existing financial need markers such as Pell-eligibility**
  - Introduced an open-ended question inviting students to describe factors that might not already be reflected
- **Breaking down myths: "I can't earn a scholarship"**
  - Empowering students by flipping from a deficit model to a strengths-based model; leveraging peer success stories



# Rubrics, Weighting, and Scoring

- Recalibrated scoring rubrics to weight various aspects per the aim of our different scholarship funds
  - Our general scholarship fund now includes 3 constructs: financial need, identity and background, and program rationale
  - Reviewing more than just EFC: Pell eligibility, other aid students may be receiving, qualitative information the student shares, total cost of attendance for study abroad program
- Developed essay/video response rubrics
- Invite campus stakeholders who work with underrepresented populations to serve on selection committees
- Facilitate scoring calibration meetings





# Rubrics, Weighting, and Scoring



Sample Scholarship Application Scoring Rubric

Standard Application Questions:	Points Possible
7. Are you/have you served in the US armed Forces?	Yes=1; No=0
9. Does the student come from an underrepresented student group/diverse heritage background? In addition to racial and ethnic minorities, the following are considered underrepresented groups in education abroad: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Males</li> <li>LGBTQIA+ students</li> <li>Students with disabilities</li> <li>Non-traditional aged students</li> </ul>	Yes=2; No=0
12. How does the student currently pay for college/graduate school? Is the student relying on financial aid, scholarships, holding a job, etc. to afford college? Based on information shared, is it likely that the student could only afford to study abroad if they receive a scholarship?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High Need: Can only study abroad if receives a scholarship=2</li> <li>Medium Need: Student may be able to study abroad with other resources=1</li> <li>Low Need: Student can afford most study abroad expenses without scholarship=0</li> </ul>
13. Activities, involvement, honors Has the student demonstrated that they are an engaged and committed student likely to be a good candidate for a study abroad experience based on their past endeavors? Alternatively, if the student has not been involved in extracurriculars do they provide a compelling reason why?	Yes=1; No=0
Supplemental Questions	Points Possible
1F. Is the student studying a major that is traditionally underrepresented in education abroad? Majors traditionally underrepresented in education abroad include those that are in the STEM fields, health sciences, education, and legal studies and law enforcement	Yes=1; No=0
1K. Does the student have previous experience abroad?	Yes=0; No=1
1L. Is the student a first-generation college student?	Yes=2; No=0
1M. Is the student a UIC freshman or transfer student in their first year at UIC?	If no, the student is ineligible for the scholarship
2. Does the student receive a Pell grant?	Yes=1; No=0



Short Response Questions Rubric

Points:	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Prompt 1:</b> In what ways do you anticipate this program will challenge you?  As a first-generation college student, what strengths do you have that have helped you achieve your goals so far?  How do you envision these strengths might help you be successful while studying abroad?  Please be specific in addressing any challenges you have overcome and the skills you used to do so.	Response does not clearly explain challenges they anticipate facing abroad, any strengths that they have, nor challenges they have overcome. Comprehension of the response is difficult due to many errors or it being too brief.	Response addresses one of the question's prompts: a challenge the student expects to encounter abroad, a strength they have, or a challenge they have overcome. Overall, the response is generic and lacks specific examples. Comprehension of the response is difficult due to many errors or it being too brief.	Response addresses 2 of the 3 prompts (challenges expected to face abroad, strengths, and challenges the student has overcome) with a good degree of specificity. Some of the response still may be generic or vague, but the student otherwise seems to have an understanding and appreciation for how studying abroad may challenge them and the strengths they possess to persevere. Comprehension is generally good, although a few errors may exist.	Responses to all three prompts within the question are provided. The student provides at least one specific example of a challenge they have overcome and the strengths they used to do so. The response is well organized and easy to comprehend.	Responses to all three prompts within the question are provided. The student provides a few specific examples of challenges they have overcome and the strengths they used to do so and makes a connection between how this will help them in study abroad. The response is well organized and easy to comprehend.



# Beyond Funding: Programs Making a Difference

## FirstGen Flames Abroad Scholars



## First Year Flames Abroad: College Success & Student Leadership in a Global Context





# Frederick Douglass Global Fellowship



#InclusionIsGlobal



**GLOBAL INCLUSION 2022**

October 4-7, 2022 • San Francisco, CA





#InclusionIsGlobal



**GLOBAL INCLUSION 2022**  
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# FDGF 2017



- GPA of 3.0 or above
- Video interview
- Essay
- Letter of recommendation from President of institution
- Students at MSIs
- Pell eligible
- 184 apps

# FDGF 2022



- GPA of 3.0 or above
- Video interview
- No Essay
- Letter of recommendation from faculty or administrator
- Student of color
- Financial need not considered
- 2,500 apps





• • •  
• **Frederick Douglass Summer Scholars grant for all applicants**







# Fund for Education Abroad

Non-profit, fully philanthropically-funded organization  
Support students who are underrepresented in U.S. study abroad  
30+ Scholarship Funds  
Founded in 2010

## WHO?

### Priority Populations:

First-generation college students  
Community college students (current & who have transferred)  
Students who are people of color

Additional scholarships for applicants who:  
plan to study in particular regions of the world  
identify as LGBTQ+  
are from or studying in specific regions of the U.S.

## WHY?

- Data (Open Doors, etc.) shows that our priority populations are underrepresented.
- Financial concerns often cited by prospective study abroad students as a barrier
- Other scholarship funds are guided by what organizations and individual donors want to support and fund

## FEA Scholars 2010-2022

71% First-generation college students  
82% Students of color  
37% Community college students

# A Walk Down FEA Memory Lane

*How have we restructured our funds to meet these needs?*

Turning TOWARDS:

Revisiting our mission and vision: Who is “least likely” to study abroad?

Fundraising:

- Launched a campaign to have named scholarships and endowments with some specifications
- Returning to more generalized scholarships that support more FEA Scholars; streamlining funds
- Communicating to donors and partners the students we want to support, and WHY

Access Partnerships:

- People in the field are some of our biggest stakeholders & supporters
- Providers and institutions want to increase access to their programs and market beyond traditional avenues
- Running scholarships can be, frankly, an administrative pain!



# Moving FORWARD: FEA Application

*What barriers existed in our application processes and what are we doing to combat these?*

We provide a great deal of support to applicants and the advisors/officers/administrators at their home institutions during the application phase: Phone, email, etc.

Application doesn't ASSUME a student attends an institution where the process and the offices needed are obvious (or even available/existing)

Lowered point value of items the student has little control over, like letter of rec

Revised reviewer training to work towards more consistency in responses

Still navigating:  
Financial Aid Information & Determining Need  
Letter of rec





# FEA Rubric & Program Design



*How are we handling our rubric/weighting/scoring?*

- Revisited rubric and realized weighting was inconsistent in terms of representing our mission and vision; revised point values
- lowered worth of letter of rec
- previous travel has long been an issue discussed with our reviewers, and some reviewers assume it as a sign of privilege; we've assigned point values to reflect different previous travel experiences
- Define very clearly OUR FEA definition of 1st-generation college student
- Very clearly defining transcript scoring

Questions that remain:

- Huge variance in reviewer rating of essays: How to make this more consistent
- Need has a big impact on score, and we use FAFSA EFC; will change in the future
  - little to no access for students in the financial “middle” in terms of need
  - How will we assess w/o FAFSA?

# FEA's Biggest Shifts: Leaning into Equity & Access

Ensured consistency in value points assigned to ALL priority populations (all 8 pts)

Lowering value of letter of rec (13 pts→8 pts)

Removed “I recommend, I do not recommend” options

- applicants move forward based on scores alone

Revised reviewer training:

- Opportunity to discuss reviewer biases
- Better define terms that were open to subjectivity (Traveled “some”)
- Create more consistency across the board
- Reiterate what reviewers cannot access (financial aid info)



# FEA's Support Before, During, & After

*How are we supporting students beyond funding through innovative program design?*

Guiding students through application process

Application webinar (for both students and advisors)

Social media takeovers

Peer mentor program

Alumni engagement

"I feel more supported by FEA than I do with my program host"





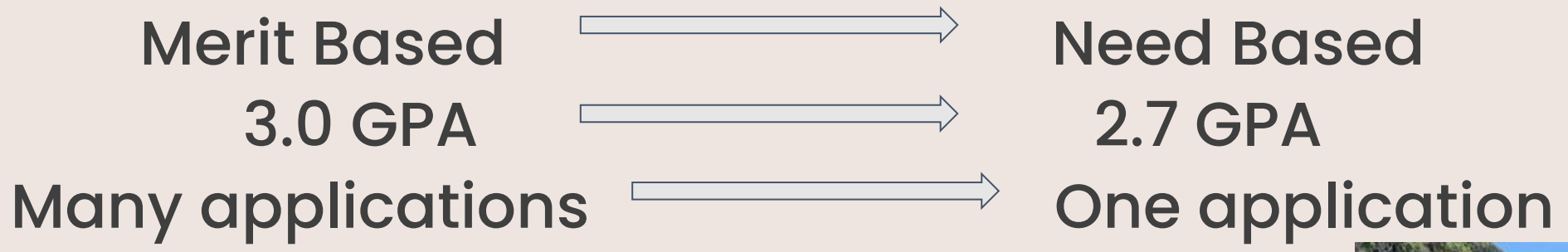


# IES Abroad

- Non Profit Study abroad provider organization **Mission:** “..we educate students to become global leaders through premier study abroad and internship programs...”
- WHO: Priority given to students who demonstrate high financial need and are Pell Grant recipients
- WHY? IDEA Initiative started in 2008; Initiative to Diversify Education Abroad. Recruitment, Scholarship, Advising, & Social Identity resources
- More than \$6 Million in aid, Over 150,000 students abroad in over 70 year history



# Scholarship & Aid Evolution



# Barriers & Opportunities

- GPA requirement
- Application process
  - Deadlines; all for one, one for all!
- Application materials required
  - International student considerations
  - Essay; review panel
- Diversification of aid type
  - Public University grants (automatic)
  - HBCU grants (automatic)
  - HACU grants (automatic)
- Timing of notification
  - Rolling notifications BEFORE acceptance; students know upfront what they are receiving. It's NEVER TOO EARLY!







# Scholarships: A Tool for DEIA



**Reframing:** Is what we are doing having the IMPACT we need and want?

- Data; statistics and overall enrollment.
- Looking at yield and melt...42% of our applicant withdrawals are due to unmet need.

**Reflection:** How has our student population changed and how do we need to shift to meet the need?

- PUG; is it reaching the students who need it most at Public Institutions
- Internal vs. external assessment

**Reform:** Changing our internal policies to achieve the outcomes needed

- Donor funded scholarships through Advancement office \*no separate application required
  - Example: Charles Merrill Scholarship for Morehouse & Spelman (Target our HBCU partners) & HACU Scholarship



Consider financial need?

Change GPA requirement?

Change the size of the cohort?

Interview applicants?

**YOUR THOUGHTS?**



# Case Studies

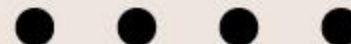
*Meet in small groups of 4-6 to discuss the case studies. Be prepared to share.*



# Case Study 1: 1st Gen?

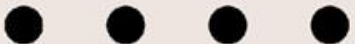
Your office has two scholarships, each \$5000, restricted for first-generation college students. Five students apply. One student with moderate financial need has two parents who each attended community college and graduated with Associate Degrees. Two students have no financial need and very high EFCs, but none of their parents attended college. One student with high financial need doesn't know one parent's education level, and her father started college but didn't finish. The fifth student, who also has high financial need, shares that he grew up relatively privileged with both parents having doctorate degrees, but he became a foster child at 16 and is now completely financially independent.

What is your definition of first-generation college student? How would you rank these students? What other information would you want to collect to award these scholarships in a fair and equitable manner?



## Case Study 2: GPA

Your school offers a scholarship for STEM students to study abroad on a direct enrollment program for the semester. Last year you lowered the GPA requirement from 3.0 to 2.5, to include a larger number of students. On the program last spring however, some of those students were unable to pass the lab courses taught by one of your partner universities. Do you revisit the GPA requirement in light of that? What other options might you consider instead?







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# Return to the polls...



<https://www.menti.com/fi1mpi3iu8>