

Billington Summer Research Fellowship in US History Occidental College, 2026 Guidelines

The History Department funds two Billington Summer Research Fellowships in US History for undergraduates conducting faculty-mentored archival/primary source research in US History. This is a competitive fellowship and History majors who have completed their junior year will be given some preference in the process. American Studies students are also encouraged to apply for research projects using historical methods. All projects related to the history of the United States from its colonial era to the recent past are eligible. The Billington Summer Fellows will participate in the ten-week Summer Research Program offered by the URC from Tuesday, May 26, and ends on Friday, July 31, 2026. The annual all-day SRP conference is scheduled for Wednesday, July 29, 2026. Billington Summer Fellows will receive a stipend of \$5200 paid over ten weeks, subsidized on-campus housing and meal plan dependent on financial need, and the opportunity to apply for a small budget of consumable research expenses up to \$400.

The deadline for the Billington Summer Research Fellowship is February 2, 2026, by 5:00 pm.

To apply, please visit the [Summer Research Program](#) website. Read all instructions and advice carefully before finalizing your proposal and application packet. Be sure to check the Billington Summer Research Fellowship box on the application form in addition to the URC Summer Research Program Fellowship.

Please direct any questions about the Billington Summer Research Fellowship to Marla Stone, History, at mstone@oxy.edu.

About the Billington Fund at Occidental College

The Billington Summer Research Fellowships are made possible by the estate of historian Ray Allen Billington and supplemented by a grant from the Times Mirror Foundation. This generous fund brings a distinguished Billington Professor to Occidental College and the Huntington Library every other year. The Billington Summer Research Fellowships follow in the tradition of supporting teaching and learning at American liberal arts colleges.

Objectives of the Billington Summer Research Fellowship

Research in archival, oral history, or other primary source materials stands at the heart of the historical discipline. Through this competitive summer research fellowship, Occidental History Department offers students an extended opportunity to engage in original historical research and analysis. Billington Summer Research Fellows will gain advanced research skills by conducting original historical research in archives, oral history projects, or other special collections in the Los Angeles area.

Support

Billington Summer Research Fellows in US History will receive a (taxable) stipend of \$520 per week for ten weeks of research. Students who choose to live on campus will receive a housing subsidy depending on financial need. Generally, the amount awarded for summer research is taxable, but the College is not obligated to withhold taxes or send a 1099, so students should retain a copy of their contract as part of their tax records. Since individual tax liability depends on each individual's circumstances, Fellows should contact a personal tax advisor with any questions or concerns. In addition, there is an opportunity to submit a budget for an additional \$400.00 to cover consumable research expenses. (Please see URC Summer Research Program website for more details on housing and taxes. All URC Summer Housing Policies also apply to the Billington Summer Research Fellows.)

Expectations

The Billington Summer Research Fellowship Program expects close collaboration between Billington Summer Fellows and their faculty mentors, as well as interaction between Fellows with their peer researchers in the URC Summer Research Program, including:

- a full-time exclusive commitment by Fellows for the entire stated ten-week program period (except in very unusual circumstances, late starts and early departures will not be allowed, and students may not hold other campus employment at the same time as their fellowship).
- participation in research ethics training -- in-person at our ethics seminar and through completion of a CITI certification program.
- participation in all scheduled meetings.
- regular meetings with research mentors.
- participation in any program assessment effort.
- submission a final report before receipt of the final study grant payment.
- presentation at the Oxy Summer Research Conference.

Fellows are expected to maintain high academic and social standing.

Faculty mentors must be tenure-track or continuing non-tenure track faculty.

Selection Process

Applicants will be considered by the committee of History Department Faculty members. Students who are selected will be notified by the week of Spring break so that all applicants can make their summer plans accordingly. Factors considered during the selection process are:

- The quality of the proposal, including demonstrated knowledge of the proposed primary source collection.
- The strength of faculty support
- An effective personal statement
- Academic experience consistent with the ability to do the proposed research

Application Process

Students who would like to apply for the Billington Summer Research Fellowship should develop an outline of their project and approach a faculty member with whom they would like to work to discuss the feasibility of collaborating with her or him over the summer. Many faculty members prefer that student research be closely aligned with their own work. After you and your potential faculty mentor have agreed to apply for the Billington Summer Research Fellowship, you can open an application using the URC portal.

Pursuant to federal law and College policy, all research involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the College's Human Subjects Research Review Committee before research begins.

Applications require:

- (i) a project proposal,
- (ii) a personal statement,
- (iii) an itemized budget, and
- (iv) a letter of recommendation from a faculty mentor.