

WINTHROP MCNAIR PARTICIPATION

Memorandum of Understanding

Being a McNair Scholar is a nationally recognized, federally funded honor. You were selected for this opportunity because of your potential for success in research and graduate study. There are only 29 new McNair Scholars in the state of SC this year. For your sake, the program's sake, and the sake of those who were not selected, do all you can to get the most out of this precious and rewarding opportunity.

Winthrop's Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement program is primarily funded by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). ED provides this program description.¹

Through a grant competition, funds are awarded to institutions of higher education to prepare eligible participants for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. Participants are from disadvantaged backgrounds and have demonstrated strong academic potential. Institutions work closely with participants as they complete their undergraduate requirements. Institutions encourage participants to enroll in graduate programs and then track their progress through to the successful completion of advanced degrees. The goal is to increase the attainment of Ph.D. degrees by students from underrepresented segments of society.

The success of Winthrop's TRiO McNair Program is measured by our current and past participants' success on the following objectives.

1) Research or Scholarly Activities:

96% of McNair Program participants who initiated research or scholarly activities during the McNair Program academic year will have completed these activities during the academic year. (Completed activity examples include conference presentations, publications, and honors theses)

2) Graduate School Enrollment:

50% of McNair Program bachelor's degree recipients (or equivalent) will be accepted and enrolled in a graduate program of study by the fall term of the academic year immediately following the completion of the bachelor's degree (or equivalent).

3) Continued Enrollment in Graduate Study:

75% of first year graduate students will continue to be enrolled in graduate school at the beginning of the fall term of the next academic year.

4) Doctoral Degree Attainment:

14% of McNair Program participants served who will attain a doctoral degree within ten (10) years of the attainment of the bachelor's degree. Table A-1, here, lists the doctorates accepted by the U.S. Dept. of ED: <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf21308/table/A-1>.

To help our participants meet these objectives, Winthrop's McNair Scholars Program provides transformational research and graduate admissions supports and professional development opportunities throughout the junior and senior years. This includes, but is not limited to, a paid summer research experience; faculty mentoring; quantitative and verbal reasoning preparation; writing and statistics & methods tutoring; graduate admissions, interview, and funding application guidance; and travel to present research as well as explore and interview at graduate programs. Some of these services are paid for with Winthrop funds. ED provides the following list of required and permissible services for which federal funds can be used.

- (a) **Opportunities for research or other scholarly activities** at the grantee institution or at graduate centers that are designed to provide participants with effective preparation for doctoral study,
- (b) **Summer internships (stipend, room and board),**

¹Downloaded 5/8/2023 from <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/triomcnair/index.html>

(c) **Seminars and other educational activities designed to prepare participants for doctoral study,**

(d) **Tutoring,**

(e) **Academic counseling,**

(f) **Graduate Admissions and Graduate Financial Aid Assistance,**

Assistance to participants in securing admission to and financial assistance for enrollment in graduate programs (also financial literacy),

(g) **Mentoring**

programs involving faculty members or students at institutions of higher education, or any combination of faculty members and students, and

(h) **Exposure to cultural events and academic programs** not usually available to project participants (ICRM, GA) (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a–15)

To be eligible to receive Winthrop McNair services, the program participant must produce research and graduate admissions products consistent with the mandatory objectives every year and be a Winthrop McNair Scholar in good standing. This means he/she/they must

- 1) Be enrolled in a bachelor's degree program, making appropriate progress toward that degree, and be in academic good standing;
- 2) Produce a high quality research product each program year with the support of a PhD Mentor vetted by the McNair Program Director (the McNair program year begins the first day of Winthrop's fall semester);
- 3) Meet with a McNair staff member at least once each month September through April and contact the McNair Director at least once over the summer;
- 4) Identify and ask for program staff and services that will help him/her/them find and fund appropriate graduate programs (services can include tutoring for courses, travel, application fees, grad admissions test prep and registration fees, and more);
- 5) Work with program staff to search for and identify appropriate graduate programs throughout my program participation;
- 6) Apply to appropriate graduate programs during their senior year and in time to be enrolled by the September after earning the bachelor's degree;
- 7) Respond to all requests for information from McNair staff within 72 hours or explain delays as soon as possible; and
- 8) Always behave in accordance with the requirements of the Winthrop Student Conduct Code;² applicable laws and regulations; protocols to protect the health, wellness, and safety of themselves and those around them; and in a way that exhibits respect for themselves, the program, and the legacy of Dr. Ronald E. McNair.

My signature below indicates (a) my understanding of the responsibilities and privileges of being a McNair Scholar, (b) my promise to work with my Mentor to complete high quality undergraduate research, and (c) my commitment to work with McNair staff to find appropriate post-baccalaureate degree programs and funding so I can enroll in graduate/professional study by the fall after I graduate.

Student Printed Name

Cheryl A. Fortner, PhD
McNair Director

Student Signature and Date

Director Signature and Date

² <https://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/studentconduct/StudentConductCode.pdf>