

Jane Q. Public

Personal Statement

March 4, 2020

Dear Named Fellowship Awards Committee Members,

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my applications for the 2020-2021 Named Fellowship. As a first-generation student from an underserved minority group, I am excited to have the opportunity to further my research agenda and expand UNLV's academic footprint in the study of political science.

Commented [R01]: Explicit mention of the fellowship and the 'why'

Elections have consequences. This axiomatic statement sums up the salience of electoral studies. The aftermath of elections not only decides government makeup but also policymaking. Often times, election results are predicted ahead of the actual vote (e.g. 2008 U.S. Presidential elections). There are, however, outliers where predictability does not come to fruition (e.g. 2016 U.S. Presidential elections). Thus, the study of elections is as dynamic as it is salient.

In Nevada, the impact of elections is especially important due to the size of the Latino voting community. Despite its growth, research into this distinct voting group is still scarce. My current research focuses on the vote calculus within the Latino electorate. Do Latino voters maintain a varying vote calculus? Are there sociological differences that correspond to political preferences? Finally, what are the [hypothetical] vote functions of undocumented respondents?

Commented [R02]: The preamble to the research and the research question

Being awarded OUR's Named Fellowship will provide the financial tools necessary to address these questions. Specifically, the funds will assist in the purchase of a national dataset (Latino Immigrant National Election Study, or LINES) that evaluates Latino immigrant political behavior. This dataset will be used towards research on the behavioral traits of Latino immigrant voters in Nevada. LINES gauges both documented as well as undocumented voters and asks them a series of political questions, including voting behavior.¹ Thus, possession of LINES is essential to my current research agenda as well as my growth as an undergraduate researcher.

Commented [R03]: How the fellowship will help facilitate research

As a political science major, I have developed a mentor-mentee relationship with Dr. Zhivago. Overtime this relationship transitioned into Dr. Zhivago becoming my faculty research mentor. Recently, we had the opportunity to present a manuscript, titled "A Tale of Two Elections: The 2008 and 2016 U.S. Presidential Elections", at the American Political Science Association (APSA) conference. As the sole undergraduate UNLV student, I had a distinct opportunity to display UNLV undergraduate research footprint. The positive remarks received at APSA has led us to submit this manuscript for publication.

My academic accolades are not limited to the research domain. Since attending UNLV, I have maintained a 4.0 grade point average and have been a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Political Science Honor Society. I have also participated in the undergraduate research symposium, hosted by OUR, and have volunteered with Three Square, a local organization that provides wholesome food to hungry people.

Commented [R04]: Research and service background

At UNLV, undergraduate research is student-centric, faculty-driven, and institutionally supported. UNLV's commitment to fostering the growth of undergraduate research is embodied through the Top Tier mission, which also includes bridging UNLV with the greater Las Vegas community. After all, research must have practical and community-based implications.

Thank You for your consideration,

Jane Q. Public

¹ LINES asks undocumented respondents a hypothetical voting question. That is, if the respondent had the right to vote, for whom would they vote for?