Glasscock Graduate Research Fellowship

The Glasscock Center for Humanities Research annually funds up to ten Graduate Research Fellowships at $2,000 each. Departments can nominate up to two graduate students to be considered for these awards. To be eligible, students have to be working on a Doctoral dissertation or Masters thesis but could be at the initial stages of their projects. Students are expected to work closely with their advisors on a project description, rationale for the grant, and budget. The budget might include conference participation and travel, fieldwork or archival work, or it might simply be for research materials. The outcome should be a dissertation or a thesis, or a significant portion thereof. These students will make up the community of graduate scholars who populate the Graduate Colloquium Series (five each semester). They are required to participate for a semester in the Graduate Colloquium Series and use the experience as a tool to improve their own writing and projects and help each other to improve the quality of the work being produced as a group. Please check with the financial aid office to confirm that your financial aid will not be affected by receipt of this or other awards.

Students must have both the Director of Graduate Studies' and the Department Chair's approval to be nominated. Applications should go through a rigorous selection process at the departmental level before being nominated to the Glasscock Center by the Department Chair. The selection process at the departmental level may be done by a departmental committee that is already assigned the task of evaluating students, by a committee that includes the Graduate Director, or a committee that is created for the purpose of selecting a nominee. In some cases, the committee may consist of graduate students. Students may only receive the Glasscock Graduate Research Fellowship once. Students may not hold a Brown-Kruse Fellowship at the same time as the Glasscock Graduate Research Fellowship. Preference may be given to students who have not already received a Brown-Kruse Fellowship.

Date: 2/11/2016
Name: Guillaume Bogiaris Thibault
Address: 2010 Allen Building
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Department: Political Science
Email: gbogiaris@tamu.edu
Phone: 979-845-1410 (office)

Current year in graduate program (select one): 1 2 3 4 5 6
MA or PhD Student: PhD
Expected date of graduation: May 2017

Previous financial support from Glasscock Center (preference may be given to applications who have not received major funding from the Glasscock Center):

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title of program</th>
<th>Term in which you received assistance</th>
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<td>Small Conference Grant</td>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
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Applicants must either attend a Glasscock Center Grant Writing Workshop or consult with a Glasscock Center Advisory Committee member. Please check that you have done (at least) one of these.

Name of workshop attended: N/A. Met w/ Diego Von Vacano
Date attended: 2/11/2016
Provide a working title for your presentation to the Graduate Colloquium Series.

Machiavelli and Florentine NeoPlatonism.

Please describe your current research project and expected outcomes at the end of the fellowship period. In addition to the general topic, include the research methodology, sources, and the contribution the work makes to your field(s). In other words, how will you accomplish your research and what is its impact? (Limit 500 words)

Citizens in contemporary democracies are constantly confronted with conflicting political views. The confusion created by this variety means that recognizing the best opinions (and eliminating the worst) is a problem theorists must address. My dissertation will turn to Machiavelli’s insights regarding political education and virtù in order to help us undertake this task. These insights, which have often been misunderstood, can be fruitfully expressed in terms of Machiavelli’s relationship to Platonic philosophy. Themes such as education, knowledge of the good, virtue, judgment, and good laws are central to the philosophy of both Machiavelli and Plato. Moreover, Plato’s philosophy, either through manuscripts, translations, or its general influence on Renaissance thought, was an inescapable part of Machiavelli’s intellectual world. Yet the literature on the topic offers little diversity. Leo Strauss - and the many scholars he influenced - argues that Machiavelli’s conspicuous silence about fundamental aspects of Platonic philosophy and his criticism of Renaissance Platonism testify to Machiavelli’s rejection of Plato. This thesis has recently been challenged by Erica Benner, who argues that Machiavelli’s “manner and matter of writing are deeply indebted to Greek ethics,” and thus that he is much closer to his contemporary humanists than had previously been assumed. Nevertheless, direct treatment of the philosophical debate between the two authors remains practically absent from the literature. My dissertation will fill this gap.

I will (1) examine the existing scholarly positions regarding Machiavelli’s relationship to Plato; (2) demonstrate that the differences between these positions can be traced back to the fact that Machiavelli rejected the political arguments originating from humanistic readings of Plato; (3) show that Machiavelli had a different reading of Plato; (4) uncover what topics addressed by Machiavelli can be characterized as Platonic insights and (5) the philosophical reasons that lead Machiavelli to accept some of these insights and reject others. Steps (1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) will be undertaken with the aim of (i) proving (or disproving) the thesis according to which Machiavelli rejected ancient philosophy; (ii) showing how Machiavelli’s philosophy can be understood as a response to Plato’s; (iii) demonstrating how the response in (ii) furthers our understanding of Machiavelli’s views on human nature, education and virtù; (iv) using (iii) and the other theoretical fruits of Machiavelli’s debate with Plato to provide an answer to the education conundrum posed above and thereby attempt to alleviate the problem of dirty hands. Methodology: close reading of the Discourses, the Prince, the Florentine Histories, as well as the Theaetetus, Phaedrus, Laws, Republic and Statesman, and an examination of the sources of Machiavelli’s access to ancient philosophy, i.e. neo-platonist texts and translations coming from the Roman Empire and the early Renaissance, and the Orti Oricellari group and the Greek Revival that took place under the leadership of Bernardo Rucellai (see attached preliminary bibliography).

I hope to use the funds to travel to the Renaissance Studies Association meeting in March and to buy additional research material, in order to have a polished first chapter by the end of this semester. Please see preliminary bibliography attached.
The Glasscock Center supports humanities research in traditional humanities disciplines, which are usually grounded in qualitative methods. The Humanities are understood to include (but are not limited to) study in the following disciplines: modern and classical languages; linguistics; literature; history; political theory; jurisprudence; philosophy; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts. The Center's grant programs encourage interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research that joins humanities inquiries with the humanistic social sciences and other research fields and methods. Research from non-humanities disciplines that takes an interpretive or qualitative approach to questions of meaning in human experiences and endeavors are also welcome. Humanities inquiries are usually qualitative and address questions of meaning in the products of human culture and thinking. Research that is primarily quantitative and/or reliant upon the canons of scientific method usually falls outside the parameters of humanities research and thus may not be eligible for funding. If you are not sure whether your research contributes to the humanities, or for other questions about writing your application, please feel free to consult with the director, associate director, or a member of the Center's advisory committee.

Describe how your work is situated within or oriented toward humanities inquiry. (Limit 100 words)

My dissertation is not only situated within the humanities, but partakes in most of its different fields. Experience and research in the history of political thought as well as Renaissance history constitutes the backdrop of my project. But the work itself requires knowledge of Latin, Ancient Greek and Italian (which I’ve already acquired - I will be happy to supply evidence on demand). On top of this, I hope to be able, as part of my project’s conclusion (see above), to be able to speak to current debates within political theory and political philosophy about political persuasion and political knowledge.

Please indicate how the $2,000 bursary would advance your project to completion. Be specific (e.g., the benefit and relevance of travel to a specific conference, fieldwork or archival research in specific locations or archives, collaboration with other scholars at TAMU or another location, purchase of research materials or access to digital resources, etc.). Please provide as detailed a budget as possible so that we can assess how the bursary will be used (attach additional page, if necessary).

I intend to primarily use the Glasscock funds to travel to Montreal and attend the intensive Latin training of the 2016 McGill Summer Institute in Classical Studies, which will facilitate my access to primary sources in their original language. Monies left over from that trip would help me to buy additional research material, alleviate the financial burden of the three months I am not on A&M payroll (and thus circumvent the need to find extra income and potentially slow down my research progress) as well as renew my membership to the American Political Science Association. Any leftover funds will be used facilitate attendance to APSA’s 2016 annual conference (in Philadelphia), and/or my travels to the 2016 Association for Political Theory Conference in Columbus OH in October 2016.

Please see itemized budget attached for the projected costs of 2016 Summer Institute attendance.
Please check with the financial aid office to confirm that your financial aid will not be affected by receipt of this or other awards.

☐ I understand that financial aid may be affected by receiving this award.

Applicant (Printed Name): Guillaume Bogiard Thibault
Applicant (Signature): [Signature]
Date: 2/11/2016

To be completed by Director of Graduate Studies and Department Head:

This student applying for the Glasscock Graduate Research Fellowship is in good standing and is one of two nominees from this department.

Director of Graduate Studies (Printed Name): Matthew C Fuhrmann
Director of Graduate Studies (Signature): [Signature] Date: 2/11/2016

Department Head (Printed Name): William Clark
Department Head (Signature): [Signature] Date: 2/11/2016

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:
Applicant should complete and sign this form and submit to Department Head and departmental Director of Graduate Studies for approval and signature.

Applicant should then send signed application form as a PDF to glasscock@tamu.edu or send by campus mail to Mail Stop 4214.