



Center for Expanding Viewpoints in Higher Education

Edge Fellowship

Overview

The *Edge Fellowship* brings together a selective cohort of Tufts University undergraduate students who want to think deeply, engage boldly, and lead with integrity. Fellows explore major philosophical and cultural traditions that shape contemporary debates, train with experts in navigating disagreement, and receive funding to pursue research, experiential learning, and civic engagement opportunities. The program is for students who want to grow intellectually while helping to elevate Tufts' culture of engagement across ideological, religious, and cultural differences.

Housed at the [Center for Expanding Viewpoints in Higher Education](#) (CEVIHE), the fellowship provides intensive curricular and co-curricular programming, sustained advising, structured leadership development, and enhanced access to the Center's faculty and staff, guest speakers, and networks of leaders in higher education, business, philanthropy, religion, and politics. The program aims to cultivate student leaders who elevate campus culture by fostering engagement across ideological, religious, and cultural differences.

Expectations and Opportunities

Fellows commit to a structured set of academic requirements totaling 7 credits in their first year, followed by continued engagement throughout their time at Tufts.

1. Foundational Coursework

Every fellow is required to complete the two-course *Philosophical and Religious Roots of the Modern World* sequence during their first year at Tufts. Drawing on the humanities and social sciences, this sequence introduces students to the foundational texts and debates that have shaped philosophical, religious, political, and cultural understandings of the world from antiquity to the present. The fall course, *Human Purpose in the World* (3 credits), examines the encounter between Greek philosophy and Abrahamic monotheism, tracing the evolution of conceptions of human purpose, authority, obligation, and moral order. The spring course, *Self, Science, and the Crisis of Meaning* (3 credits), explores the intellectual transformations of the modern era—skepticism, religious freedom and oppression, the scientific revolution, the Enlightenment, and critiques of modernity—and how these traditions continue to inform today's debates about identity, truth, pluralism, and authority. Together, the sequence provides fellows with a rigorous, historically grounded, and conceptually diverse framework for analyzing contemporary public affairs and navigating disagreements in a polarized civic landscape. It also establishes a shared intellectual foundation that unifies each cohort and supports thoughtful engagement across competing worldviews.

2. Leadership Development

During their first semester, fellows are required to participate in a weekly leadership training meeting with CEVIHE staff. The meeting will count as a 1-credit class. In these sessions, fellows will build connections with one another and learn from guest experts about contentious political, economic, and social issues. In later years, they will contribute to the intellectual development of future fellowship cohorts. Throughout their time at Tufts, fellows are expected to exemplify the virtues the Center seeks to cultivate—openness to competing viewpoints, seriousness of purpose, and a willingness to navigate disagreement with integrity.

3. Lunch Series

Throughout their time at Tufts, fellows are encouraged to attend CEVIHE's flagship reading group, *Politics and Culture from All Sides*. Functioning as a workshop in constructive disagreement, this weekly series involves reading controversial books and articles, engaging with faculty discussants and guest speakers, and discussing sensitive political, economic, and social issues.

4. Educational Enrichment Funding

Each fellow will have access to a designated stipend amount (\$2,000 guaranteed for class of 2030 fellows) to be used during their first and second years for activities that advance the Center's mission. Eligible uses include research support, including books, databases, specialized software, or archival access; unpaid or low-paid internships, including travel and living expenses; experiential learning, including conferences, seminars, study trips, workshops, or immersive programs focused on civic leadership or pluralism; and independent projects designed in collaboration with CEVIHE-affiliated faculty or staff.

5. Advising

Fellows will receive sustained advising from CEVIHE-affiliated faculty across the humanities, social sciences, and professional schools at Tufts. Formally, fellows will be assigned to CEVIHE-affiliated faculty and staff as their pre-major advisors. Informally, fellows will get to know staff and faculty affiliated with the Center, who can help them navigate the competing perspectives and moral frameworks they will encounter throughout their college experience. Advisors may supervise research projects or independent studies supported by the fellowship's educational enrichment funds; facilitate small interdisciplinary reading groups or salons that probe sensitive or unresolved issues; and offer critical feedback as fellows refine their analytical, interpretive, and argumentative skills. Advisors will also play a crucial role in connecting fellows with relevant academic and professional networks, ensuring that the fellowship functions not only as an intellectual community but also as a developmental pathway that supports students' professional trajectories.