



LSA COLLEGIATE FELLOWS PROGRAM

Building a diverse and inclusive scholarly environment

The LSA Collegiate Fellowship Program is a major faculty hiring initiative to promote a diverse academic environment. Promising early-career scholars with a commitment to diverse scholarly excellence are encouraged to enter the academic profession while preparing them for tenure-track appointments at Michigan. Over the program's first five years, the college recruited 47 new Fellows, in many LSA fields, who demonstrated the critical perspective that comes from their non-traditional educational background and/or understanding of the experiences of groups historically underrepresented in higher education. These Fellows have increased diversity in faculty backgrounds across the college—95% have become U-M faculty and bring valuable perspectives to their research and undergraduate teaching in LSA.

An expendable gift of \$100,000 over two years supports a Collegiate Fellow during their preparation for and transition into a tenure-track appointment at the University of Michigan. Funds will provide postdoctoral scholars with dedicated research time, mentorship, travel funding, and professional development opportunities. Gifts provide the resources to recruit more Fellows and bolster the academic excellence of the university.

Ann Heffernan is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science and a 2020 LSA Collegiate Fellow. She examines the study of disability, through the lens of feminist theory and political thought. Her current research focuses on disability and citizenship and the importance of intersectionality in understanding disability.

“To the extent that scholars have explored disability and citizenship, they tend to think of it as a category of exclusion (i.e. disabled people as being excluded from citizenship or public life). While I agree with this approach, I show how disability is in fact central to the ways we think about belonging and inclusion.



Although disability remains understudied in political science, I’ve been pleasantly surprised by my colleagues’ willingness to see disability as a valid (and productive) subject of academic inquiry. And while political theory may seem like an unlikely home for doing work on disability, it offers a vocabulary and a lens for thinking about issues of inclusion, citizenship, and power that I’ve found really generative. This was something I was always interested in, but I just needed to find a home for that interest.

Ultimately, I hope students gain more of a perspective on politics and social life from engaging with disability studies. I like my students to explore complexity and uncertainty, to experience looking at things from multiple perspectives to consider how disability is impacting different groups or how is it influenced by particular social and political structures.”

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Look to Michigan

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