

Loyola University Chicago Fellowship Office

Strategic Plan

2026–2031

Executive Summary

The Fellowship Office at Loyola University Chicago prepares students to pursue nationally and internationally competitive fellowships that support academic excellence, leadership, service, and global engagement. This strategic plan provides a five-year roadmap (2026–2031) for strengthening the Fellowship Office’s impact, expanding equitable access to funding, increasing student success, and enhancing Loyola’s national profile.

Designed for a small but high-impact office consisting of one Director, one Coordinator, and a Faculty Advisory Board, this plan aligns directly with Loyola University Chicago’s institutional strategic plan, *For the Greater Good*. It emphasizes cura personalis, magis, and justice-oriented outcomes while remaining realistic, scalable, and sustainable given current staffing.

I. Institutional Context and Alignment

Loyola University Chicago’s strategic plan, *For the Greater Good*, calls for:

- Delivering on the promise of Jesuit education
- Elevating the University’s reputation and societal impact
- Deepening Jesuit, Catholic culture
- Preparing institutional capacity for the future

The Fellowship Office advances these priorities by positioning competitive fellowships as pathways for students to engage in research, graduate study, public service, teaching, creative work, and global leadership consistent with Loyola’s mission.

II. Vision

The Fellowship Office aspires to be a nationally recognized model for equitable, mission-driven fellowship advising that empowers Loyola students to pursue prestigious opportunities for research and study.

III. Mission

The Fellowship Office supports undergraduate and graduate students through equitable access to fellowship advising, high-quality application preparation, and collaborative

mentorship, enabling students to pursue competitive awards that advance academic excellence, leadership, and service.

IV. Core Values

The Fellowship Office is guided by the following values:

- **Cura Personalis:** Supporting the holistic development of each student
- **Equity and Access:** Reducing barriers and expanding participation across student populations
- **Magis:** Striving for excellence in advising and preparation
- **Integrity:** Ethical advising, transparent processes, and responsible stewardship
- **Collaboration:** Partnering with faculty, departments, and campus offices
- **Continuous Improvement:** Using assessment to refine practice

V. Situational Analysis

A. Office Structure and Capacity

The Fellowship Office consists of:

Ruth Gomberg, Director (strategic leadership, advising, faculty engagement, institutional alignment)

Andy Weber, Coordinator (program coordination, advising, student outreach, logistics, data tracking)

A Faculty Advisory Board (disciplinary expertise, nominations, mentorship)

Patricia Findley, Social Work

Marianne Ryan, Libraries

Susana Cavallo, Modern Languages and Literatures

Richelle Rogers, Digital Media and Storytelling

Demetris Komnenos, Economics

Florence Chee, Communications

Catherine Nichols, Anthropology & Museum Studies

This staffing model requires intentional prioritization, scalable advising strategies, and strong partnerships.

B. Strengths

- Strong alignment with Loyola's mission and strategic priorities
- High-impact outcomes for students
- Dedicated faculty and administrative partners
- Personalized advising model

C. Challenges

- Limited staffing capacity
- Uneven student awareness
- Federal cuts to national fellowships

D. Opportunities

- Expand fellowship portfolio to include opportunities for faculty and graduate student research
- Grow expertise in privately funded fellowships
- Align explicitly with DEI and global engagement initiatives
- Leverage alumni and awardee networks

E. Threats

- National declines in fellowship funding in some areas

VI. Strategic Priorities (2026–2031)

1. Expand equitable access to fellowship advising
2. Increase the quality and competitiveness of fellowship applications
3. Strengthen faculty and campus partnerships
4. Elevate Loyola's national fellowship profile
5. Build sustainable office infrastructure and curricular and assessment programs

Strategic Crosswalk: Fellowship Office Priorities and Loyola Strategic Pillars

Fellowship Office Strategic Priority	Deliver on the Promise of Jesuit Education	Elevate Reputation & Impact	Deepen Jesuit, Catholic Culture	Prepare Institutional Capacity
Expand equitable access to advising	Supports student success and access		Cura personalis, justice	
Increase application competitiveness	Academic excellence	National awards visibility		
Strengthen faculty & campus partnerships	Mentorship & formation	Scholarly reputation	Jesuit collaboration	Cross-unit coordination
Elevate Loyola's fellowship profile		External recognition	Mission-driven storytelling	
Build sustainable infrastructure				Staffing, systems, data

VII. Goals, Strategies, and Key Initiatives

Priority 1: Expand Equitable Access

Goal: Broaden participation among underrepresented and early-career students.

Strategies: - Early outreach to first- and second-year students - Partnerships with advising, DEI, and student success offices - Group workshops and scalable advising resources

Key Initiatives: - Fellowship Office Cohort Initiative (FOCI) – Diversification of Fellowship Advisory Committee - Targeted outreach to first-generation students – Partnerships with Study Abroad (Gilman) and Ricci Offices.

Priority 2: Increase Application Competitiveness

Goal: Improve application quality and success rates.

Strategies: - Structured application advising - Interview preparation - Faculty mentorship integration – Cohort initiative (FOCI)

Key Initiatives: - FOCI curricula - Mock interviewing- Faculty and cohort advising models

Priority 3: Strengthen Faculty and Campus Partnerships

Goal: Build a collaborative fellowship ecosystem.

Strategies: - Faculty Advisory Board engagement - Departmental liaisons - Integration with undergraduate research and honors programs

Key Initiatives: - Annual faculty fellowship reception - Discipline-specific advising collaborations - Faculty recognition for mentorship – Dept meeting “tours”

Priority 4: Elevate National Profile

Goal: Increase Loyola’s visibility and reputation through fellowship success.

Strategies: - Strategic storytelling and communications - Benchmarking against peer Jesuit institutions - Alumni engagement

Key Initiatives: - Annual fellowship impact report - Student and alumni spotlight features - Coordination with University Marketing and Communications

Priority 5: Build Sustainable Infrastructure

Goal: Ensure long-term effectiveness and resilience.

Strategies: - Data-informed decision-making - Clear role delineation - Workload management and scalability

Key Initiatives: - Fellowship tracking database - Annual planning and assessment cycle - Documentation of advising practices

VIII. Staffing and Governance

A. Director Responsibilities

- Strategic leadership and institutional alignment
- High-level advising for major fellowships
- Faculty and senior leadership engagement
- Assessment and reporting

B. Coordinator Responsibilities

- Frontline student advising
- Program logistics and student communications
- Workshop coordination
- Data tracking and reporting support

C. Faculty Advisory Board

- Disciplinary expertise and nomination support
- Student mentorship
- Strategic guidance and advocacy

IX. Assessment and Key Performance Indicators

Student Metrics: - Number of students advised - Demographic participation data - Application and award rates

Program Metrics: - FOCI attendance - Faculty engagement - Student satisfaction and learning outcomes

Institutional Impact: - National recognition - Alignment with Loyola strategic goals

X. Review and Continuous Improvement

- Annual strategic review led by the Director
- Advisory Board feedback sessions
- Adjustments based on data and institutional priorities
- Five-year plan refresh in 2031

XI. Conclusion

Through intentional alignment with Loyola University Chicago's mission and strategic priorities, the Fellowship Office will continue to serve as a catalyst for student success, equity, and national distinction. This plan provides a realistic yet aspirational framework for advancing the office's work over the next five years in service of the greater good.