

Director of the Kessler Scholars Program

College of LSA, Division of Undergraduate Education

Posting Title: Director of the Kessler Scholars Program

Job Title: Academic and/or Research Program Officer Inter (100116)

Job Opening ID: xxxxxx

Org Group: College Of LSA

Work Location: Ann Arbor Campus

Department: 171402 (LSA UG: Cohort-Based Scholars)

City: Ann Arbor

State: MI

Full/Part Time: Full-Time

Regular/Temporary: Regular

FLSA Status: Exempt

Salary \$90,000-\$95,000

Posting Duration: 30 days, starting on March 7

How to Apply

This director position is interdependent with posting [xxxxxx: LEO Adjunct Lecturer](#) (Comprehensive Studies Program), which involves teaching a one-credit college success seminar for first-year Kessler Scholars in the academic fall term. You must apply to both job postings and be qualified for both positions in order to be considered as a candidate. (Please see Job Posting [xxxxxx](#), which describes the LEO Adjunct Lecturer position, for the specific application requirements of that position.)

To apply for the director position, a cover letter is required. Please attach the letter as the first page of your CV or resume. The cover letter should address your specific interest in the position and outline skills and experience that directly relate to this position. These materials must be submitted through the U-M Careers Website.

Why Work at Michigan?

In addition to a career filled with purpose and opportunity, the University of Michigan offers a comprehensive benefits package to help you stay well, protect yourself and your family and plan for a secure future. Benefits include:

- Generous time off, including vacation time, sick time, holiday and season days
- A retirement plan that provides two-for-one matching contributions with immediate vesting
- Many choices for comprehensive health insurance
- Life insurance
- Long-term disability coverage
- Flexible spending accounts for healthcare and dependent care expenses

In addition, The College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA) offers:

- Enhanced tuition support programs for LSA courses
- Strong commitment to work/life balance
- Flexible work arrangements with respect to campus stakeholder needs

Being part of something greater, of serving a larger mission of discovery and care — that's the heart of what drives people to work at Michigan. In some way, great or small, every person here helps to advance this world-class institution. It's adding a purpose to your profession. Work at Michigan and become a victor for the greater good.

Job Summary

The University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA) seeks a visionary, student-centered leader to serve as Director of the Kessler Scholars Program, a scholarship program dedicated to helping first-generation, limited-income students thrive as part of a cohort-based campus community. The Kessler Scholars Program combines substantial scholarship awards with academic, professional, and personal support to help first-generation students navigate the University of Michigan with a clear sense of belonging and purpose across all years of their undergraduate experience.

The Kessler Scholars Program at U-M welcomes 40 first-year students each year and supports overall a four-year cohort of 160 students. The Kessler Scholars Program is designed around evidence-based best practices for student success. Students in the Kessler Scholars Program engage in shared learning experiences, receive regular one-on-one guidance from professional staff, support one another through a peer-mentoring program, come together for interactive workshops and community service events, and help shape program activities through a student leadership board. Students receive financial support from the Irene and Morris B. Kessler Presidential Scholarship Fund, established in 2006 through a gift from the Judy and Fred Wilpon Family Foundation. In 2021, the university announced a major gift from the Wilpon Family Foundation to permanently endow the Kessler Scholars Program at Michigan.

The Kessler Scholars Program at Michigan is part of a broader project, the Kessler Scholars Collaborative, an initiative of the Wilpon Family Foundation to promote success for first-generation, limited-income college students nationwide. As a member of the Kessler Scholars Collaborative, the Director of the Kessler Scholars Program at U-M will work with colleagues at partner institutions to develop opportunities for student networking and connection and to refine evidence-based strategies for supporting students from admission through graduation.

Job Description

The director provides intellectual vision for the Kessler Scholars Program and is responsible for leading innovative programmatic and curricular development along with long-term strategic planning in concert with LSA Dean's Office. The director also represents the Kessler Scholars

Program at Michigan in regular engagement with the Kessler Scholars Collaborative and professional peers at the program's partner institutions. This academic/administrative leadership position reports to the Office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education (UGED) in the College of LSA, with a direct reporting line to an Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education.

The director leads and administers, with staff involvement, all aspects of the Kessler Scholars Program. The director's role includes oversight of scholarship selection and awarding processes for the Kessler Scholars Program, in close partnership with the Director of LSA Scholarship Programs. The director also supervises the leader of the Upper Peninsula Scholars program and guides and nurtures the development of this similar scholarship program. Additionally, the Kessler director builds partnerships across campus to support resource connection for students in the Kessler Scholars Program and to build awareness of the program and the experiences of first-generation, limited-income students face at U-M. This position plays a key role in advising the College on first-generation student initiatives and college access and success.

The director is responsible for leading the professional staff who support the Kessler Scholars Program, including overseeing staff performance. This position also provides administrative oversight and support for the ongoing development and operations management of a related project, the U.P. Scholars Program, which provides cohort-based support for rural, limited-income students from the state's Upper Peninsula along with substantial scholarship support.

This is a full-time, 12-month staff position with an interdependent part-time adjunct lecturer position with an 11% appointment the fall term of the academic year. The effort associated with this staff position will decrease to allow for the instructional effort in the Lecturer appointment. The instructional appointment is structured to allow the director of the Kessler Scholars Program to serve as instructor-of-record for a one-credit college success seminar reserved for incoming Kessler Scholars and housed in the Comprehensive Studies Program.

The Kessler Scholars Program is part of the Division of Undergraduate Education (UGED), the administrative home to many of the College of LSA's high-impact and experiential learning opportunities. The Director of the Kessler Scholars Program works in close partnership with the Division's leadership, programs and centers, and other campus units to provide an inclusive atmosphere of collaboration and to leverage the multiplicity of resources in service of the program's objectives. The Kessler Scholars Program plays a key role in the various ways that LSA and the Division of Undergraduate Education seek to offer broad support to underrepresented student populations.

Responsibilities:

Program Vision and Leadership (40%)

- Leads and administers, with staff involvement, all aspects of program including curricular and programmatic development along with program vision.
- Oversees strategic planning for the Kessler Scholars Program, including early planning and execution related to the program's endowed status.

- Executes program-level assessment and evaluation, including annual reporting to the college and to the program funders on outcomes and achievements.
- Oversees the recruitment, selection, and awarding process to select and retain annually a broadly diverse student cohort.
- Support individual student needs through coaching and mentorship
- Create, develop, and maintain systems for engaging Kessler Scholars alumni in program activities with current students.

Unit Administrative Leadership (25%)

- Provide leadership, supervision, support, and advocacy for professional staff team for Kessler Scholars Program and U.P. Scholars Program (three direct reports, one open position as of winter 2022)
- Develop and oversee budget planning for the Kessler Scholars Program and guide effective stewardship and management of donor gift funds and college funding.
- Provide support and guidance to the leader of the U.P. Scholars Program on the development of that unique scholars initiative.
- Actively participate in LSA UGED meetings and events.
- Participate in LSA initiatives and serve on committees in LSA and the university.
- Actively support LSA and U-M initiatives to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Engagement with National and Campus Partners (20%)

- Represents the U-M Kessler Scholars Program within the national Kessler Scholars Collaborative and works with professional staff peers at partner institutions to build network and connection opportunities for students.
- Serves as a resource in the College and across the university on issues related to first-generation college students, limited-income students, and other access and success matters.
- Develops and promotes cross-campus partnerships for programming and student support by establishing close working relationships with key campus partners in LSA UGED, including LSA Scholarships, LSA Recruitment, the Comprehensive Studies Program, and core academic support programs.

Donor Relations (15%)

- Supports ongoing engagement with the donor family that founded and has endowed the Kessler Scholars Program.
- Establishes strong working relationships with key leaders in LSA Advancement and the Office of University Development to support donor relations.
- Produces reports and analysis to support stewardship of endowed scholarship and program funds.

Required Qualifications

- A master's degree in higher education or relevant social science field or comparable, relevant professional experience.

- 5 or more years of progressively responsible experience in a higher education setting, including record of successful leadership of staff teams.
- Demonstrated success in a leadership role related to student success program design and development.
- Demonstrated success working with and participating in programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Experience working with culturally diverse groups and demonstrated knowledge of research and practice related to support of first-generation and under-represented students, student retention and completion, and academic success.
- Knowledge of and demonstrated experience with high impact practices for undergraduate students.
- Demonstrated ability to foster teamwork and cooperation as well as a sense of community around a shared vision and set of values.
- Strong partnership-oriented and collaborative working style; strong interpersonal skills and diplomacy; superb listening and influencing skills; the ability to cultivate and sustain trust and credibility with colleagues.
- Ability to develop long-range goals and objectives while simultaneously managing execution and details across multiple projects and tasks.
- Proven ability to think critically, distill key insights from large amounts of data and information, and write clearly and concisely to summarize key points and recommendations regarding complex issues and decisions.
- Experience developing and using assessment and tracking tools for program assessment and outcomes evaluation.
- Demonstrated ability to identify and act upon opportunities to enrich and expand the organization's relevancy to key stakeholders, including donors and foundation partners.
- Experience leading professional and/or student staff with excellent judgment, leadership, and conflict-resolution skills.
- Well-developed interpersonal skills and excellent oral and written communication, with attention to detail.

Desired Qualifications

- Doctoral degree in a related field (education or other social science) is strongly preferred.
- Direct leadership, programming, teaching, or research experience related to first-generation college students.
- Understanding of higher education philanthropy including donor relations and stewardship best practices.
- Understanding of federal and institutional student financial aid procedures and knowledge of financial aid and scholarship award procedures.
- Research experience including direct experience with IRB-approved program assessment, analysis, and/or other program evaluation.

- Direct experience in higher education administration, including budget management, leadership of professional staff and/or student teams, development of program reports and presentations.
- Familiarity with U-M/LSA curricula, programs, policies, campus resources, contacts, and offices that provide assistance and support services for undergraduate students.
- Working knowledge of U-M organizational policies, rules, regulations, procurement and purchase guidelines.