

Charles Phelps Taft Research Center
at the University of Cincinnati
Graduate Summer Fellowship Award

Each section (I-III) should be placed at the start of a new page. All required materials must be included in a single document, uploaded to the electronic submissions system, no later than 5PM on the published day of the deadline. Departmental review is required for this program, as well as a letter of support. Applicants should submit their application with enough time to receive review prior to the close of the deadline. Taft does not accept an obligation to review applications that have not received intradepartmental review by the close of the deadline.

I. General Information

- a. Name: XXXX
- b. M#: MXXXXXXXX
- c. Department: Romance and Arabic Languages and Literatures
- d. Project title: *Viene la ausencia* ("The coming of absence": creative doctoral dissertation); *Más allá del texto literario* ("Beyond the literary text": third chapter of an extensive analytical essay accompanying my creative doctoral dissertation)
- e. Project Location: Cincinnati, OH.
- f. Probable Results of a Grant (such as publications, working papers, and presentations): Third part of creative doctoral dissertation completed (dissertation is divided into four parts); third chapter of analytical essay.
- g. Have you already or will you in the future apply for other grants for this travel, including departmental support? I have not applied to any other grants. I will apply to a Departmental Summer Enhancement Award, should I not receive this Graduate Summer Fellowship Award.

II. Taft Grant History

Please list your grant history with Taft for the last 5 years, in reverse chronological order, including project title, grant type, grant date, and amount of award, as well as project development subsequent to the grant, e.g. publication.

NONE

III. Project Narrative

I am applying for the Graduate Summer Fellowship Award in order to be able to dedicate myself during the summer to work on (1) the third part of my creative doctoral dissertation –a novel tackling the topic of national identity in contemporary Colombia, and (2) the third chapter of an extensive analytical essay that will accompany such creative work –on the synchronies between creative writing and academia . This time of the year will be definite for me to advance towards the completion of such creative doctoral research project.

My dissertation in progress – *Viene la ausencia (The coming of absence)* – is a novel that explores contemporary Colombia through the lens of a narrator that obsessively reconstructs the lives of two long-gone friends. Drawing upon the critical work of researchers dedicated to studying the causes and consequences of the Colombian armed conflict such as Gonzalo Sánchez, David Bushnell, Andrés Suárez and María Teresa Ronderos, on the one hand, this novel aims to address the important socio-historical debate on the nature and effects of the armed conflict. On the other hand, in critical response to the works of scholars like Fredric Jameson, Jed Esty and, more recently, Michael Beddow and Marc Redfield on the formation of the national subject in the coming-of-age novel, as well as on the ideas of Benedict Anderson, Homi Bhabha and Kwame Anthony Appiah, among others, on the concept of 'Nation', this novel purposely adopts a *Bildungsroman*-like model in order to problematize the idea –the (im)possibility– of a national subject in a historically unstable country of ever-present inequality.

Nowadays, Colombia faces a crucial, pivoting moment in its history: after more than sixty years of armed conflict, a peace agreement has been reached between the government and the F.A.R.C guerrilla, the largest and most long-lasting guerrilla group in Latin America. In such times of post-agreement, the need for works that contribute to the country's historical memory is urgent – works that not only give voice to victims but also generate alternative –non-official– national narratives.

I am currently working on the second part of this novel, which has a focus on the experience of inequality along the 90's, a period where the armed conflict grew exponentially and class division became extremely distinct. By July, I plan to start the third part, which will target the 2000's, the time-period in Colombian contemporary history where the conflict reached its peak, leading to a massive raise in combats and the skyrocketing of internal and external migration. For this particular part I have conducted deep, on-going research in the topic of armed conflict and violence. However, with respect to internal and especially external migration, I still must carry a deeper research in order to better –and more faithfully– represent this transcendental and very contemporary topic. Given that the two main destinations of Colombians migrants at the time were –and continue to be– the United States and Spain, during the July I plan to: (1) concentrate on gathering a considerable amount of information that will give me a better understanding of this phenomena (as one of the characters emigrates to the US, another one flees to Spain and the third one is displaced out of his town by violence and lack of opportunities); (2) study and analyze the different material I recollect; and (3) consistently work on the writing of this third part of my creative doctoral dissertation, which I aim to finish by the end of the summer break.

As previously mentioned, the novel will be accompanied by an analytical essay studying the links between creative writing and academia, concentrating on the relationship between criticism and fiction. My main objectives in such essay are: (1) to carry out a brief historical journey of what has been and is nowadays Creative Writing, as an academic discipline – for which I have set grounds on the works of D.G. Myers, Eric Bennett, and Lauren Glass; (2) to explain the symbiotic relationship that exists between literary criticism and fiction, in the light of Ricardo Piglia's insights and in close dialogue with some of the main ideas proposed by the Formalists and the New Critics; (3) to give an account of the way in which the forms of reading a text may be transposed to the reading of other social phenomena, drawing on both Ricardo Piglia's discussion on his matter as well as that of Hayden White as well as the New Historicism critics; and (4) to position the practice of literary creation above its own literary system – following the ideas of Cristina Rivera-Garza and Paul Dawson–, towards a social system within which to influence and take part in the debates of our time.

I have already finished the first chapter of such essay and I am currently working on the second one. For the month of July, I plan to start working on the third, for which I will need the time to read, re-read, and analyze the work of the different scholars that nurture this investigation (Ricardo Piglia, Hayden White, Stephen Greenblatt...). I aim to finish this third part by early August.

Given the fact that this has been a hybrid –creative and critical– project to which I have dedicated a considerable amount of thought and planning, the Taft's Graduate Summer Fellowship will most certainly provide me with the necessary means to concentrate on the writing and revisions necessary to finish both of the above-mentioned parts by the beginning of August 2019. Moreover, it will positively contribute to finishing my dissertation by December 2019, defend it by January 2020 and graduate in May 2020, which will allow me to have a better profile when the 2020 job market opens, while additionally giving me time to submit the final outcome to literary agents and publishers for an eventual publication.

IV. Curriculum Vitae and Transcript

V. Other sources of funding