School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

SHASS Faculty Fellows Education Program

Call for Applications for Spring ‘28

Description:

The SHASS Faculty Fellows Program offers faculty the opportunity to participate in a supportive intellectual community on campus. The program has three core aims: (1) to provide SHASS faculty with time to focus on their research, writing, or artistic production, and to receive collegial support for the same; (2) to foster social and intellectual community within the School, including between faculty and students beyond the classroom; and (3) to provide informal opportunities to develop intergenerational professional mentorships.

This call is for a **special session** of the program to be run in Spring ’28 that will convene a faculty cohort of **Education Fellows** who will devote the fellowship semester to exploring and designing a variety of approaches or responses to AI in their teaching. The idea is to convene a semester-long symposium on educational experience, research, and development that is not tied to a particular curriculum or syllabus and will have broader applicability across the school. Ideally, the cohort will include a variety of disciplines and interest in AI-enabled, AI-light, and intentionally AI-free experiments.

The SHASS Faculty Fellows is a competitive program, requiring an application from a member of the tenure-line faculty and a brief endorsement by their Head. Fellowships are for one semester. If selected as a Fellow, faculty will receive one course release to allow for in-person participation in the full activities of the program (Fellows are expected not to teach during that term). Program activities will include: an offsite retreat before the beginning of the semester, biweekly working sessions with lunch, and an opportunity to present to or attend a dinner with the undergraduate Burchard Scholars. Fellows are expected to remain in residence at MIT.

Fellows may request paid UROP support for their related activities.

Fellows will be expected to continue their regular service to their Unit, School, and/or Institute, as well as maintain their advising commitments while in residence.

Units with curricular need may request funding support (up to $15K) from the Dean’s office to hire a temporary lecturer to teach one subject per Fellow.

Up to six Fellows will be selected in each semester, with attention paid to forming a diverse cohort across the various units in SHASS. It is not possible to be selected as a Fellow more than once within a six-year sabbatical period. A faculty review committee, co-chaired by the Associate Dean for Faculty and a faculty co-lead, will review applications and make recommendations to the Dean.

Application Process:

Prospective applicants should consult with their Head and DAF as soon as possible to discuss their interest in the program and the implications of potential participation for their teaching plans for the following year. The application deadline for the Spring ‘28 cohort is **December 1, 2026**.

Applications are to include: a completed application form; a one-page description of pedagogical interests and specific plans for the Fellowship term; an indication of interest in and commitment to the community aspect of the Fellows program; and an updated CV (including MIT service).

Heads should submit applicant endorsement forms via Submittable by **December 4, 2026**. Endorsements should take into consideration the aims of the program (see above), the guidance to the review committee (see below), the preparedness of the applicant to carry out the proposed work, and the curricular and service needs of your unit.

Selection Process:

For this special call, an annual review committee of former Faculty Fellows representing the diversity of SHASS disciplinary fields will be joined by SHASS Education Research Liaison Graham Jones and convened by the Associate Dean for Faculty (ex officio). The committee will review applications per the below guidelines to compose a disciplinarily diverse cohort of up to six fellows.

In addition to considering the preparedness of the applicant for the proposed project and what applicants are likely to bring to and get out of the Fellows program at this time, the review committee will follow the below guidance:

Guidance to the review committee:

Distribute fellowships across units and disciplines while also attending to equity across unit size;
Distribute fellowships across faculty ranks;
Ensure a range of approaches to AI in teaching will be represented;
Give consideration to exceptional MIT service and teaching contributions.

FAQ:

Who is eligible? Tenure-line faculty in SHASS of any rank are eligible to participate in the Faculty Fellows Program.

Will the SHASS Faculty Fellows Program affect my tenure clock? No.

Will the SHASS Faculty Fellows Program affect my sabbatical clock? No.

Will the SHASS Faculty Fellows Program count as a semester leave against the 2-year pre-tenure maximum? No.

Is it possible to combine being a SHASS Faculty Fellow with MITHIC project funding or a Dean's Grant? Yes.

Can I be a Faculty Fellow in the same academic year as taking a one-semester sabbatical or other MIT-sponsored leave? Yes! Fellows who take a one-semester, tenured sabbatical leave in the same academic year as their fellowship do not need to teach that year or make up teaching credits later. N.B.: this is an exception to the usual expectation that, when taking a leave or holding a Faculty Fellowship for one semester, faculty will teach 2 subjects in the alternate semester. Pre-tenure faculty should discuss with their Head the teaching implications of taking a Faculty Fellowship alongside a Junior Research or Old Dominion leave since a robust teaching record is necessary for promotion cases. (Again, service is expected while being a Faculty Fellow.)