

## M. Richard and Beth G. Zinman Scholarship Endowment for James Madison College

James Madison College is home to many distinguished and acclaimed teachers. One of these extraordinary teachers is Professor M. Richard Zinman. Professor Zinman is University Distinguished Professor in James Madison College. He is one of the founders of the College and he has long been an inescapable presence—feared and loved by generations of students and colleagues—in the political philosophy field in the College, now known as Political Theory & Constitutional Democracy (formerly known as Justice, Morality, & Constitutional Democracy).

In honor of a lifetime of great teaching, and in recognition of Professor Zinman’s many extraordinary contributions to James Madison College—as founder, teacher, scholar, and gadfly—James Madison College is establishing the M. Richard and Beth G. Zinman Scholarship Endowment, to support mentoring excellence in liberal education at James Madison College. The fund is designed to support students undertaking individual (or small group) projects of excellence under the guidance of a faculty member in James Madison College (as described more fully below). The fund is designed to support both faculty and students, since a critical part of liberal education at James Madison College is individualized mentoring relationships between students and faculty members.

Some years ago, on the occasion of an Honors College Faculty Award for distinguished teaching and advising of Honors College students, Professor Zinman wrote an essay about the unique opportunities afforded to students at Michigan State University entitled “In the Shadow of Congressman Justin Morrill.” Justin Morrill was the author of the Civil War era legislation (“the Morrill Act”) that established the American tradition of land grant universities, and of course Michigan State University is one of the pioneer land grant institutions. The Morrill Act aimed to establish in every state “at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies . . . , to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanical arts . . . , in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life.” In somewhat antique language, the Morrill Act describes the unprecedented democratic aspiration of the land grant university: to combine liberal education and practical education, and to do so for *all* citizens in the emerging democratic society of the United States. As Professor Zinman put it: “The Morrill Act aimed to combine things that for ages had been thought to be incompatible: aristocracy and democracy; beauty and utility.”

Professor Zinman describes himself in that essay as a “typical Woody Allen academic: a New York snob,” who came to love the charms of a Midwestern university. He has dedicated his teaching life to the achievement of excellence in liberal education in the democratic and utilitarian environment of the land grant university. James Madison College has had an outsized place in the Michigan State story, he argues: “among other things, Madison was an attempt to combine the strengths of a small, intimate, liberal arts college with those of a vast, complex, diverse research university.” That is a rare combination. “By establishing Madison, MSU acknowledged that the conditions for excellence in undergraduate education in general and liberal education in particular are not ‘luxuries’ but necessities.”

Beth G. Zinman was a vital part of the Madison and MSU community through her many years as an educator and academic advisor, working directly with generations of Honors College students. She also provided such a powerful grounding and support for her husband’s work at Madison, welcoming generations of his students into their home. She had a great sense of humor and incredible warmth for others, whether friends, colleagues, or students in need of guidance. They formed a great team and partnership.

We honor Professor Zinman and Mrs. Zinman by establishing an endowment fund to provide permanent support for excellence in liberal education at James Madison College, in the form of awards to individual students, sponsored by faculty mentors, to facilitate projects that enhance the liberal education of James Madison College students by facilitating opportunities for educational pursuits outside of the classroom. In some cases, funding might be offered to both the faculty member and the student, but the principal purpose of the fund will be to offer scholarships to students. Professor Zinman, like many other faculty members at James Madison College,

recognizes that excellence in liberal education is not only manifested in the classroom. In the best cases, liberal education can be enhanced by faculty members who establish individual mentoring relationships with their students. Such mentoring can be life-changing and life-forming, because it enables the faculty member and the student, working together, to identify the particular intellectual concerns and talents of the student, and to pursue lines of inquiry and projects of study that go well beyond the “one size fits all” teaching necessary in the classroom.

The Zinman Scholarship Fund would support projects such as those described below. The description is illustrative, not exhaustive. We aim to invite Madison faculty mentors and Madison students to think imaginatively about opportunities to enhance the liberal education that is provided through excellence in the classroom, by enabling students to undertake projects outside the classroom that in some way extend or fulfill the promise of their Madison educations. In the Madison context, this has long meant that faculty members spend significant amounts of time with students in office hours and at co-curricular events; and that faculty members dedicate time and energy to working with students on independent study projects (both formal and informal), in honors options and other small study groups, and on honors theses. The Zinman Scholarship Fund is designed to support such projects. In most cases, the funds would go directly to the student. In some cases, funding might also be offered to the faculty member, in order to facilitate innovative and demanding mentoring projects that might not otherwise be possible. The focus of the fund is to encourage a particular kind of teaching excellence: mentoring through supervision of substantial intellectual projects undertaken outside the classroom. The award committee should have the flexibility to determine how best to allocate funds to support such mentoring.

The M. Richard and Beth G. Zinman Scholarship Endowment Fund would be administered each year by one member of the faculty of the Political Theory & Constitutional Democracy field in James Madison College, chosen by the Dean of James Madison College in consultation with the Chair of the PTCDF field. Students in all fields in the College would be encouraged to apply. The PTCDF field committee might serve as a selection committee, but the designated faculty member will bear principal responsibility for managing the application and selection process each year. The criteria for the awards must include the following:

- An “enhancement” requirement—all projects supported by the fund should extend the student’s opportunities beyond what is ordinarily available through standard classroom, field experience, or study abroad experiences.
- A “liberal education” requirement—all projects supported by the fund should conform to the spirit of Professor Zinman’s lifelong dedication to excellence in liberal education in the context of the land grant university.
- A “faculty-student collaboration” requirement—all projects supported by the fund should aim to extend or enhance the teaching or mentoring relationship between individual students and faculty members in the College.
- A “scholarly, artistic, or public affairs product” requirement—all projects supported by the fund should facilitate the production of some student work appropriate to the project, such as a research or scholarly paper, or another sort of product appropriate to the project (a work of art, etc.).

All applications must be joint applications by an individual student (or small group of students) and a faculty mentor. Faculty members and students are encouraged to be inventive in developing proposals. So, for example, enhancement projects that require travel abroad are encouraged as a means to broaden the horizons of students, building on what is learned through books in a classroom. In some cases, a mechanism for academic credit might be offered for the final product (independent study credit, for example). We anticipate that one or more significant awards (\$1000, in 2013 dollars, would typically be the smallest award). In some cases, a smaller award or a number of smaller awards, especially to supplement other funding, might be appropriate. There is no requirement that the whole available expendable fund be expended in any given year; that is, we anticipate that funds would be rolled over from year to year if applications do not meet the various requirements of the award specified above.