

Revised Guidelines for the Thomas-Lain Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation

The Thomas-Lain Fund was created to fund academic scholarships, awarded on the basis of an essay competition, for students in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Pittsburgh.

Eligibility:

Both undergraduate majors and graduate students in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Pittsburgh are eligible to participate in the essay competition provided they have maintained a GPA of 3.25 or higher.

Essay Criteria:

1. The essay must be an original work written by the student.
2. The essay topic would require the competing students to discuss their future career plans in the field of physics and/or astronomy after they graduate with the degree toward which they are currently working.
3. The completed essay should be no longer than five (5) 8.5"x11" pages, printed double-spaced using a 12-point font with 1" margins on all edges.
4. In addition, a cover page must be included with the following information about the student: name, mailing address, e-mail address, telephone number, status (undergraduate major or graduate student, and the year of study in which the student is currently enrolled), and the current cumulative GPA. This cover page does not count toward the 5-page limit.

Essay Judging:

The essays will be judged by a departmental award committee that will be composed of three Physics and Astronomy Department faculty members, including a representative of the Undergraduate Program, a representative of the Graduate Program, and a third member appointed by the department chair. Award committee members would be disqualified from judging any essay submitted by a student performing research for and/or being advised by that faculty member. Criteria to be used for judging will be determined by the award committee prior to reading the essays.

Scholarships:

Winners of the essay competition will receive a scholarship known as “The Thomas-Lain Scholarship” that will be renewable on a yearly basis at the amount originally awarded until the completion of their current degree program provided that:

- (a) Their cumulative GPA does not drop below 3.25
- (b) They do not change majors.

For undergraduates, the award will first be applied to cover tuition, books, fees, campus housing, or other expenses directly related to the academic program. For graduate students, if tuition and all others fees are covered by University support, a stipend or award may be given directly to the student.

Publicity:

The recipients of “The Thomas-Lain Scholarship” will be announced at the annual departmental awards luncheon during the Spring Term and their names will be added to the existing plaque honoring winners of this award.