

The Malcolm and Ann Kerr Award for Excellence in Scholarship



ABOUT THE AWARD

The Malcolm and Ann Kerr Award for Excellence in Scholarship provides an opportunity for top PhD students in the Department of Community Sustainability (CSUS) to gain university teaching experience so that they may become more competitive for faculty positions after graduation. Malcolm and Ann Kerr both chose to devote their professional careers to improving people's lives through education and understanding. This commitment was based on a belief that education helps us to see ourselves and our humanity through understanding others. Education is a means to living the principles that make a humane and democratic society.

The awardee will receive a one-semester, half-time teaching assistantship that supports tuition, fees, health insurance, and a stipend during the academic year following the award process. The awardee may serve either as the instructor of record or as a teaching assistant under another instructor, depending on the awardee's preference, prior experience, and the needs of the department. The awardee will work with a faculty mentor to enrich their teaching experience and help them build their skills. As part of the mentoring plan, the awardee is encouraged to participate in teaching programs available in the MSU Graduate School, such as the [Certification in College Teaching \(CCT\)](#), one of the [teaching communities, or a teaching/learning-related fellowship](#) programs, such as the [FAST Fellowship](#).

ABOUT MALCOLM AND ANN KERR

Malcolm and Ann Kerr's careers embodied the spirit of MSU's Land Grant ideals in an international context, although neither taught at MSU. They devoted their professional lives to higher education at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), the American University of Beirut (AUB), and the American University in Cairo (AUC). They were committed to promoting international understanding through teaching and research that contributed to the common good.

Malcolm Kerr was a renowned scholar of Middle Eastern politics and history. His best-known work was *The Arab Cold War*. He was president of AUB from 1982-84, and was assassinated there while on his way to work in 1984. Ann Kerr has carried on their legacy, serving on the AUB Board of Trustees for many years, as well as on a presidential advisory board for EARTH University in Costa Rica. Since 1990 she has served as the Coordinator for the Visiting Fulbright Scholar Enrichment Program for the Los Angeles Metropolitan area, based at UCLA. She also teaches an undergraduate course at UCLA on international cross-cultural understanding and is the author of two books, including *Come with Me from Lebanon*.

Malcolm was born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon, where his father was a professor at AUB and his mother was the dean of women. Malcolm and Ann met at AUB, where he was studying for a master's degree and she was a junior-year abroad student from California. They had four children, three of whom were born at the AUB hospital. In 2008 Ann married Ken Adams.

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Students will apply in the fall of each academic year, with instructions sent to students several weeks before the deadline. Additionally, an informational session will be held for interested students about one month before the application deadline. *The teaching assistantship will be awarded in the following academic year.* Details about the teaching assistantship assignment will be arranged between the awardee and the Department.

The CSUS Department will appoint a committee to review the applications and select the recipient on a competitive basis according to the following criteria.

Applicants must:

- be at least a second-year PhD student in the Department of Community Sustainability who has completed all the CSUS PhD core courses;
- have shown consistent excellence as a scholar throughout their graduate career;
- be in good standing (see the CSUS Graduate Handbook); and
- have demonstrated commitment to pursuing an academic career.

The application should include the application cover form plus a 1- to 2-page single-spaced, standard font and size, application essay that contains:

- an overview of the applicant's career goals as a faculty member, including how teaching is integrated within these goals;
- description of prior teaching experience (formal and/or informal), if any;
- identification and rationale for their proposed role (as either an instructor of record or a teaching assistant), and identification of preferred CSUS course(s) to teach;
- teaching philosophy; and
- outline of proposed mentoring activities and support they would like to receive.

Recipients may receive the Kerr Award teaching assistantship more than once in the absence of equally or nearly equally qualified applicants; however, preference will be given to applicants who have not received the award in the past. The faculty review committee reserves the right to not award the scholarship if no applicant meeting the criteria has applied. Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to reapply the next year.