

Graduate Fellowships Guidelines

*for nominees entering graduate studies in the
2017-18 academic year*

Information and nomination forms for
directors of graduate studies and department chairs / directors



Office of Graduate Studies
University of Missouri
Revised December 2016

About these Guidelines:

These guidelines and nomination forms are intended to be used by directors of graduate studies (DGS) and department chairs/directors at the University of Missouri. **We encourage DGSs and chairs/directors to spend time reading through these guidelines as we update them each year to reflect changing practices informed by student and program suggestions.**

Nominations must be completed by departments and other graduate programs, which choose candidates from the body of applicants in any given year. Students are not permitted to nominate themselves for Graduate Studies fellowships. Students with questions should contact their department/program's DGS. A list of department/program web sites can be found through the Office of Graduate Studies Web site:
<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/programs/a-z/>.

Questions regarding the guidelines can be directed to Jeni Hart, Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs: hartjl@missouri.edu or (573) 882-6260

Eligibility Requirements for New Awards:

For nominated students to receive consideration for any Office of Graduate Studies fellowship, the following conditions must be met:

- Student must be newly accepted to MU master's or doctoral degree programs as full-time graduate students. ("Newly accepted" means that the students have not been enrolled in a graduate degree program at MU in the past 3 years).

***New PhD students who are completing/or have completed a MA/MS at Mizzou within the past 3 years will be considered for eligibility if the nomination provides a compelling justification for suspension of the 'newly admitted' rule*

- The department/program should have notified the student that they were nominated for a fellowship.
- The department/program must have provided all of the required nomination materials described in the subsequent sections of this guide.

Students who are **not eligible** to receive new awards or renewal support from an Office of Graduate Studies fellowship include:

- Benefit-eligible University employees (FTE .75 or more).
- Students who will not be enrolled full-time in master's or doctoral study (9 hours of graded graduate course work per semester or, for those who have passed their comprehensive examinations, 2 hours of 9090 or 9990 (Engineering) Research during fall and spring semester and 1 hour during summer session).
- Students in first professional degree programs, such as law (JD), medicine (MD), or veterinary medicine (DVM).
- Students who are not newly-accepted into a master's or a doctoral degree program (*see ** above*).
- Students who are on academic probation or fail to meet the GPA requirements for a fellowship program.

Departmental Nomination Procedures and Checklist:

Nomination Deadline: **Noon (CST), Monday, February 6, 2017**. Complete nomination files must be emailed as one, single PDF file (one PDF file per applicant) by the DGS (or staff representative) to the Office of Graduate Studies at mugradfellowshipnom@missouri.edu.

Restrictions on Nominations:

- Each department may submit no more than a total of 3 master's/specialist-level fellowship nominations and 4 doctoral-level fellowship nominations for a grand total of 7 nominations. **This limit does not apply to Ridgel, Marshall, and McNair nominations, for which there are no restrictions to the number of nominations.**
- Nominations for new fellowship awards must be for students who are newly admitted into graduate degree programs (*see ** on previous page for potential exception to newly admitted rule*).
- While we recognize that departments/programs can utilize fellowships to leverage enhanced recruitment (e.g., freeing funds to recruit additional students), the Office of Graduate Studies Fellowship program is meant to support the very best students. Thus, it is the expectation of the Office of Graduate Studies that any student nominated for a fellowship is one the department/program plans to accept and support independent of receiving a fellowship.

Early Consideration:

If a department is able to recruit a highly competitive student and requires an early decision, an evaluation can be arranged upon request. Please contact the Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs with such a request.

Late Entries:

Submission of nominations after the deadline date will be subject to consideration using the same review criteria, but awards will be made only to the extent that funding is available.

Checklist for Complete Nomination Files:

An MU department/program formally nominates a student for an Office of Graduate Studies fellowship/ scholarship by emailing a complete nomination package in electronic format (one, single PDF file per applicant) to mugradfellowshipnom@missouri.edu. Forms requiring a signature or appearing originally as paper copies, including the nomination form, some transcripts, and some letters of recommendation, may be scanned or may include electronically reproduced signatures. All of the following must be included **in this order**:

1. Nomination form fully completed and signed by the DGS or the department chair/director. Forms in this packet can be copied for use or downloaded from our website (<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/assistantships-fellowships/fellowships/mizzou-graduate-fellowships/spring-fellowship-competition>). The signature confirms that:
 - a) the student has completed the MU Graduate Application form;
 - b) the department/program has newly accepted the student for the identified graduate degree program;
 - c) the student is being nominated for an Office of Graduate Studies fellowship/scholarship by the department/program;
 - d) the department accepts the cost sharing method it selects for this nomination.
2. Department letter of support from the DGS (countersigned by the department chair/director/program head) that **explicitly** describes the department/program's academic (including mentorship) and financial commitment to the student and the reason(s) the department is recommending the student for a fellowship. [*Please recognize that should the student receive an Office of Graduate Studies fellowship, this letter of support from the degree department/program should be seen as a contract stating the minimum department/program obligations to the student.*]

GRE or other standardized test scores cannot be a part of the application; nominations that include information about standardized tests will not be considered for awards.

Instead departments/programs should explain the nominee's preparation and promise for graduate study in the discipline or field as well as the nominee's fit with departmental strengths. Evaluators will be looking not only for the raw talent and potential of the student but also for the department's commitment and ability to mentor

that student successfully. The rationale behind the decision to exclude GREs is quite simple: the Office of Graduate Studies no longer requires GREs for admission and thus do not feel we can make them a requirement for fellowship consideration. Moreover, although we respect that some departments/ programs still use the GRE as an important factor of their decision-making process, others do not, and as such, we are not allowing inclusion of GRE scores in any nomination – thus providing uniformity of nomination packages.

3. Three (3) letters of recommendation, at least 2 from an academic source familiar with the student's academic ability (copies of letters used for department application are appropriate). Letters of support from the department (see item 2) are not included in the 3-letter minimum;
4. A 500-word personal statement from the student giving reasons for pursuing graduate study (personal statement used for department application is appropriate);
5. If relevant, a completed Statement of Native American Eligibility (p. 3 of the Departmental Nomination Form).
6. If the student is eligible for the McNair Fellowship, include a letter from the McNair Director at the university the student previously attended.
7. If the student is eligible for the AmeriCorps/VISTA/Teach for America/Missouri Advising Corps program, include evidence of participation in the relevant program and the number of years of participation.

All applicants must be fully processed and admitted through the Office of Graduate Studies admissions system to be considered eligible for a fellowship unless Assistant Vice Provost has provided an exemption for the applicant.

Selection Process:

All nomination files will be reviewed to ensure that they are complete and that the candidates meet the Office of Graduate Studies criteria for fellowships/scholarships. The complete files will be evaluated by a Graduate Fellowship Committee comprised of faculty members who represent graduate academic fields across the campus. The committee members will evaluate each candidate's strengths. The scores from these evaluations will be tabulated and will serve to rank the candidates as the basis for the final award decisions made by the Office of Graduate Studies. The committee will evaluate each nominee in terms of:

- Student qualifications such as undergraduate and/or graduate (as appropriate) grade performance in the last 2 years of undergraduate work, including research and scholarly experiences, graduate-level performance if applicable, and letters of recommendation.
- Student commitment to graduate education in the field or discipline, as shown in the student's personal statement and letters of recommendation.
- Fit with MU and department, as shown in the student's personal statement and the department's letter of support.
- Departmental commitment to cost sharing for the fellowship award, as indicated by the fellowship nomination form and the department's letter of support.

Announcement of Awards and Notification of Acceptance or Rejection:

Award decisions about nominations for new fellowships submitted by the deadline will be announced no later than the first full week of March. Departments will be notified about the status of all nominees. The departments and programs will then notify individual students of their status, including those who are not selected for an award. The Office of Graduate Studies will provide a template with suggested language for the notification letters. In

addition, the Office of Graduate Studies staff members will be glad to help recruit these talented students, including meeting with those students and corresponding with them. Departments will be notified when a student is an alternate for a fellowship and then will be notified if and when an award becomes available. It is crucial that departments let the Office of Graduate Studies know as soon as possible if their winning students decide to *accept* (often times they inform programs long before the Office of Graduate Studies) *or not to accept* the offer so that alternates can be informed in a timely manner.

Award letters will include an acceptance notice provided by the Office of Graduate Studies that must be returned with a signature to the Office of Graduate Studies by April 15. Failure to respond by that date may nullify the original award notice.

Tuition Waivers (GSSP):

Graduate students who receive fellowship support also receive a waiver of resident tuition and non-resident fees through the Graduate Student Support Program (GSSP). All courses that are relevant and applicable to a student's degree program and those approved by the adviser are covered by the GSSP fee waiver, up to the graduate tuition rate. That is, this program does not cover courses that are not listed on the student's program of study or otherwise approved by the adviser, nor the cost of incidental fees, such as computing, activity, health or other supplemental fees. If a course is charged at a higher rate than the graduate tuition rate, but is an approved course and paid through MyZou, the GSSP will cover up to the graduate tuition rate and the difference will be the responsibility of the student, unless the department makes other arrangements with the student. Please note that if a student is funded on a grant as part of the department's cost share for the fellowship, the grant must cover half of the student's tuition and insurance costs, unless tuition is not an allowable expense on the grant, and a cost-share tuition waiver request form (<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/forms-downloads/repository/cost-share-fee-waiver-request-form.pdf>) has been completed and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies.

A student's GSSP support can be suspended when a student is on academic probation or does not meet the criteria for fellowships requiring a particular GPA or another aspect of progress toward degree. For more information about the limits on the amount of time students can be covered and other ways graduate students can qualify for this program, check the website: <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/tuition-support-program/>. The contact person for this program is Karen Gruen, 210 Jesse Hall, 884-2326, gruenk@missouri.edu.

Tax Information about Office of Graduate Studies Fellowships and Scholarships:

Graduate students should note that fellowships and scholarships from the Office of Graduate Studies and from extramural sources are taxable, though taxes are not automatically deducted from their stipend. Students will need to determine how they wish to handle their tax liability. For additional information about a student's obligation to report and pay taxes, see our web site: <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/assistantships-fellowships/tax-information.php>.

Procedures for Renewal of Multi-Year Awards:

Graduate students who have been awarded multiyear awards will receive a message in mid to late spring semester from the Office of Graduate Studies informing them that their fellowship/scholarship is renewable if and only if conditions for continued support are met. Upon receipt of the notice from the Office of Graduate Studies, students should follow the directions indicated in the letter regarding confirmation of their intended continuation with the fellowship and verification of adequate progress. If this information has been received,

graduate students will be notified whether their fellowship/scholarship is renewed in early June.

Suspensions of Renewal:

Conditions that could result in suspension of a multi-year renewal award:

- Not maintaining the required GPA. Probationary status automatically disqualifies a student for continuation unless the department demonstrates extenuating circumstances.
- Not maintaining full-time enrollment in credit-bearing graduate-level courses.
- Failing to meet criteria set for Office of Graduate Studies fellowships in general or for a specific fellowship/scholarship program.
- Not making adequate annual progress as defined by the department (student must be informed by the department on why adequate progress is not being met in relation to department's policies).
- Any employment in total of more than 28 hours per week at MU. (N.B., OGS expects that fellowship students will not work off campus during the academic year.)
- Being "off campus" for half of a semester or more. For absences from campus for such periods of time that are in line with the academic progress of the student (e.g., data collection for a dissertation), the fellowship can be maintained if the department maintains its financial commitment (e.g. assistantship or departmental fellowship).
- Acceptance of an external fellowship. If the student is offered an external fellowship, the Office of Graduate Studies will work with the student to develop an appropriate support package.

Deferring a Fellowship Award:

Graduate students who have been awarded fellowships can request a deferral of their implementation by writing a letter that indicates the reasons and the expected duration for the deferral, addressed to the Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs, Office of Graduate Studies. Reinstatement requires a letter requesting reinstatement and the above renewal materials, submitted during the semester before the fellowship is to be reinstated.

Extensions of Awards that Have Expired:

Requests for extensions of one semester or one year must be initiated by the department. Extensions will be granted only under extremely unusual circumstances and are subject to the availability of funds. Consideration for an extension will require submission of the items listed above for the Renewal of Multi-Year Awards, with letters from the student and the department addressed to the Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs, Office of Graduate Studies. These letters must indicate compelling reasons why an extension should be granted and include the expected completion date for the student to obtain the graduate degree. No extension requests will be considered after April 20, 2017. Decisions about extension requests may be delayed pending completion of new and renewal awards procedures.

5-Year Doctoral-Level Fellowship and Scholarship Programs

All of the following programs are reserved for graduate students newly admitted into doctoral degree programs. Each provides 5 years of support plus a tuition waiver and insurance subsidy. Please note that if a student is funded on a grant as part of the department's cost share for the fellowship, the grant must cover half of the student's tuition and insurance costs, unless tuition is not an allowable expense on the grant, and a cost-share tuition waiver request form (<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/forms-downloads/repository/cost-share-fee-waiver-request-form.pdf>) has been completed and

approved by the Office of Graduate Studies. Each require that the nominating department/program indicate one of two cost-share options that will constitute the department/program's commitment to the nominated student (in the nomination letter, as well as award letter).

With the exception of George Washington Carver, Gus T. Ridgel and Ronald McNair Fellowships, which have their own pair of cost sharing options (see below), ALL fellowships are subject to the following cost-sharing options:

Option 1: In year 1 of the student's program, the Office of Graduate Studies will provide a stipend of \$18,600. In years 2 – 5, the Office of Graduate Studies will provide \$8,600 and the department/program will provide *at least* \$10,000.

Option 2: The Office of Graduate Studies will provide \$9,600 and the department/program will provide the student *at least* \$9,000 (a total of at least \$18,600 annually with departmental/program partial match), for each of the 5 years of the award.

For both Option 1 and Option 2, departmental/program support may consist of an additional fellowship or other source of funding, and/or a teaching or research assistantship. The Office of Graduate Studies strongly encourages departments and programs that provide a .5 FTE assistantship to consider providing a .25 FTE assistantship and additional fellowship funding (e.g., \$9000, or the cost equivalent of a .25 FTE assistantship) for the student instead. (NOTE: *tuition waivers are only given when departmental/program funds being provided meet GSSP eligibility criteria. Also, if funds, such as an external grant, are used to support a fellowship student during departmental/program commitment years, that funding source or the department/program shall be responsible for a portion of tuition and insurance*). All stipends are disbursed in monthly payments and are processed through Financial Aid.

**In the case of the Ridgel and McNair Fellowships, the amount provided by the Office of Graduate Studies under Option 1 will be \$20,000 in year 1; in years 2-5, the Office of Graduate Studies will provide \$10,000 and the department/program will provide *at least* \$10,000); for Option 2, the Office of Graduate Studies contribution will be \$11,000 per year (the departmental/program match must be *at least* \$9,000, but must also be at the equivalent of the most competitive funding level for teaching or research assistantships in the program). The Office of Graduate Studies strongly encourages departments and programs that provide a .5 FTE assistantship to consider providing a .25 FTE assistantship and additional fellowship funding (e.g., \$9000, or the cost equivalent of a .25 FTE assistantship) for the student instead.

Statement on the Cost-sharing Model

The department/program **cannot** replace a portion of its financial burden with Office of Graduate Studies funds and still ask the student to perform the same duties for the department/program. Two students performing the same duties for departmental/program funds (e.g., 0.5 FTE GTA), one paid fully by the department/program, the other paid from departmental/program and Office of Graduate Studies funds **CANNOT** receive the same total stipend and educational package. For example, if a graduate assistant not on fellowship is being paid \$18,000 on 0.5 FTE appointment by your department, your student on fellowship doing the same graduate assistant work at 0.5 FTE must also be paid \$18,000 from your department in addition to the fellowship.

IF Office of Graduate Studies funds are used as part of the total 'normal' stipend level of a student and the departmental/program commitment is reduced, either 1) the duties expected (FTE) of that student to receive departmental/program funds **MUST** also be reduced accordingly, or 2) the student must receive some additional ('value-added') educational/training/development benefit not readily available to non-fellowship students (any such scenario **MUST** be pre-approved by the Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs, Office of Graduate Studies).

George Washington Carver Fellowships: Established in 2001 by the chancellor of the University of Missouri-Columbia, the G. W. Carver is awarded to the most highly ranked fellowship nominee who is a U.S. citizen, newly accepted into a doctoral degree program in any field, and a member of an underrepresented ethnic minority population (African American, Native American or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latinx). The nominee must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

For the Carver Fellowship, the Office of Graduate Studies, the amount provided by the Office of Graduate Studies under Option 1 will be \$21,000 in year 1; in years 2-5, the Office of Graduate Studies will provide \$11,000 and the department/program will provide *at least* \$10,000); for Option 2, the Office of Graduate Studies contribution will be \$12,000 per year (the departmental/program match must be *at least* \$9,000, but must also be at the equivalent of the highest funding level for teaching or research assistantships in the program). The Office of Graduate Studies strongly encourages departments and programs that provide a .5 FTE assistantship to consider providing a .25 FTE assistantship and additional fellowship funding (e.g., \$9000, or the cost equivalent of a .25 FTE assistantship) for the student instead.

William Gregory Fellowships: Endowed by St. Louis dry goods merchant, Charles R. Gregory, in memory of his brother, William, the Gregory Fellowship has since 1914 furthered the academic careers of many of MU's most outstanding graduate students. Awards can be made to doctoral students in any discipline. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Adeline Hoffman Fellowships: Established in 1981, this program is for newly admitted doctoral students who have and maintain a 3.5 GPA, with special consideration for those in a human sciences area (e.g., Personal Financial Planning, Architectural Studies, Human Development and Family Studies, Nutrition and Exercise Physiology, and Textile and Apparel Management).

G. Ellsworth Huggins Scholarships: This program was established in 1979 with a \$3.5 million bequest from G. Ellsworth Huggins, the largest gift up to that date received by the University of Missouri-Columbia. Awards can be made to doctoral students in any field, with special consideration given to students from Huggins's birthplace (Barton County, MO), especially graduates from schools in Lamar, MO. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Stanley L. Maxwell Scholarships: This program was established in 2001 with a gift from the Maxwell estate. It provides merit scholarships for graduate students. Nominees for this 5-year doctoral award must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Gus T. Ridgel Fellowships: Named in honor of the first African American student to earn a graduate degree at MU, this fellowship program was established in 1987 to assist qualified underrepresented minority graduate students (African American, Native American or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latinx) in any field at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Recipients must be U.S. citizens. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Robert E. Waterston Award: Established in 2001 by Robert E. Waterston, this 5-year doctoral award is used to support doctoral students and can be made to graduate students in any discipline. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Master's, Specialist, or Doctoral Fellowship and Scholarship Programs

AmeriCorps/VISTA/Teach for America/Missouri Advising Corps Graduate Fellowships: Established in 1998, this program is designed to reward volunteers who recently completed assignments in these service organizations and are accepted into master's, specialist, or

doctoral degree programs in fields related to their prior service and oriented toward a relevant career. Awards are made for 3 to 4 students per year who receive support for years equal to the number of years of service in AmeriCorps, VISTA, Teach for America, or Missouri Advising Corps, with a stipend equivalent to the current value of a .25 FTE assistantship from the Office of Graduate Studies. The nomination materials must include evidence of the number of years of AmeriCorps/VISTA/Teach for America/Missouri Advising Corps service. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

David R. Francis Fellowships: With an endowment from former Missouri Governor David R. Francis (1850-1927), this fellowship program was established in 1927. Awards are for graduate students newly admitted into master's or doctoral degree programs in either public affairs or creative literature. The nomination materials for this fellowship program from creative literature applicants must include an original composition. At the master's/specialist level, the stipend is \$8,200 from the Office of Graduate Studies with an equal amount of matching support required from the department/program for up to 2 years. At the doctoral level, the support depends on the cost-sharing arrangements with the department/program, with a stipend of \$18,600 (the Office of Graduate Studies provides the stipend in the first year, and in years 2-5, the Office of Graduate Studies provides \$8,600 and the department/program provides at least \$10,000) or \$9,600 for each of 5 years from the Office of Graduate Studies matched \$9,000 (minimum) from the department/program. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Ronald E. McNair Fellowships: Established in 2001, this program is named in honor of Ronald E. McNair (1950-1986), physicist, astronaut, and crew member of the space shuttle Challenger. The program is designed to support newly admitted master's, specialist, or doctoral students in any field who successfully completed a Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program at a university prior to beginning the MU graduate program. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA. Fellowship applicants must include a letter from the McNair Director at the Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program at the university where they completed the McNair Program.

Master's- or Specialist-Level Fellowship and Scholarship Programs

Office of Graduate Studies Fellowships: This fellowship program is designed to assist departments in recruiting and retaining graduate students who are US citizens and have been newly admitted to a master's or specialist degree program at MU in any field. Support is \$8,200 per year for up to 2 years (maximum award of \$16,388) from the Office of Graduate Studies, with an equal amount of matching funds required from the department/program for each year. Departmental support may consist of a fellowship or a fee-waiver qualifying teaching or research assistantship. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Thurgood Marshall Academic Scholarships: Named in honor of the late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall (1908-1993), this program is designed to assist departments in recruiting and retaining newly admitted master's students from underrepresented ethnic minority populations (African American, Native American or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latinx). Recipients must be U.S. citizens. Support is \$8,200 each year for up to 2 years (maximum award \$16,388) from the Office of Graduate Studies, with an equal amount of matching funds required from the department/program for each year. Departmental support may consist of a fellowship and/or a fee-waiver qualifying teaching or research assistantship. Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Other Sources of Support for Graduate Students

Curators Grant-in-Aid (GIA) Scholarships: In the early 1950s the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri authorized the Curators Grain-In-Aid (GIA) Scholarship specifically for international students. Since the inception of the award, thousands of international students demonstrating good academic standing and financial need have been helped to successfully complete their programs of study. Please see

<http://international.missouri.edu/come-to-mu/students/funding-your-education/gia/index.php> for further details.

Extramural Funding Programs

The MU Office of Graduate Studies regularly receives funding for training programs from federal and state agencies, private foundations, and corporations, for which individual students are selected for fellowship support. The Office of Graduate Studies maintains a web-based database of external funding opportunities at <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/assistantships-fellowships/fellowships/external-fellowships/>. In addition to financial support, winners of external fellowships receive a waiver of tuition and a medical insurance subsidy option, unless the award program from the funding organization is designed to cover such costs. Students with qualifying external fellowships must have their stipends and other payments made by the external agency through the MU Financial Aid Office.

Departmental/Program Support

Departments/programs administer many fellowships, scholarships, traineeships and other financial assistance programs for graduate students. For additional information, students should contact the unit's department chair/director or DGS.