

GRADUATE SCHOOL DEAN'S DISSERTATION COMPLETION FELLOWSHIP

I. MISSION

The mission of the Graduate School Dean's Dissertation Completion Fellowship is to support superior scholarship that enhances the reputation of their program, department and the University of Cincinnati, by providing one-year fellowships to support doctoral students in the final year of degree work.

II. APPLICATION PROCESS

A complete application packet requires the following materials:

- Letter of nomination by the graduate program director. The letter must include: (a) verification that the dissertation is proceeding on schedule for graduation by the summer term of the fellowship year, (b) what funds are currently supporting the applicant, and (c) when the applicant passed the qualifying examination.
- *Separate* statement from program providing the student's total earned graduate credit hours (as of the end of the current fall semester) and the number of credit hours the student is planning to take for the upcoming spring and summer semesters.
- A recommendation letter from the student's dissertation chair verifying the status of the dissertation research and writing and attesting that the student will complete the thesis and receive the degree by the end of the fellowship term.
- At least one other letter of recommendation from a professor familiar with the student's academic and creative or research/scholarly accomplishments.
- Student submission of a statement (up to two pages) describing creative and/or scholarly accomplishments, especially the significance in the discipline.
- A curriculum vitae that includes current contact information for the student.
- Student submission of plans (up to two pages) for the dissertation work during the fellowship year, including (a) approximate date of dissertation defense and graduation term and (b) number of credits still required to complete the degree before the start of the proposed academic year.
- **The actual dissertation completed to date** (e.g., in the humanities and social sciences, the actual dissertation chapters already written; in the natural and applied sciences, other evidence of research and writing that substantiates the student's promise to complete the degree by the end of the fellowship term). Note that the committee is not asking for a writing sample, but rather for *actual dissertation work* that has already been completed, which the committee will use to assess the persuasiveness of the candidate's and the program's promise to graduate within the award term.

- [A completed, signed agreement \(available on the fellowship website\)](#) in which the student, mentor, and graduate program director acknowledge the fellowship requirement to complete the degree by the end of the award term, along with the understanding of loss of eligibility for any future university (including departmental) funding should the recipient not achieve this goal.

The programs and nominators are responsible for submitting all requested materials for the fellowship. Programs will not be notified if materials are missing, and the nominee will not be allowed to add anything missing or update materials after the deadline.

III. SELECTION CRITERIA

The purpose of this award is to support students in their final year of study. Eligible students are those with dissertation committees established, who will have all coursework completed by the beginning of the fall semester of their fellowship year, and who are sufficiently advanced in their dissertation research and writing to be able to commit credibly to graduating by the end of the fellowship year.

As part of the application process, nominees, their mentors, and their graduate program directors must sign agreement in which the student, mentor, and graduate program director acknowledge the fellowship requirement to complete the degree by the end of the award term, along with the understanding that dissertation fellows will forfeit eligibility for any future university (including departmental) funding should the student not achieve this goal.

Nominations should not include those who will graduate prior to spring term of the fellowship year, nor those who are ineligible for funding in fall or spring of the fellowship year due to the 174 graduate credit rule. Students who will not be eligible for the fellowship due to the 174 rule will not have their application packets reviewed.

Nominations are limited to one from each doctoral program and are made by the graduate program director in consultation with program faculty. The director's letter of nomination must attest that the dissertation is proceeding on schedule for graduation by the summer of the fellowship year, as must the recommendation from the student's dissertation advisor.

Awards will be made on the basis of:

- Quality of the dissertation research/scholarship
- Methodology or creativity of dissertation work
- Anticipated contribution that the dissertation will make to field
- The support of the program and student's advisor, as well as the strength of the recommendation letters
- Student's previous accomplishments and potential for future success
- Likelihood that the student to complete the dissertation and graduate by the end of the fellowship year

IV. AWARD PROCESS AND STRUCTURE

The Graduate School will prepare and issue the stipend and scholarship offer letters. To accept or decline the award offer, the student must sign the letters appropriately and return the letters to the Graduate School.

The Graduate School provides a one-year stipend of \$20,000, which will be disbursed in biweekly installments via Catalyst throughout the fall and spring of the fellowship year. The Graduate School will also provide a one-year tuition scholarship for the fall and spring of the dissertation year. This scholarship will be posted by the Graduate School to the student's Catalyst account. The tuition scholarship covers the instructional fee, non-resident surcharge (if applicable), campus life fee, and general fee. The scholarship does NOT cover the ITIE fee nor any program fees. The scholarship does not cover the UC Student Health Insurance charge, however, dissertation fellows are eligible for the [GSHI Award](#), which covers approximately 70% of the UC SHI charge.

Programs may choose to supplement the stipend and/or cover any charges not covered by the tuition scholarship, but they are under no obligation to do so.

UC maintains a position that all income, from whatever source, is taxable and may be subject to withholding. The IRS maintains final authority on the taxability of all stipends, and in all cases, the university cannot guarantee that any stipend is tax-exempt. The Graduate School cannot provide legal advice to individual students regarding their awards.

Fellows may not hold teaching or research employment at UC or elsewhere during the fall and spring semester of their fellowship year. Should a student start a teaching or research position during their fellowship year, they will forfeit all stipend payments for the remainder of the fellowship year as of the date of their first day of employment. Should a student start a teaching or research position during the fall semester of their fellowship year, they will forfeit the tuition scholarship for the spring semester.

Students must maintain an enrollment of 12 graduate credits or more throughout the entire fall semester and spring semester to maintain their eligibility for the fellowship.

V. FELLOWSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

Fellow Responsibilities (Student):

- Register full-time (12 credits or more) for fall and spring semester of fellowship year. If the student withdraws from one or more classes and falls under 12 graduate credit hours, then the stipend and scholarship will be cancelled. The student is responsible for notifying the program and the Graduate School if they have withdrawn and fallen below the minimum, but they are working on registering for additional credit hours to get their enrollment back to the required minimum.
- Register for ENGL 9010, Interdisciplinary Dissertation Workshop course, either in the summer prior to the fellowship year or the fall of the fellowship year. The course is typically *not* offered in spring semester. Students who register for the "Maymester" summer ENGL 9010 course will receive a 1 credit tuition scholarship from A&S, however, this scholarship does *not* cover the ITIE fee nor any program fees.
- No teaching or research employment at UC or elsewhere during the fellowship year. The fellow must inform the Graduate School immediately if they accept an offer of teaching or research employment, so that award funds may be appropriately cancelled.
- Participation in the annual UC Graduate School Three Minute Thesis competition. With suitable justification and documentation of a timing conflict (to be adjudicated by the Graduate School's Program Director), the student may replace this requirement with an alternative presentation of research results in another venue.

- Acknowledgement of the Graduate School Dean's Completion Fellowship in publications resulting from work done during the fellowship year.

Program (Graduate Director, Graduate Staff, and/or Advisor):

- The program monitors the fellow's class registration, to ensure that the student is registered for the appropriate course work and at the appropriate level. This includes verifying that the student registers full-time (12 credits or more) for the entirety of fall and spring semester and that they register for ENGL 9010, Interdisciplinary Dissertation Workshop course, either in the summer prior to the fellowship year or in the fall of the fellowship year.
- Communicate with program's business manager that the fellow's stipend *and* tuition scholarship will be posted by the Graduate School.
- Should a student be dismissed or leave before completing the fellowship year, the academic program must immediately notify the Graduate School.

Graduate School:

- As part of the application review process, check all nominees for total UC credit hours and previously earned graduate degrees to verify that (so long as the student registers for coursework as outlined in application packet) the student will not reach the 174 limit during the fellowship year.
- Prepare and issue the stipend and scholarship offer letter.
- Post stipend *and* tuition scholarship via Catalyst.
- Coordinate as needed with the central A&S business office to ensure fellows registered for ENGL 9010 summer (Maymester) course receive the 1 credit hour scholarship.
- If the availability of the ENGL 9010 course changes (either a session is cancelled or the course is offered in spring semester), the Graduate School will communicate these changes to the fellows in a timely manner.
- Track participation in the Three Minute Thesis competition, and adjudicate requests for timing conflicts and alternative presentations.