

Graduate Fellowships Guidelines, 2010-2011

information and nomination forms for department chairs
and directors of graduate studies



Graduate School
University of Missouri - Columbia
October 9, 2009

About these Guidelines:

These guidelines and nomination forms are intended to be used by department chairs and directors of graduate studies at the University of Missouri. 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 School fellowships. Students with questions should contact their graduate program's director of graduate studies (DGS). A list of program/department Web sites can be found through the Graduate School's Web site:

<http://gradschool.missouri.edu/programs/catalog/>

Changes for 2010 reflected in these updated guidelines:

- The "Ridgel +" program allows eligible students to pair money from the Graduate School with other major university-funded fellowships
- There is no limit on the number of McNair-eligible students a program can nominate, and McNair nominations do not count against a program's maximum number of nominations
- Master's level fellowships – the Graduate School and Thurgood Marshall programs – are doubled in value. They confer \$5,000 a year for up to two years from the Graduate School, to be matched by the department in each year a student receives Marshall funding.
- Rules have been clarified: any funding providing by the Graduate School must go directly to the student to supplement other funding. Programs cannot use Graduate School funding to replace department-provided or grant-provided funding for teaching and research assistantships.

Eligibility Requirements for New Awards:

To receive consideration for any Graduate School fellowship, students nominated by a department must meet the following conditions:

- Have applied and be newly accepted to MU master's or doctoral degree programs as full-time graduate students
- Have notified the department that they wish to compete for Graduate School fellowships
- Have provided to the department the materials listed below for the nomination process

Students who are **not eligible** to receive new awards or renewal support from a Graduate School fellowship include:

- Benefit-eligible University employees (FTE .75 or more).
- Students who will not be enrolled full-time in master's or doctoral study (nine hours of graded graduate course work per semester or, for those who have passed their comprehensive examinations, two hours of 9090 or 9990 (Engineering) Research during fall and winter semester and one hour during summer session).
- Students in professional-level postbaccalaureate degree programs, such as law (JD, LL.M), medicine (MD), or veterinary medicine (DVM).
- Students who are not newly-accepted into a master's or a doctoral degree program.
- Students who are on academic probation or fail to meet the GPA requirements for a fellowship program.
- Students who accept another major fellowship, including a Life Sciences Fellowship. Students may be nominated for both a Life Sciences and a Graduate School fellowship but may accept only one or the other, except in the case of eligibility for a Ridgel Fellowship (see below)

Ridgel + program

If a student nominated by a department during the regular fellowship process is awarded both a Ridgel and another major university-funded fellowship (including a Life Sciences fellowship), she or he will be able to accept a "Ridgel +" combination which includes a \$4,000 annual Ridgel Fellowship Award made directly to

the student for the four or five years of the Life Sciences or other major university-funded fellowship. The full amount of the Life Sciences or other fellowship must be paid to the student.

Departmental Nomination Procedures and Checklist:

Nomination Deadline: 5:00 pm, February 10, 2010. Complete nomination files must be submitted in electronic form (CD, DVD, or thumb drive) by the DGS to the Graduate School (210 Jesse Hall, Attn. Jessica Manley) by the deadline. Please do not send by email.

Restrictions on Nominations:

- Each department may submit no more than a total of three master's-level fellowship nominations and four doctoral-level fellowship nominations for a grand total of seven nominations. This limit does not include Ridgel, Marshall and McNair nominations, for which there are no restrictions on the number of nominations.
- Nominations for new fellowship awards must be for students who are newly admitted into graduate degree programs, with preference given to students coming from outside MU.

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.

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. No new nominations are likely to receive consideration after June 30, 2010

Checklist for Complete Nomination Files:

An MU department formally nominates a student for a Graduate School fellowship/ scholarship by submitting a complete nomination package in electronic format (CD, DVD, or thumb drive). Documents should be in a readily available format, including .doc, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .jpg formats for text and images. 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:

1. Nomination form fully completed and signed by the DGS or the department chair. Forms in this packet can be copied for use or downloaded from our Web site (<http://gradschool.missouri.edu/financial/assistantships-fellowships/>). The signature confirms that (a) the student has completed the MU Graduate Application form, (b) the department has newly accepted the student for the identified graduate degree program, (c) the student is being nominated for a Graduate School fellowship/scholarship by the department, and (d) the department accepts the cost sharing method it selects for this nomination.
2. Department letter of support from the director of graduate studies that explains the department's academic and financial commitment to the student and the reason(s) the department is recommending the student for a fellowship. **GRE scores cannot be a part of the application; nominations that include information about GREs will not be considered for awards.** Instead, departments should explain the nominee's preparation and promise for graduate study in the discipline as well as the nominee's fit with departmental strengths. Evaluators will be looking not only for the raw talent of the student but also for the department's commitment and ability to mentor that student successfully.
3. Three (3) letters of recommendation, at least two from an academic source familiar with the student's academic ability (copies of letters used for department application are appropriate);
4. A transcript from each college or university attended. (Official transcripts supplied with an application should be sent directly to Graduate Admissions rather than included in a fellowship nomination);
5. A 500-word personal statement from the student giving reasons for pursuing graduate study (personal statement used for department application is appropriate);
6. If relevant, a completed Statement of Native American Eligibility form, available in this packet.

7. If the student is eligible for the McNair Fellowship, include a letter from the McNair Director at the university other than MU.
8. If the student is eligible for the AmeriCorps/VISTA/Teach for America program, include evidence of participation in the relevant program and the number of years of participation.

Selection Process:

All nomination files will be reviewed to ensure that they are complete and that the candidates meet the Graduate School's criteria for fellowships/scholarships. The complete files will be evaluated by a Graduate Fellowship Committee composed of faculty members who represent graduate academic fields across the curriculum. The committee members will assign scores reflecting their evaluations of each candidate's strengths. These scores will be tabulated and will serve to rank the candidates, as the basis for the final awards made by the Graduate School. The Committee will evaluate each nominee in terms of:

- Student's qualifications such as undergraduate grades, performance in the last two years of undergraduate work including research and scholarly experiences, graduate-level performance if applicable, and letters of recommendation.
- Student's commitment 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.
- Department's commitment to cost sharing for the fellowship award 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 that are submitted by the February 10, 2010, deadline will be announced around the first week of March, 2010. Departments will be notified about which of their nominees will be offered a fellowship, and which were not successful. Departments will then notify fellowship recipients; the Graduate School will provide a template with suggested language. The Graduate School will not notify students who were not selected. 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 Graduate School know as soon as possible if their winning students decide 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 Graduate School that must be returned with a signature to the Graduate School by April 15, 2010. Failure to respond by that date can nullify the original award notice.

Waivers of Educational Fees (GSSP):

Graduate students who receive fellowship support also receive a waiver of resident and non-resident educational 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. That is, this program does not cover courses that are not listed or approved by the adviser, nor the cost of incidental fees, such as computing, activity, health or other supplemental fees. Fee waivers are suspended if a student is on academic probation or does not meet the criteria for fellowships requiring higher GPAs. 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 Web site:

<http://gradschool.missouri.edu/financial/assistantships-fellowships/tuition-waivers/>. The contact person for this program is Karen Gruen, 210 Jesse Hall, 884-2326, gruenk@missouri.edu.

Graduate Medical Insurance Subsidy Program

Graduate School fellowship recipients also qualify for a subsidy if they enroll in the Accident and Sickness Insurance offered through MU. This program is available to students who qualify for a fee waiver under the GSSP. Once a student has enrolled in the insurance through MyZou or the Cashier's Office

(international students are automatically enrolled in the international insurance when they register for their classes), the student should contact Karen Gruen at gruenk@missouri.edu so that she can apply the subsidy and credit the student's account. Further details about the program can be obtained from the Web site <http://gradschool.missouri.edu/financial/medical-insurance/> or by contacting Karen Gruen, 210 Jesse Hall, 884-2326, gruenk@missouri.edu.

Tax Information about Graduate School Fellowships and Scholarships:

Graduate students should note that fellowships and scholarships from the Graduate School and from extramural sources are taxable. For additional information about a student's obligation to report and pay taxes, see our Web site: <http://gradschool.missouri.edu/financial/assistantships-fellowships/tax.php>.

Procedures for Renewal of Multi-Year Awards:

Graduate students who have been awarded multiyear awards will receive a message by April 20, 2010, from the Graduate School 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 Graduate School, students must reply by May 1, 2010, to Lee Wilkins, requesting renewal of their fellowship/scholarship award and stating their intention to continue full-time graduate study at MU. This request should be made through email wilkinsl@missouri.edu

Students must also ask the director of graduate studies or department chair of their departments to certify their adequate progress by May 1, 2010, with a message sent to Lee Wilkins, indicating the following:

- The student is making acceptable progress in completing the degree program. This must be reflected by an up-to-date entry in the Graduate Student Progress System.
- Confirmation of the department's academic and financial commitment toward the student's fellowship, with a teaching or research assistantship or other form of support, as indicated with the initial nomination process.
- The student is expected to continue full-time study, making specific reference to the date of the student's submission of the M-1 or D-1 form.

If this information has been received, graduate students will be notified about whether their fellowship/scholarship is renewed by May 10, 2010.

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 Graduate School fellowships in general or for a specific fellowship/scholarship program.
- Full-time employment at MU or elsewhere or benefit-eligible employment at MU.
- Acceptance of an external fellowship. If the student is offered an external fellowship, the Graduate School 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 George Justice, interim dean of the Graduate School. 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 Dr. George Justice, Interim Dean of the Graduate School. 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 May 1, 2010. Decisions about extension requests may be delayed pending completion of new and renewal awards procedures.

Five-Year Doctoral-Level Fellowship and Scholarship Programs

All of the following programs are reserved for graduate students newly admitted into doctoral degree programs, with preference given to students new to MU.

All of the following doctoral programs provide five years of support plus a fee waiver and insurance subsidy, as described above. There are two cost-sharing arrangements available to departments. Departments should indicate their choice of cost-sharing on the nomination form. For the first support option, the Graduate School will provide a stipend of \$13,500 in years 1, 2, and 5, and the department will provide an equivalent amount in years 3 and 4. Departmental support may consist of a teaching or research assistantship or other departmental funding. For the second support option, the Graduate School provides \$8,000 for each of five years matched by a comparable amount from the department. Departmental support may consist of a teaching or research assistantship or other source of departmental funding. Fellowship stipends are disbursed in monthly payments and are processed through Financial Aid. In the case of the Ridgel Fellowship program, the amount provided by the Graduate School in the first option is \$15,500 per year and in the second option is \$10,000 per year. The departmental match for a Ridgel, in the second support option, must be at least \$8,000, but also must be at the most competitive level of teaching or research assistantship for students in that year in the program. Doctoral level fellowships will be paid by the Graduate School as a supplement to a fully-paid graduate assistantship or fellowship from the department. Graduate School fellowships cannot be used to replace departmental funds supporting a research or teaching assistantship.

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 and 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 Mexican American). The nominee must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA. For the Carver Fellowship, the Graduate School provides \$17,000 per year in years 1, 2, and 5 or \$12,000 per year for five years. In the former case, the department commits to providing at least \$17,000 in years 3 and 4 through a teaching or research assistantship or other fellowship. In the latter case, the department agrees to a .50 assistantship at the highest level in the department in addition to the \$12,000 from the Graduate School.

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.

Adeline Hoffman Fellowships: Established in 1981, this program is for newly admitted doctoral students who have and maintain a 3.3 GPA, with special consideration for those in a human sciences area (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, Missouri), especially graduates from schools in Lamar, Missouri. 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.

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 doctoral students in any field who successfully completed a Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program at a university other than MU. 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 a university other than MU.

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 in any field at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Awards can be made to U.S. citizens who are members of an underrepresented ethnic minority population (African American, Native American or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Mexican American). Nominees must have and maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Robert E. Waterston Award: Established in 2001 by Robert E. Waterston, this award is used to support doctoral students and can be made to graduate students in any discipline.

Master's or Doctoral-Level Fellowship and Scholarship Programs

AmeriCorps/VISTA/Teach for America 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 or doctoral degree programs in fields related to their prior service and oriented toward a relevant career. Awards are made for three to four students per year who receive support for years equal to the number of years of service in AmeriCorps, VISTA, or Teach for America with a stipend equivalent to the current value of a .25 FTE assistantship from the Graduate School. The nomination materials must include evidence of the number of years of AmeriCorps/VISTA/Teach for America service.

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 level, the stipend is \$5,000 from the Graduate School with an equal amount of matching support required from the department, either concurrently or for a second year of support, which may consist of a teaching or research assistantship or other support. At the doctoral level, the support depends on the cost-sharing arrangements with the department with a stipend of \$13,500 (the Graduate School provides the stipend in years 1, 2, and 5, and the department provides the stipend in years 3 and 4) or \$8,000 for each of 5 years from the Graduate School matched by a comparable amount from the department.

Master's-Level Fellowship and Scholarship Programs

Graduate School 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 degree program at MU in any field. Support is \$5,000 per year for up to **two** years (maximum award of \$10,000) from the Graduate School, with an equal amount of matching funds required from the department for each year. Departmental support may consist of a fellowship or a fee-waiver qualifying teaching or research assistantship.

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 graduate students from underrepresented ethnic minority populations (African American, Native American or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Mexican American). Recipients must be U.S. citizens and newly admitted – not enrolled in a graduate degree program at MU in the past three years – in a master’s degree program in any field. Support is \$5,000 for each of two years (maximum award \$10,000) from the Graduate School, with an equal amount of matching funds required from the department in that year or the subsequent year of study. Departmental support may consist of a fellowship or a fee-waiver qualifying teaching or research assistantship.

Peace Corps Fellowships Program: This fellowship provides a stipend of \$7,000 for two years to a returned Peace Corps Volunteer to study for a master’s degree in one of these five programs: Social Work, Rural Sociology, the Truman School for Public Affairs, Geography, or Political Science. The \$7,000 fellowship will be matched by at least \$5,000 in fellowship or assistantship support by the nominating program. Please contact the coordinator, Dr. Don Spiers, for further information (spiersd@missouri.edu).

Other Sources of Support for Graduate Students

Curators Grant-in-Aid (GIA) Scholarships are designed to assist international students, especially those who have unanticipated and/or unusual financial needs that can affect their academic progress. Applicants must be enrolled as full-time students in a degree program, be in good academic standing, have completed at least one full semester at MU, and be able to pay for costs other than educational fees. Each Curator’s GIA Award consists of a waiver of all educational fees for a total of up to nine credit hours for fall or winter semester courses but does not include incidental fees or summer session enrollments. Because of the limited number of awards, students should seek other sources of funding. Further information and applications are available from the International Center, N52 Memorial Union, Columbia, MO 65211 (<http://international.missouri.edu/scholarships/gia/>).

Extramural Funding Programs

The MU Graduate School 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 Graduate School maintains a Web-based database of external funding opportunities at <http://gradschool.missouri.edu/financial/assistantships-fellowships/fellowships/external/fellows>. In addition to financial support, winners of external fellowships receive a waiver of educational fees and a medical insurance subsidy option, unless the award program from the funding organization is designed to cover such costs.

Departmental Support

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

Departmental Assistantships: Approximately 1,800 graduate teaching and research assistantships from departments and area programs are available to graduate students. For the academic year 2010-2011, stipends for quarter-time, nine-month appointments are expected to be at least \$4,903. If a student receives an assistantship, he or she may be eligible for a waiver of educational fees through the Graduate Student Support Program (GSSP), described above.