

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL PRESIDENTIAL FELLOWSHIP 2008/2009

Program

Description and objectives: The Presidential Fellowship is funded by the President of the University and awarded by The Graduate School. This highly competitive award is the most prestigious fellowship awarded by Northwestern. Recipients of the Presidential Fellowship become part of Northwestern University's Society of Fellows. The fellowship will be awarded to candidates who combine outstanding intellectual or creative ability with the capacity to play an active part in the life of the Society. The Society of Fellows meets twice per quarter and enables stellar students from across the university to have interdisciplinary interactions with their peers in other fields. The goal is to create future leaders who are enthusiastic and literate about the broad scholarship of the university. All Presidential Fellows must participate in the Society of Fellows functions; an exception is made for students not in residence at the time of Society meetings. Applications are by nomination only.

Award amount: The fellowship will provide the appropriate tuition payment (at the 588, 599, or 503 rate) and a monthly stipend. Students who are already supported by external fellowships are eligible to be nominated for, and awarded, an honorific Presidential Fellowship. An honorific Presidential Fellowship carries no monetary award; however, the honoree participates in all activities of the Society of Fellows.

Award period: The Presidential Fellowship is a 24-month award for PhD students and a 12-month award for MFA students, beginning in fall quarter 2008.

Eligibility: At the time of nomination, PhD applicants must have completed an approved dissertation proposal. The award is contingent upon admission to PhD candidacy by fall quarter 2008. By the beginning of the award period, PhD Fellows must be registered for TGS 599 Post-candidacy Research or 503 Resident Research Continuation. By the beginning of the award period, MFA Fellows must have completed all residency requirements and be registered for 588 Resident Master's Study. Students who are on an extension of the deadline for the completion of all MFA or PhD requirements are not eligible for a Presidential Fellowship. Students who have had an Alumnae Dissertation Fellowship, Dissertation Year Fellowship (DYF) or a Weinberg Dissertation Fellowship are not eligible for a Presidential Fellowship.

Department approval: Electronic submission of an application by the designated department or program person (see below) constitutes confirmation that the application has been vetted and endorsed by the department or program. Nominations may only be made by departments or graduate programs, which may nominate one or two applicants, depending on size. The departments/programs eligible to nominate two students are: Biomedical Engineering, Chemical and Biological Engineering, Chemistry, Economics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, History, IBiS, IGP, Material Science and Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, NUIN, Physics and Astronomy, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology. All other departments/programs may nominate one student. Departments should nominate only those applicants who will be competitive in university-wide competition. Departments that choose not to nominate the maximum allowable

number of applicants in one year will not suffer a reduction of allowable nominations the following year. Applications in excess of the maximum will not be considered.

Deadline and Notification dates: Check with the department in which you are enrolled for the department deadline. Departments should set their own deadlines such that nominated students will receive feedback and have time to revise applications for form, substance, and clarity prior to final submission to The Graduate School. The deadline for departments to submit nominees' applications to The Graduate School is 12:00 noon on Friday, October 19, 2007. The announcement of 2008/09 Presidential Fellowship recipients will be made in December 2007.

Review Process

Review process: The Presidential Fellowship Committee will review all nominees and select a group of finalists to interview during the week of December 3, 2007.

Nomination process

The materials described below must be collected into a single pdf file and submitted by the designated TGS nominator for your department/program.

Applications must include all required materials and adhere to all page, font, and format restrictions. Do **not** include materials other than those requested. Applications that do not comply with these instructions will not be considered for an award.

Materials required: The required materials are to be submitted in the following order:

1. The completed application form.
2. Abstract. A short description in lay terms of the nature of the research or creative work and its implications, **not to exceed one page**. The abstract must be double-spaced and in Times New Roman 12-pt. font.
3. A description of the research or creative work, **not to exceed five pages**. The description must be double-spaced and in Times New Roman 12-pt font. The description should be in narrative form, clearly focused, and organized. The narrative should encompass all dimensions of the student's work and not be limited to the thesis or dissertation only. Questions that might guide students in writing this description include: What is the likely impact of their work on knowledge and research within their field of study? What are the interdisciplinary implications? In what ways is the work innovative or original? What is the student's trajectory beyond the degree? The description should be written in plain language, free of jargon. Committee members who evaluate applications may not have a specialized knowledge of an applicant's area of study. Endnotes, bibliography, or pictures do not count toward the 5-page limit, but these may not exceed a total of two additional pages.
4. A curriculum vitae including education, professional experience, awards, presentations, publications, and professional memberships.
5. Two letters of recommendation. One letter of recommendation from the department or program should describe the outstanding qualities of both the nominee and his or her research or creative work. The Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, or other designated faculty member can write this letter on behalf of the department or program. The second letter of recommendation is to be from the faculty member best qualified to comment upon the student's scholarship and research goals (usually the student's advisor). Both letters should address the following: the qualities that set this

student apart from others in the department or program; the significance of the scholarly or creative research to thought and knowledge (within the discipline or across disciplines); and how the nominee would contribute to the Society of Fellows. Applicants should provide recommenders with a copy of the Presidential Fellowship Guidelines for Writers of Recommendation Letters (below). Letters of recommendation should **not exceed two single-spaced pages** each.

6. An unofficial Northwestern transcript. An unofficial Northwestern transcript. Unofficial transcripts may be obtained from CAESAR. After logging in to CAESAR, you can view your unofficial transcript by selecting “For Students” → “Academic Information” → “View Unofficial Transcript.” Once the transcript is displayed, select “Switch to printer-friendly view” at the top of the screen. To save your unofficial transcript as an electronic document, copy and paste the entire transcript into a Word (or equivalent) file.
7. A sample of research or creative work in electronic format. This could be a scholarly article, conference paper, review article or work of art such as a series of images (no more than 10) of traditional artwork, a musical composition, a website, or a film (no longer than 15 minutes). Samples that cannot be embedded in a text document, such as sound or video clips, must be made available on the web; the student should write a one-page statement describing the work(s) and provide URL(s) so that the committee members can access the work(s). Dissertation proposals, dissertation chapters, and qualifying exams are not acceptable samples.

Nominee’s responsibilities: The student applying for the fellowship should prepare items 1-4 and 6-7 above as electronic documents and provide these to the designated nominator for the department or program. The student should provide his or her advisor or other faculty member with the Guidelines for Writers of Recommendation Letters (below). The student is responsible for asking the faculty member to prepare the recommendation letter in electronic form and deliver it to the designated nominator.

Department nominator’s responsibilities: The designated department or program nominator is responsible for assembling all the documents, including the two letters of recommendation and the nominee’s unofficial transcript, into a single pdf file and submitting the application/nomination to The Graduate School through the web interface. Departments must indicate on the application whether the nominee is to be considered for a funded or unfunded Presidential Fellowship.

Instructions for web site: Each department or program should have a designated person who submits the pdf file through the web interface. This would normally be the Chair, Director of Graduate Studies or Program Assistant. This person should contact Bill Rett, IT Manager for The Graduate School, for access to the system or for other technical related questions (491-8538, w-rett@northwestern.edu). For other questions, please contact Mary Pat Doyle (847/491-8497, mdoyle@northwestern.edu).

To submit the application the nominator should go to <https://fellowships.gsad.northwestern.edu> and use her/his current netid and password to log into the site. After logging in, the designated submitter should fill in the data fields requested and click “Browse” to select the assembled pdf file. For Program, select the Academic Program that is nominating the student. For Award, select the correct competition the student is being nominated for. When everything is complete, click the “Submit Application” button at the bottom of the page.

Northwestern University Presidential Fellowship Guidelines for Writers of Recommendation Letters

- At the top of your letter write the applicant's name and department.
- Include your full name and title.
- Return the recommendation letter in electronic form to the designated nominator in the student's department or program.

Check with the student's department or program for the deadline for receipt of your letter. Letters must be included with the completed electronic version of the application, which the designated nominator will submit as a single pdf file. Nominated applications must be submitted to The Graduate School by 12:00 noon on Friday October 19, 2007.

Please provide an assessment of the applicant's knowledge and abilities as well as of the dissertation project. Keep in mind that committee members who may not have a specialized knowledge of an applicant's area of study will evaluate applications.

It is assumed that the nominees for Presidential Fellowships are among the best in the university and that their research is also of outstanding quality. Thus, while your recommendation letter will undoubtedly address criteria 1 and 2, it is crucial that your letter also address the other criteria. Your recommendation may also include other comments about the applicant and the dissertation project that you consider helpful to the Presidential Fellowship Committee in carrying out its review, but please **limit your recommendation to no more than 2 single-spaced pages** in Times New Roman 12-point font.

Criteria:

1. Significance of the dissertation topic to thought and knowledge in the applicant's discipline.
2. Originality, creativity and contribution of the student to the dissertation and the research field.
3. Breadth of student's scholarly interests, particularly breadth that extends outside the student's discipline.
4. Potential for the student to contribute to a community of outstanding scholars from the entire spectrum of disciplines at Northwestern University.
5. Potential for the student to enrich the student's department and discipline by exposure to and interaction with the other Presidential Fellows.
6. Potential for the student to use the experiences as a Presidential Fellow for the enrichment of society and academia in general as well as the student's own discipline after graduation.

PRESIDENTIAL FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION CHECKLIST
2008/2009 ACADEMIC YEAR

The following materials must be submitted to The Graduate School, in the order given, as a single pdf file:

- The completed PF application form.
- The abstract of the research or creative work. (**1 page**).
- Description of the research or creative work. (**5 pages**).
- A curriculum vitae that includes education, fieldwork, awards, presentations, publications, professional memberships and professional experience.
- Two letters of recommendation: one from the nominating department or program and one from the faculty member most familiar with the student's scholarship and research goals (normally the advisor).
- An unofficial Northwestern transcript.
- A sample of creative work; or, if the sample has been made available on the web, a one-page statement describing the work(s) and providing the relevant URL(s)

Department/program nominator: Submit the single pdf application file on the web at <https://fellowships.gsad.northwestern.edu> by 12:00 noon on Friday, October 19, 2007.