

November 1, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans
Graduate Operations Committee
Department Heads
Graduate Advisors
Interdisciplinary Degree Program Chairs

FROM: Mark J. Zoran, Ph.D.
Acting Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies

**SUBJECT: Call for Nominations
Texas A&M University Graduate Diversity Fellowship – February 2, 2018**

I am pleased to announce a call for nominations of prospective graduate students for the 2018-2019 TAMU Graduate Diversity Fellowship. This fellowship provides an excellent opportunity for departments to recruit diverse, outstanding students to their graduate programs. The fellowship selection committee understands that each department would like to secure as many awards as possible, but due to the limited amount of funds, we ask that each department nominate only their best prospective students for consideration. *The early deadline is required in order to provide timely competitive offers to outstanding prospective students who are also being recruited by our peer institutions.*

The fellowship will use the Internet Grant Proposal System (see attached sheets for instructions) for nomination submission and review. Nominations can originate from the faculty member who will serve as the incoming student's academic advisor (if identified) or from others such as Department Graduate Program Directors, Department Heads or Program Chairs.

Only U.S. citizens or permanent residents seeking entry to master's or doctoral programs at TAMU will be eligible for this award. To be eligible, the prospective student must be graduating with a bachelor's or master's degree no later than August 2018, so that he/she can begin graduate work at TAMU in Summer or Fall 2018. Nominees must have submitted an application for graduate admission to Texas A&M by the date of their nomination in order to be considered for the fellowship. We believe this demonstrates the student's genuine interest in attending Texas A&M and will decrease the number of declined awards. Students do not have to be admitted at the time of nomination. However, should a student be awarded the fellowship, the nominating department will be expected to admit the student. This understanding will prevent the offering of a fellowship to a student that is later denied admission by the nominating department. Attached to this memo are fellowship nomination guidelines as well as the evaluation criteria that will be used by reviewers in evaluating nominees for these fellowships.

Immediate contact following notification of award with high-quality students is crucial for success. OGAPS will coordinate with the department and college to follow up each offer with a personal email, phone calls, and additional contacts in an effort to improve our acceptance rates.

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In addition to meeting the stated criteria of eligibility, nominees for the 2018-2019 Diversity Fellowship must be applying for enrollment in the following colleges/schools or interdisciplinary programs.

1. Colleges/Schools of: Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture, Bush School, Education and Human Development, Dwight Look College of Engineering, Mays Business School, Geosciences, Liberal Arts, Science, or Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.
2. Interdisciplinary programs of: Agribusiness and Managerial Economics, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Marine Biology at TAMU – College Station, Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences, Genetics, Neuroscience, Toxicology, or Water Management and Hydrological Science.

Fellowship details may be found at <http://ogaps.tamu.edu/Buttons/Funding-Opportunities/Graduate-Diversity-Fellowships>. If you have any problems with or questions regarding the submission process, contact OGAPS-fellowship-admin@tamu.edu or call 845-3631. For general questions about fellowship requirements, contact Dr. Rosana Moreira, Assistant Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies, at 845-3631.

I look forward to working closely with you, as we continue on our journey to increase the quality and diversity of our graduate student population at Texas A&M University.

Attachments

Pc: Dr. Carol Fierke
College Business Administrators

Texas A&M University Graduate Diversity Fellowship 2018-2019 Nomination Guidelines

Deadline for submission: 5 p.m., Friday, February 2, 2018

Diversity at Texas A&M University is an indispensable component of academic excellence. The TAMU Graduate Diversity Fellowship seeks to increase the diversity of the graduate student population at Texas A&M University and to support the development of high achieving scholars who show promise of distinguished careers and whose life and research experiences and/or employment background will contribute significantly to academic excellence at TAMU and maximize educational benefits of diversity for all students. **Nominees must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents.** In addition, the prospective student **must be graduating with a bachelor's or master's degree no later than August 2018**, so that he/she can begin graduate work at TAMU in Summer or Fall 2018. Although students starting their graduate programs in Summer 2018 are eligible for nomination, fellowship funding will not begin until Fall 2018. **Master's students currently enrolled at TAMU are eligible for nomination for a doctoral Diversity Fellowship.** Nominees must have submitted an application for graduate admission to Texas A&M by the date of their nomination for this fellowship. The nominating program must plan to admit the nominated student should he/she be selected as a Diversity Fellow.

To address the goal of increasing diversity at Texas A&M, eligible nominees may be from minority groups that historically have been under-represented at TAMU and/or in their profession; may be first generation college graduates (neither parent earned a bachelor's degree); or may be persons with disabilities or veterans. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. **Nominations should include a diversity statement and relevant supporting data and narrative about the basis of the nominee's eligibility regarding these markers of diversity.** For example, if females are underrepresented in electrical engineering, data provided should show the percentage of women in electrical engineering, in their department/program and/or profession.

In addition to meeting the stated criteria of eligibility, nominees for the 2018-2019 Diversity Fellowship must be applying for enrollment in the following colleges/schools or interdisciplinary programs.

1. Colleges/Schools of: Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture, Bush School, Education and Human Development, Dwight Look College of Engineering, Mays Business School, Geosciences, Liberal Arts, Science, or Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.
2. Interdisciplinary programs of: Agribusiness and Managerial Economics, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Marine Biology at TAMU – College Station, Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences, Genetics, Neuroscience, Toxicology, or Water Management and Hydrological Science.

The Doctoral Diversity Fellowship provides four years of funding for domestic doctoral students enrolling for the first time in a doctoral program in Summer or Fall 2018. OGAPS will provide an \$18,000 stipend per year for three years and up to \$10,000 per year for tuition and fees for three years, with the nominating department mandated to provide an assistantship* of a minimum of 25 % FTE at the

department's standard assistantship rate for three years. If the department provided assistantship is 50% FTE, it **must** also include payment for health insurance equivalent to the student health insurance plan. If the department provided assistantship is 25% FTE, OGAPS will provide reimbursement to the student for the cost of personal health insurance coverage equivalent to the student health insurance plan.

Also matching funding, at a minimum equivalent to the 50% FTE standard assistantship rate for the nominating department and tuition payment in year 4 is required from the nominating department and/or faculty.

The Master's Diversity Fellowship provides two years of funding for domestic master's students enrolling for the first time in a master's program in Summer or Fall 2018. OGAPS will provide a \$13,000 stipend per year for two years and up to \$10,000 for tuition and fees per year for two years, with the nominating department mandated to provide an assistantship* of a minimum of 25 % FTE at the department's standard assistantship rate. If the department provided assistantship is 50% FTE, it **must** also include payment for health insurance equivalent to the student health insurance plan. If the department provided assistantship is 25% FTE, OGAPS will provide reimbursement to the student for the cost of personal health insurance coverage equivalent to the student health insurance plan.

For both the master's and doctoral level awards, work effort for the assistantship should be consistent with FTE (e.g. standard work effort for 25% FTE equals 10 hours/week).

[*Some exceptions may be approved by OGAPS for a department/program to offer a scholarship instead of an assistantship. The scholarship, at a minimum, must be equivalent to a 25% FTE at the department's standard assistantship rate. **In those cases, the department/program must also provide payment for the student health insurance plan.** *The request to offer a scholarship instead of an assistantship must be submitted to and approved by OGAPS **before** the nomination is submitted.*]

It is essential that Graduate Diversity Fellowship recipients be given ample opportunities for success and integration into the culture of their respective department early in their campus residence.

As part of the nomination process, nominators must submit the student's Apply Texas application materials and a two-page letter of nomination that provides an evaluation of the applicant's 1) past superior academic performance, 2) relevant experiences outside the classroom, and 3) other indicators of future success; and, finally, 4) how this applicant can contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program and to his/her future profession. **Attached you will find a checklist of items that MUST be included when you submit your nomination packet. Reviewing these now will assist you as you prepare for the IGPS submittal process. The deadline for submitting Diversity Fellowship nominations is 5 p.m., February 2, 2018.**

Reviewers will consider the Master's and Doctoral nominations separately. Nominations will be automatically forwarded to appropriate department and college personnel for approval. The award selection committee will complete their review by February 19th, and the official award letters will be distributed shortly thereafter. Nominators, graduate advisors, department heads and graduate deans will be notified of

which applicants have been selected for the Diversity Fellowship. **In our effort to distribute comprehensive financial packages, we will include funding details provided in the *Financial Commitment Template* of the faculty/department's financial obligation within the OGAPS fellowship award letter.**

2018-2019 TAMU Graduate Diversity Fellowship Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will consider all aspects of the applicant's experiences in the evaluation process with a focus on academic achievement and, in addition, how the applicant will contribute to the overall diversity of the University. Specifically, reviewers will consider the following elements:

- **How this applicant can contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program or university, and to his/her future profession:** nominee may be from minority groups that historically have been under-represented at TAMU and/or in their profession; may be first generation college graduates (neither parent earned a bachelor's degree); or may be persons with disabilities or veterans. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.
- **Evidence of superior academic achievement** such as class rank; GPA; quality of undergraduate institution; honors or other awards; etc.
- **Relevant experiences outside of the classroom** such as extracurricular experience related to course of study; leadership experiences; work experiences; military experience; internships; personal history; international experiences (i.e., study abroad, semester at sea, etc.); research experiences (either at their own university or in summer undergraduate research opportunities at other universities); oral or poster presentations; publications; etc.
- **Letters of recommendation**

DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP NOMINATOR CHECKLIST

DIVERSITY FELLOW nominators ***MUST submit the following items online to IGPS and MUST submit in the correct database....one is for prospective MASTER'S students and the other for prospective DOCTORAL students:***

For Master's and Doctoral nominations of students NOT currently enrolled at TAMU

1. Entry fields regarding nominee
2. Completed nomination letter clearly describing how this student's application meets all of the criteria regarding selection for the Diversity Fellowship (**no more than two (2) pages**).
3. Diversity statement written by the nominator about how the applicant contributes to diversity in the nominating department/program and/or his/her future profession (**no more than one (1) page**).
4. Three (3) references for the student.
5. Completed **Financial Commitment Template** noting the department/program's financial offer to complement the Diversity Fellowship benefits.
6. Student's resume or curriculum vitae.
7. Apply Texas Application materials (eg. application, transcripts, etc.).

Items 2-7 should be saved in one (1) pdf file, in the order noted, and uploaded into the IGPS submission system.

For Doctoral nomination of students currently enrolled at TAMU Master's

1. Entry fields regarding nominee
2. Completed nomination letter clearly describing how this student's application meets all of the criteria regarding selection for the Diversity Fellowship (**no more than two (2) pages**).
3. Diversity statement written by the nominator about how the applicant contributes to diversity in the nominating department/program and/or his/her future profession (**no more than one (1) page**).
4. Two (2) **new** reference letters for the student (**no more than four (4) total pages**).
5. Completed **Financial Commitment Template** noting the department/program's financial offer to complement the Diversity Fellowship benefits.
6. Student's resume or curriculum vitae.
7. Copy of undergraduate degree transcript.
8. Copy of TAMU master's degree transcript.

Items 2-8 should be saved in one (1) pdf file, in the order noted, and uploaded into the IGPS submission system.

**2018-2019 DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP AWARD
FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TEMPLATE (MASTER'S)**

Nominating Department/Program: _____

Student nominee: _____ **UIN:** _____

Nominator's printed name: _____ **Nominator's signature:** _____

Year	Departmental/Program Contribution (Assistantship or approved scholarship)	% FTE (min of 25%)	Monthly Amount	Insurance required (if approved scholarship) Yes or No	Duration of Commitment (9 or 12 months)	Annual Amount of assistantship or scholarship
1*						
2*						
TOTAL						

**Required*

2018-2019 DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP AWARD
FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TEMPLATE (DOCTORAL)

Nominating Department/Program: _____

Student nominee: _____ **UIN:** _____

Nominator's printed name: _____ **Nominator's signature:** _____

Year	Departmental/Program Contribution (Assistantship)	% FTE (min of 25%)	Monthly Amount	Duration of Commitment (9 or 12 months)	Annual Amount of Assistantship
1-3*					
Year	Departmental/Program Contribution (Assistantship)	% FTE (min of 50%)	Monthly Amount	Duration of Commitment (9 or 12 months)	Annual Amount of Assistantship
4*					
Year	Departmental/Program Contribution (Assistantship)	% FTE	Monthly Amount	Duration of Commitment (9 or 12 months)	Annual Amount of Assistantship
5**					
TOTAL					

* Required | ** If Applicable