Texas A&M University Fellowships
2015-2016 Nomination Guidelines

TAMU Graduate Diversity Fellowship
Deadline for submission: 5 p.m., Friday, February 6, 2015

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 2015, so that he/she can begin graduate work at TAMU in Summer or Fall 2015. Although students starting their graduate programs in Summer 2015 are eligible for nomination, fellowship funding will not begin until Fall 2015. 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. Eligible applicants might be from minority groups that historically have been under-represented at TAMU and/or in their profession; might have overcome socioeconomic or other educational disadvantages; might be first generation college graduates (neither parent earned a bachelor’s degree); might be persons with disabilities, or veterans; or will work on scholarly topics related to diversity and inclusion. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Nominations should include a brief statement about the basis of your applicant’s eligibility regarding these markers of diversity.

The Diversity Fellowship provides funding for domestic doctoral students enrolling for the first time in a doctoral program in Summer or Fall 2015 in the amount of $103,800 over a 3-year period. The fellowship provides an $18,000 stipend per year for three years, $9,000 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. If the department provided assistantship is 50% FTE, it must also include payment for health insurance equivalent to the student health insurance plan.

Matching funding, at a minimum equivalent to the standard assistantship level for the nominating department, and tuition payment in year 4 is required from the department and/or faculty.

The Diversity Fellowship provides funding for domestic master’s students enrolling for the first time in a master’s program in Summer or Fall 2015 in the amount of $59,200 over a 2-year period. This includes a $13,000 stipend per year for two years, $9,000 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.
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). Since assistantships less than 50% FTE are not benefit eligible, OGAPS will provide reimbursement to the student for the cost of personal health insurance coverage equivalent to the student health insurance plan.

[*Some exceptions may be approved by OGAPS for a department/program to offer a scholarship instead of an assistantship. 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. Should the student be awarded the Fellowship, the faculty and/or department will be required to develop an individualized mentoring plan, stipulating how the mentor will guide this Diversity Fellow to achieve success in his/her academic program while integrating the Fellow into the local academic community, by the end of the first year of the fellowship.

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 6, 2015.

Reviewers will consider the Master’s and Doctoral nominations separately. Nominations will automatically be forwarded to appropriate department and college personnel for approval. The award selection committee will complete their review by February 27th, 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 a copy of the faculty/department’s financial commitment along with the OGAPS fellowship award letter.

Please be prepared to provide a copy of the faculty/departmental offer letter, when notified, around March 3, 2015. For award offers made prior to this date that are (1) greater than or equal to the required minimum, submit a copy to OGAPS; or (2) less than the required minimum, submit a revised offer letter to OGAPS.
GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

2015-2016 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:

- **Evidence of superior academic achievement** such as class rank; GPA; standardized test scores, quality of undergraduate program; 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**

- **How this applicant can contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program or university, and to his/her future profession**: applicant might be from minority groups that historically have been under-represented at TAMU and/or in their profession (if nomination is based on underrepresentation, please provide data to substantiate); might have overcome socioeconomic or other educational disadvantages; might be first generation college graduates (neither parent earned a bachelor’s degree); might be persons with disabilities, or veterans; or will work on scholarly topics related to diversity and inclusion. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.
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. Statement written by the nominator about how this applicant can contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program and to his/her future profession (no more than one (1) page).
4. Three (3) references for the student.
5. A statement of financial support (assistantships/scholarships, with $ amounts) that the department/program plans to offer this candidate to complement the Diversity Fellowship benefits.
6. Student’s resume or curriculum vitae (no more than four (4) pages).
7. Apply Texas Application materials.

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. Statement written by the nominator about how this applicant can contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program and to 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. A statement of financial support (assistantships/scholarships, with $ amounts) that the department/program plans to offer this candidate to complement the Diversity Fellowship benefits.
6. Student’s resume or curriculum vitae (no more than four (4) pages).
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.