

## Graduate Research Fellowship Awards for 2025 – 2026 NOMINATION DUE DATES:

**February 19, 2025 by 5:00 pm for 1<sup>st</sup>-year nominations**

**February 19, 2025 for continuing student self-nominations**

**Purpose:** Approximately \$70,000 (depending on F&A distribution) annually is set aside for Graduate Research Fellowship awards. The fellowships are merit-based awards that contribute to educating graduate students and moving the university research mission forward. The awards are to be used to recruit and retain outstanding graduate students. We have 2 categories of Graduate Research Fellowship Awards:

1. Continuing Graduate Student Research Fellowship (\$6,000/year): Current UCCS graduate students apply through the UCCS Scholarship portal ([see Financial Aid Scholarship page for information](#)) by February 19.
2. First-Year Graduate Student Research Fellowship (\$6,000/year): Programs nominate incoming graduate students who will be admitted Summer 2025 or Fall 2025.

**Requirements:** Awards are conferred to incoming or returning graduate students with outstanding academic records. Priority is given to those graduate students who have identified a UCCS faculty mentor who will work with him/her on a research/creative product (e.g., thesis, publication, grant proposal, scholarly presentation, art showing, etc.). The student must be fully admitted to and active in (at time award is dispersed) an on-campus graduate program to be eligible for the fellowship. Awards are made for one year and will be dispersed equally between fall and spring semesters. If the graduate student fails to meet the enrollment requirement, the fellowship is forfeited. Priority will be given to students who have not received this award in the past; but all students are eligible for this award.

**Graduate Research Academy:** The Graduate School and Center for Student Research have created a Graduate Research Academy. Students who receive a Graduate Research Fellowship will be members of the Academy. Academy members will receive invitations to research events. A letter of Academy membership will be given to students (who can list this on their vita). Students must sign up to be a member of the Center for Student Research (free); events are optional opportunities for students to attend.

**Awards:** Each graduate research fellowship is a \$6,000 award for an academic year (\$3,000/semester). The number of awards will be based on the amount of money available each year in the Graduate Research Fellowship account (dependent on ICR from grant funding). For the 2025-2026 year we expect to have \$70,000, allowing for 12 awards across the two nomination types.

Although the distribution between 1<sup>st</sup> year and continuing student fellowships will depend on the number of nominations/applications we receive in each fellowship, based on the past 2 years we expect there to be about 30-40% of awards going to first-year students and 60-70% going to continuing students.

In order to make the distribution of funds equitable, any one department may receive up to 33% of total funding available in a given year. This fellowship is an important recruitment and retention tool and can especially help with nonresident tuition; please consider nominating your outstanding applicants.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Nominees/applicants will be evaluated by graduate faculty appointed by each college's dean (with appropriate representation across colleges and individual departments not having more than one representative). Evaluators will submit their ratings to the Graduate Dean who will make the final awards based on these ratings and limits on department awardees. All nominees/applicants will be evaluated on the following attributes:

1. Quality/Strength of past academic record/qualifications. A student's particular achievements will be evaluated based on their current level/stage of their academic career (e.g., MA vs. PhD; new student vs. advanced student). Evaluators may also consider quality/strength of past programs when evaluating a student's record.
2. Quality/Strength of the student's statement about the role research will play in their education and their career. May use a Graduate School application goal statement for new students. Continuing students will write an essay. **This should not be a full research proposal.**
3. Quality/Strength of letter of recommendation from UCCS faculty mentor, including clear evidence of their commitment to have a research/creative interaction with the student related to the student's stated research idea, project, or creative work.
4. Quality/Strength of letter of recommendation from another faculty member and/or professional mentor who has knowledge of the student's previous experiences and future potential, including clear evidence of scholarly/professional accomplishments.
5. Quality/Strength of other factors that may influence success in graduate school.

**Process: The process will depend on whether the candidate is competing for the First Year Graduate Student Research Fellowship or the Continuing Graduate Student Research Fellowship.**

***Continuing Graduate Student Research Fellowship:***

- Students apply directly through the student scholarship portal ([see Financial Aid Scholarship page for information](#)) by February 19. For 2025-2026 scholarships, the scholarship portal opens January 1.
- Students complete the general scholarship application and write an essay on the role of research in their graduate education and career goals.
- One letter of recommendation from a UCCS faculty member who is willing to work with the student on research speaking to student's qualifications in research and committing to working with student in upcoming research. The faculty member will receive a request for a letter of recommendation from the scholarship portal.
- One letter of recommendation from a faculty member or professional who has knowledge of the student's previous experiences and future potential, including clear evidence of scholarly/professional accomplishments. The faculty member will receive a request for a letter of recommendation from the scholarship portal.

***First year Graduate Student Research Fellowship:***

- The nomination process is initiated by the graduate director. Each department submits a nominating letter listing all first-year admitted students being nominated from the department, as well as a separate nomination packet for each student. Only one nominating letter per department should be sent. Submit all files electronically (paper files are not accepted).
- Only applicants who are admitted for starting terms of Summer 2025 or Fall 2025 should

be nominated (other students should complete the continuing graduate student research fellowship). Each individual student nomination packet should include **in the following order** (this order helps the reviewers easily look at the files):

- Two letters of support:
    - One supporting letter from a UCCS faculty mentor is required. This letter should speak to the students' qualifications and should specifically outline how the faculty mentor will work with the student on a research/creative product. Please make sure that the undergraduate GPA and the undergraduate college/university is evident in this letter.
    - An additional supporting letter from another faculty member and/or professional mentor who has knowledge of the students' previous experiences and future potential is also required. A letter of recommendation submitted with the graduate students' initial application to graduate school may be used.  
Note: No additional letters of support should be added.
  - A statement from the student nominee should briefly outline their goals for graduate school. The student's statement may include a description of research interests/experiences, or an example of a specific research idea, graduate project, or creative work to be completed. This statement can be from the student's original application packet if your department requests such a document. This statement should be no longer than 500 words. This is not a complete proposal for a research project but rather is about a students' research goals while at UCCS.
  - Graduate School Application form (not all supporting documents) plus a copy of unofficial transcripts or a transcript copied by the department (e.g., from grad application materials). This is needed because not all reviewers have access to applications through OnBase.
- Nominations should be received in the Graduate School by 5:00 pm on February 19, 2025.
  - The Graduate School will notify the students, departments, and the financial aid office about the award.
  - The funds are paid through financial aid to the student's account. If a student has a negative balance, the funds will be used to cover the balance.

**Submission of Nominations for First-year Graduate Student Research Fellowship:** Deadlines will be strictly followed. An incomplete nomination or a nomination turned in later than the deadline will not be accepted. Please submit one PDF with the nominating letter (all students being nominated by the department can be listed in one letter) and a single PDF with **all** materials for **each** individual student to the Graduate School ([graddocs@uccs.edu](mailto:graddocs@uccs.edu)) **by 5:00 pm on February 19, 2024**. Please put materials in order listed above. The student file should be named with the student's last name and department in the file name (e.g., Jones\_Business.pdf). Any questions related to the nomination and evaluation process should be directed to [graddocs@uccs.edu](mailto:graddocs@uccs.edu)