

The Graduate School *Graduate Research Fellowships* Nomination Process

NOMINATION DUE DATE: February 24, 2021 by 5:00 pm

Purpose: Approximately \$70,000 (depending on ICR 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.

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. Students who have received this award in the past are not eligible for an additional award.

Graduate Research Academy: The Research Office has created a Graduate Student Research Academy. Students who receive the Graduate Research Fellowship will be members of the Academy. Academy members will be eligible to receive a [\\$400 Research and Professional Development award](#) (students must request the funds). Academy members will receive invitations to other research events. A letter of academy membership will be given to students (who can list this on their vita). Events are optional opportunities for students to attend.

Awards: Each graduate research fellowship is a \$5,000 award. The number of awards will be based on the amount of money available each year in the Graduate Research Fellowship account. For the 2021-2022 year we currently expect to have \$80,000, allowing for 16 awards. Departments are limited to eight

(8) graduate student nominations. In order to make the distribution of funds equitable, any one department may receive up to 33% of money available in a given year (i.e., 5 awards in 2021-2022). This fellowship is an important recruitment tool and can especially help with nonresident tuition; please consider nominating your outstanding applicants.

Evaluation Criteria: Nominees will be evaluated by graduate faculty appointed by each college's dean (with appropriate representative 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 will be evaluated on the following attributes (there is not a rubric):

1. Quality/Strength of past academic record/qualifications (e.g., GPA, senior thesis, publications, presentations, awards, grants, etc.). A student's particular achievements will be evaluated here based on their currently 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, including an example of a specific research idea, graduate project, or creative work to be completed. May use a graduate school application statement, especially for new students, or have a student submit a document. This should not be a full research proposal.

3. Quality/Strength of letter of recommendation from UCCS faculty mentor, including clear evidence of 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: Graduate students do not “apply” for the fellowship like other financial aid or scholarships. Instead the program nominates a student following this process:

1. The nomination process is initiated by graduate director. Each department submits a nominating letter listing all applicants from the department, as well as a separate nomination packet for each student. Only one nominating letter per department needs to be sent. All materials should be sent electronically (paper files are not accepted).
2. Each individual student nomination packet should include **in the following order** (this order helps the reviewers easily look at the files):
 - a. Two letters of support:
 - i. 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 (or the UCCS Graduate GPA if the student is a returning UCCS graduate student).
 - ii. 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 for new students or students who have been at UCCS for less than 2 years.
Note: No additional letters of support should be added.
 - b. A statement from the student nominee should briefly outline 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.
 - c. Graduate 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).
3. Nominations should be received in the Graduate School by **5:00 pm on February 24, 2021**.
4. The Graduate School will notify the students, departments, and the financial aid office about the award.
5. The funds are paid through financial aid to student's account. If a student has a balance the funds will be used to cover the balance.

Submission of Nominations: 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 and a single PDF with **all** materials for each individual student to the Graduate School (GradDocs@uccs.edu) **by 5:00 pm on February 24, 2021**. Please put materials in order listed above. The nomination 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 Kelli Klebe at GradDocs@uccs.edu.