

## TIPS ON APPLYING FOR GRADUATE COLLEGE FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

The Graduate College provides support to outstanding graduate students through a number of fellowship and grant programs. For all of the Graduate College awards, the students' departments must submit a nomination packet to the Graduate College. Some of the awards are only available for incoming students, while some of them are available for current students. The list below provides some general tips for departments and students to assist in the nomination process.

☞ Read the Graduate College *Fellowship Bulletin*.

- The major Graduate College competitions are described in detail in the first *Fellowship Bulletin* of each academic year, which appears in August. The *Bulletin* is available via the Graduate College Web site at [www.grad.uiuc.edu/fellowship/bulletin/fellbulletinGC.html](http://www.grad.uiuc.edu/fellowship/bulletin/fellbulletinGC.html). The *Bulletins* are published approximately once a month and list both campus and external fellowship opportunities. When a new *Bulletin* is posted on the Web site, graduate program directors and contacts are informed via an e-mail announcement.

☞ Make certain that the submission is complete, internally consistent, and arrives on or before the deadline.

- The program descriptions of the major Graduate College competitions summarize the nature of the competitions and provide information about how the nominations or proposals will be evaluated. The descriptions also list the materials that must be submitted for each competition. Questions about eligibility or the requirements for submission may be directed to the Graduate College Fellowship Office (333-0036). Late or incomplete nominations or proposals will not be considered unless extensions are granted prior to the deadline. Because the Fellowship Board tries to expedite its decision-making, extensions of more than 24 hours are rarely granted.
- Students, advisers, and departments should work together to ensure that the nominations or applications are internally consistent and accurately reflect the student's research project (where required) and academic progress.
- For research-related proposals, sufficient information should be provided about students' research projects so that readers can judge their significance, coherence, and feasibility.
- Questions about the mechanics of the proposal submission may be directed to the Graduate College Fellowship Office at 333-0036 or [gradfellowships@illinois.edu](mailto:gradfellowships@illinois.edu).

☞ Make the case for the nominees or proposals.

- For the major competitions, nominations or proposals are read first by one of the area committees, which are composed of faculty members from the disciplinary areas: Humanities and Creative Arts; Biological and Agricultural Sciences; Social and Behavioral Sciences; and Engineering and Physical Sciences. These committees select the finalists, whose files are forwarded to the Fellowship Board Executive Committee, where the actual selections are made. The Fellowship Board Executive Committee consists of the chairs of the area committees, the chair of the Minority Programs Committee, two graduate students, and the chair of the Fellowship Board. Nominations for Graduate College Fellowships for students from underrepresented groups are evaluated by the Minority Programs Area Committee, which is composed of minority faculty members from different areas of the campus.
- Departments can greatly strengthen their nominations by providing a cover letter from the unit executive officer, graduate program director, or other appropriate person to explain why the department is excited about nominating this individual, why the project is important, or why the proposal is important. Explain any aspects of a student's record that are esoteric or could be perceived as weak (low GRE scores, low grades at a particular time or in a particular subject, and so forth).