



President's Dissertation Year Fellowship AY 2015-16

Purpose

The President's Dissertation Year (PDY) Fellowship program is intended for students in their final year of graduate school who are planning to pursue teaching and research appointments soon after the end of their dissertation fellowship year. This award is intended to assist outstanding graduate students who will contribute to the diversity of the campus community with the completion of their dissertation. This award should also enhance their qualifications as candidates for university faculty teaching and research appointments.

Eligibility Requirements & Standards

- The program is open to all doctoral candidates who are advanced to candidacy at the time of completing their application, and who are in their final year of graduate study.
- PDY Fellowship applicants must be United States citizens, permanent residents or AB540 students.
- All applicants must have a minimum 3.0 GPA in their graduate studies at UC Merced, and be enrolled full-time during the award period.
- A student who has previously received a dissertation fellowship, or has received funding from other sources specifically for completing their dissertation work, is ineligible to receive a dissertation fellowship.
- PDY fellows are required to present a seminar on their dissertation research twice during the program year: once at an appropriate school/group function at UC Merced and once at a UC, CSU, or independent California university. Mentors are expected to assist the fellow in the arrangement of such presentations.
- PDY fellows and their faculty mentors are required to participate in a Regional Professional Development Luncheon, hosted in the Spring by the University of California Office of the President (UCOP). Travel to the UC Berkeley campus is required, and eligible travel expenses will be covered by the Graduate Division.
- UCOP requires the Graduate Division to monitor/track the progress and eventual job placement of all system-wide diversity fellowship recipients. Faculty, staff and students participating in this fellowship must comply with all requests for information from the Graduate Division.
- Preference will be given to applicants who have progressed according to their program's expected time-to-degree.
- Award recipients are expected to file their dissertation by July 31 after the award period, and will be required to submit a report of their progress towards dissertation completion to the Graduate Division by January 31 during the award period.
- Dissertation Year Fellows who have not filed their dissertations by July 31 of the end of the award year are **NOT** eligible for further financial support from the Graduate Division.
- Fellows are prohibited from being employed during the award period.
- The University of California, Merced is committed to the recruitment, admission, and retention of a high quality and diverse graduate student population, where diversity encompasses under-represented groups based on cultural, linguistic, geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Both students and faculty mentors are expected to participate in Graduate Division diversity

activities and efforts. In accordance with applicable state law, applicants to the program may not be given preferential treatment on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, religion or national origin.

Financial Support

- Up to two awards will be made each academic year.
- Recipients will receive a fellowship up to \$20,700, paid over a 9-month academic year period, plus payment of Graduate Fees (Resident Tuition, Student Services Fee and Health Services Fee), excluding Campus Based Fees.
- Reimbursable research allowance up to \$500 to be used within the award period, reimbursed as a fellowship to the student.
- Reimbursable travel allowance up to \$500, to be used within the award period, to support visits to another university for presentation of dissertation research. Reimbursed as a fellowship to the student.

Student Loan Impact

- Per federal guidelines, all fellowship and tuition support is taken into consideration when determining student loan eligibility. If you will receive federal student loans during the same academic year as this award, please note that this award could, and most likely will, reduce your student loan eligibility.

Application Procedures

- This application is open to all students who meet the eligibility criteria. All PDY dissertation year applications will also be considered for the Graduate Dean's Dissertation Year (GDDY) Fellowship (although they will be awarded as separate dissertation awards). Faculty advisors are encouraged to invite eligible students to apply on the basis of academic merit as well as contribution to program and campus diversity.
- Students must complete the online dissertation year application (for both PDY and GDDY fellowships) by **Friday, January 16, 2015 by 5pm**. The application is available at <https://gradopportunities.ucmerced.edu/grad>. The application includes the following:
 - Curriculum vitae (CV)
 - Unofficial UCM transcript, including Fall 2014.
 - Dissertation Prospectus (maximum 4 pages, double-spaced) - Prospectus should be written for a general academic audience, i.e. a faculty reviewer who does not necessarily have expertise in the specific area of study.
 - Timeline - A timeline of expected progress for completion of the dissertation, plus a statement of intent regarding the applicant's career goals after receiving the doctoral degree. The statement should also address situations or conditions which impeded the student's advancement in their graduate studies, such as the absence of a family member who attended college; matriculation at a school or schools with poor financial or curricular support; having a physical or learning disability; or having worked long hours while attending school. The statement should also address the applicant's research interests and doctoral degree as they relate to cultural, societal or educational problems, particularly with respect to educationally disadvantaged segments of society. The statement should be written for faculty members from all disciplines.

- Declare Estimated Financial Resources - Complete the financial resources section on the application indicating all sources of known or estimated financial support the applicant will receive during the award year. The name, type and amount of support should be included for each known or estimated source. Also include a list of known or estimated financial obligations.
- Letter(s) of Recommendation - Faculty advisor name and email must be provided under the Letters of Recommendation tab on the online application form. Advisors will receive an email request for a letter of support for the applicant. Please note that the letter of support will go to the Graduate Division and the Graduate Council (GC), and will not be visible to the applicant. The letter of support should include an assessment of the candidate's merits in comparison with other students at the same stage in their graduate careers. Comments should include such indicators as the student's demonstrated academic and scholarly competence, the length of time from the first quarter of enrollment to advancement to candidacy, and feasibility of completing the dissertation within the award year. Advisors must submit letters no later than **Friday, January 23, 2015 by 5pm.**

Review Procedures

- This fellowship will follow a multiple step review process that considers all applicants. Review criteria will include adherence to the fellowship guidelines, intellectual merits of the proposal, and the academic qualifications of the applicant.
 - First Review - The review will begin with each Graduate Group nominating and ranking their top two applicants. Nominations must include a brief narrative of the process and criteria that the graduate group used to choose nominees. Nominations without this narrative will not be considered. For each nominee, the faculty advisor should be listed, along with 3-4 sentences highlighting the nominee's qualifications for the non-expert reviewer. Each Graduate Group must submit their ranked list and narrative to the Graduate Division by **Wednesday, February 11, 2015 by 5pm.**
 - Second Review - The Graduate Council will then review the nominations made by each Graduate Group and make recommendations to the Graduate Division.
 - Third Review - Final award decisions will be made by the Graduate Dean.

Deadlines

- Application Closes – January 16, 2015 by 5pm
- Letter(s) of Recommendation – January 23, 2015 by 5pm
- Graduate Group Narrative and Rankings – February 11, 2015 by 5pm

Quick Applicant Checklist

- Curriculum vitae (CV)
- Unofficial UCM transcript
- Prospectus
- Timeline
- Declare Estimated Financial Resources
- Letter(s) of Recommendation