November 25, 2019

Dear Graduate Program Directors:

The Graduate School is pleased to announce this year’s call for nominations for new Graduate Council Fellowships (GCF) to be awarded to exceptionally qualified incoming doctoral and MFA students for Fall 2020. The fellowships are available to U.S. citizens and permanent residents only.

Note: Graduate programs that submit one or more GCF nominations may make one additional offer beyond their number of authorized offers under the backstopping process. A program that is given a recruitment target of 5 lines with an offer ratio of 3 will be allowed to make 15 offers in addition to their top GCF nominee. This means that your top GCF nominee will not count against your authorized offers under our backstopping plan. This does not mean, however, that your program will receive an additional TA line if a GCF is awarded. The purpose of this allowance is to encourage programs to go after top aspirational applicants, recognizing that the yield is lower on such offers.

In 2020, we will have a targeted yield of 12 new fellows and as such, expect to make offers to approximately 45 applicants. Similar to the past several years, the selection committee will score and rank applicants separately within two broad categories, as outlined below. If you want change the pool you participate in, please notify Lori Carron. Successful nominees typically have very high test scores, strong GPAs, significant research experience (where appropriate), excellent letters, and are a good fit to the strengths of the program.

Last year’s committee noted that strong GPD nomination letters include information regarding (1) the candidates’ fit for the program, (2) details regarding the significance of their research, not necessarily the details of it, (3) perspective on the institution the candidates are coming from as the committee may not know the strength of an undergraduate program in another field, and (4) how the GCF helps make Stony Brook a competitive option.

**Humanities & Social Sciences**


*Programs typically offer 4 years of academic year TA support at base stipend levels ($20k/yr in 2020/21)*
**Engineering & Bio/Natural Sciences**

Including CEAS graduate programs, HSC graduate programs, MCB, BSB, Neuro, Chemistry, Geosciences, Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, and Physics and Astronomy

*Programs typically offer 12-month stipends ranging from $22-27K/year for the duration of the student's doctoral career.

As in prior years, the Graduate Council fellowship provides $50,000 additional support to attract our best domestic applicants. Historically, the fellowship is paid as a supplement to program-level support (assistantship stipend, tuition scholarship, etc.). We recommend that the $50,000 GCF funding be used as a supplement to the existing program offer and not used to reduce or offset your program's cost.

**Award Structures:**

In the Humanities and Social Sciences (where the standard support package for Fall 2020 doctoral admits will be a full TA stipend), we suggest that the program maintain its full TA line support to GCF awardee and supplement that TA funding with GCF funding as follows:

- Years 1-4 Full TA at $20,000, plus GCF supplement of $6,000. Total academic year stipend $26,000.
- Year 5 (could be earlier if that suited program better to provide a research or dissertation year) $26,000 (balance of GCF funds) pure fellowship year, no stipend cost to program, and no TA responsibilities.

In the Science/Engineering disciplines, we recommend supplementing the departmentally funded stipend to provide annual support of $32,000 to $34,000 per year (comparable to NSF Pre-doctoral fellowship support or your peer institutions). The balance of the GCF monies (~$20K at $4K per year for five years) should be offered to provide the GCF nominee with a sign-on bonus, laptop, travel allowance and/or annual research funds. Alternatively, programs are permitted to offer the standard annual stipend plus $10K GCF supplement (for 5 years) to create a high-end stipend meant to rival the most competitive offers and address the cost of living on Long Island.

In both competitions, graduate programs may suggest alternative funding structures as long as at least 5 years of support is offered and the GCF-funded portion does not exceed $50,000.

The 2020 Graduate Council Fellowship and Awards Committee will again include in their evaluation of GCF nominations whether the GCF offer produces a competitive stipend for that discipline/program. Nominations that do not propose a competitive offer will likely not be seriously considered.

**Nomination Procedures:**

Each program may nominate up to five candidates.

1. Identify the applicant in AY (see attached instructions).
2. Submit a letter of nomination. The letter must be written or endorsed by the Graduate Program Director. The nomination letter MUST include (1) specific reasons why the nominee is considered a top applicant, (2) a statement describing the criteria the program employs in making admissions decisions and (3) an evaluation of the nominee against these criteria.

3. Provide a detailed description of the proposed GCF offer. Specifically, identify the extent and timing of programmatic support and the timing and amount of GCF support (not to exceed $50,000 total). Programs are encouraged to provide comparative data with peer institutions and a statement regarding the competitiveness of the GCF offer. Nomination packages that do not include this information may not receive full consideration. We urge you to use one of the three financial templates (fillable pdf) to provide this information. Please see attached.

4. Submission of official transcript copies in electronic (pdf) format.

5. Submission of the existing offer of admission and support issued to the applicant by the nominating graduate program.

Students nominated for GCFs must have been admitted (evidenced by an offer of admission and full support issued prior to the date of nomination) to the relevant doctoral or MFA program. Submission of a nomination by the program implies agreement, in the event the nomination is successful, that the program will honor its financial obligations in each academic year of the fellowship and will provide a full tuition scholarship from the program’s tuition scholarship allocation.

**Deadlines:**

All nominees must be identified within Apply Yourself by close of business on **Tuesday, January 21, 2020.** All other nomination materials (#2, 3, 4 & 5, above) must be submitted electronically, via email, no later than 5 PM (close of business) on **Friday, January 24, 2020.**

All nomination materials must be submitted via email to gradfinance@stonybrook.edu. All submissions should be made by the Graduate Program Director or, if submitted by another person, then the Graduate Program Director must be copied on the email. If you encounter problems compiling or sending the electronic nomination package, contact gradfinance@stonybrook.edu.

These fellowships are an important and effective means to attract the best and brightest students to Stony Brook. The selection committee will review the nominations during the period of January 30- February 7 and winners are expected to be announced on or around **Monday, February 10, 2020.**

**PLEASE NOTE! NEW TO THIS YEAR:**

As part of a campus-wide effort to streamline graduate student stipend appointment processing, we are making a procedural change to our GCF financial packages starting with Fall 2020 appointments. This change will result in departments no longer having to fill out the GCF supplement amount on the state appointment form or fill out a separate RF Fellowship form for
the GCF portion of the stipend package. Starting with Fall 2020 appointments, the Graduate School will be disbursing the supplement as a financial aid post via the student's SOLAR account, in increments over each semester. For students who are in a stand-alone, GCF-supported fellowship year (usually in their final year), the Graduate School will continue to process their appointment paperwork as a full Graduate Assistant. More detailed procedural information will be forthcoming as we prepare for our next year's financial package processing.

Please do not hesitate to contact Lori Carron (2-7039) or me if you have any questions concerning this program.

Eric
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Eric Wertheimer
Dean of the Graduate School and
Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education
Stony Brook University