

Dissertation Completion Fellowship Award (DCFA)

The **Dissertation Completion Fellowship Award (DCFA)** is designed to support Ph.D. students as they complete their degrees during the current academic year. Awards provide up to **two quarters of stipend and tuition support at \$12,300 per quarter**.

Students requesting a second quarter of support must provide a detailed justification in their completion timeline and confirmation from their Dissertation Advisor.

DCFA Calls for 2026-27

There will be **two DCFA application cycles** during the 2026–27 academic year:

DCFA Cycle	Application Open	Application Deadline	Award Quarter	Award Notifications
Fall 2026 Call	September 8, 2026	October 16, 2026	Winter 2027	November 2026
Winter 2027 Call	November 2026	January 15, 2027	Spring 2027	February 2027

Guidelines

- **Graduation Requirement:** Students must graduate at the conclusion of the award period. For example, **Winter 2027 awardees must have a graduation date posted by March 19, 2027, and Spring 2027 awardees must have a graduation date posted by June 11, 2027.** Failure to meet the graduation requirement may affect the Graduate Program's ability to nominate future students.
- **Employment Eligibility:** DCFA recipients are **not eligible for employment** after the fellowship period ends.
- **Exceptions:** If unusual circumstances arise, contact **GradAwards** *before the fellowship ends*. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of student timelines can be found at the end of this document.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

1. Must be a Ph.D. student who has advanced to candidacy by October 16th, 2026.
2. Must not have more than 7 units of incomplete grades.
3. Have a minimum GPA of 3.5.
4. Must be making acceptable progress toward the degree. (For these purposes, acceptable progress for a Ph.D. student means advanced to candidacy within 15 quarters after entry.

5. Can be on leave to apply but must be enrolled as a full-time student (12 units) during tenure of fellowship.
6. International and domestic students are eligible to apply.

Application and Review Process

- DCFA application link: [Current Fellowship Application Portal](#)
- One letter of recommendation is required and must come from the Dissertation (Thesis) Advisor or Faculty Mentor. The letter must confirm the student's proposed completion timeline and ability to complete the dissertation by the end of the award period.
- Advisor Confirmation: The Dissertation Advisor and Graduate Advisor must acknowledge the student's thesis timeline and confirm the plan to graduate within the award period.
- We recommend that Graduate Programs establish an internal review process to determine their nominations. Programs are encouraged to use a committee-based review process to help minimize conflicts of interest. Graduate Programs must submit their student nominations by the applicable deadline.
- Student applications will be accessible to the program review committee through Slate Reader: <https://grad.ucr.edu/manage/reader/>
- Graduate Programs will receive a designated number of nominations based on program size, as outlined in **Table 1** and **Table 2**.
- If previous DCFA recipients have not graduated by the time nomination allocations are determined in September, a program's nomination allocation may be reduced.
- Approximately 100 quarters of support are expected to be awarded, with an anticipated success rate of approximately 50%, subject to available funding.

Review Criteria

- All fellowship applications are reviewed based on excellence in the student's discipline.
- When submitting a nomination, Graduate Programs are required to provide a justification explaining why the nominee demonstrates excellence in their discipline. The justification should include a program-specific rubric that outlines the criteria used to evaluate and select students.
- Programs are encouraged to remind students that writing support for fellowship applications is available through the Grad Success Writing Center at <https://gwc.ucr.edu/>.

Timeline

- Nominations will be submitted by Graduate Programs through Slate. Students do not submit nominations directly to the Graduate Division.
- The Graduate Division will verify the eligibility of nominated students.
- The Graduate Division will review applications and make final award selections.
- Programs will be notified of successful awards in November and February, respectively, with the goal of providing sufficient notice for TA and GSR appointments for students who are not selected.

Dissertation Year Completion (DCFA's) Nominations for Each Program

The nomination allocation is based on the number of Ph.D. students in each Graduate Program at the beginning of the academic year.

If your program's student count does not appear to be accurate, please contact **GradAwards**.

Table 1

Number of Students in Program	Number of nominations
<25	1
25-50	2
51-100	3
>100	4

Table 2

Graduate Program	Total # of Students	Nominations
Anthropology	40	2
Applied Statistics	49	2
Art History	15	1
Astronomy	21	1
Biochemistry and Molecular Bio	51	3
Bioengineering	45	1
Biomedical Sciences	31	2
Biophysics	16	1
Business Administration	3	1
Cell, Molecular, and Development	39	2
Chemical & Environmental Engr	68	3
Chemistry	150	4
Comparative Literature	27	2
Computer Science	178	3
Critical Dance Studies	21	1
Earth & Planetary Sciences	43	3
Economics	60	3
Education	85	1
Electrical Engineering	94	3
English	49	2
Entomology	37	3
Environmental Sciences	26	3
Environmental Toxicology	30	2
Ethnic Studies	15	2
Evoltn, Ecol & Organismal Bio	60	3

Genetics, Genomics & Bioinform	30	1
History	53	1
Materials Science and Engineer	34	2
Mathematics	93	3
Mechanical Engineering	65	3
Microbiology	40	3
Music	25	2
Neuroscience	45	2
Philosophy	36	1
Physics	112	3
Plant Biology	65	3
Plant Pathology	27	2
Political Science	64	3
Psychology	100	5
Religious Studies	22	2
Sociology	10	2
Spanish	24	1