

Dissertation Fellowship (DF) Guidelines – Summer 2026

The Dissertation Fellowship (DF) provides support to highly-qualified FIU doctoral students during the writing phase of their dissertation. It is intended to facilitate the timely completion of high-quality manuscripts and dissertations. **Dissertation Fellows are expected to graduate within one year after receiving the award.**

The University Graduate School (UGS) awards the DF three times per year. The present application is for funding that begins in Summer 2026. DF provides a stipend of **\$17,990.49 for two terms***, (\$7,087.16 in the Summer and \$10,903.33 in the Fall, given the number of pay periods per semester), inclusive of the term in which the dissertation is submitted to the UGS. After a student has advanced to candidacy, they are considered to be full-time if enrolled for a minimum of three dissertation credit hours per term (this applies to both domestic and international students). Therefore, fellowship recipients must enroll in **three dissertation** credit hours per term. UGS will provide a tuition waiver for three dissertation credits only. Any additional credits beyond the three that are required will be the financial responsibility of the student.

Publications resulting from research supported in part through a DF should acknowledge the financial support of a Florida International University Dissertation Fellowship. A copy of any such publication should be sent to the University Graduate School.

*As of Spring 2024, if the DF stipend amount is lower than the GA-base rate in the student's college, UGS will increase the stipend amount to match the GA-base rate. As of Spring 2026, the DF stipend totals per semester have been adjusted to match pay periods, rather than two equal lump sums per semester, to more closely resemble the GA payment schedule. As a result, Fall and Spring stipend totals are larger than Summer stipend totals.

IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER

- Deferment of the DF Fellowship is **NOT** allowed.
- Students may not hold any other employment or undertake other types of training during the period you are receiving your fellowship.
- The DF Fellowship is processed as a GA contract through HR/Payroll. Please note that any DF Fellowship offers are conditional upon your successful completion of background checks and pre-employment processes established by federal and state laws and FIU policies.
- UGS Fellowships can be awarded consecutively but not simultaneously.
- The Selection Committee is comprised of Associate Deans from each college. UGS does not take part in the selection process.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All conditions outlined below must be met to be eligible to apply. **NO exceptions will be made.**

To be eligible for consideration for a DF, applicants must:

1. Be currently enrolled for a minimum of three (3) dissertation credits.
2. Be **within six (6) dissertation credits** of completing all requirements for the degree by the term in which the award would begin.
3. Have an **approved Program for Doctoral Degree and Application for Candidacy Form** on file in the UGS at least two terms prior to applying for this fellowship (**Summer 2025 UGS approved candidacy**)
4. Have an **approved Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Form** on file in the UGS at least one term prior to applying for this fellowship (**Fall 2025 UGS approved proposal**) *

* **Note:** For programs requiring the proposal as part of candidacy, **both** candidacy and proposal forms must be approved and on file in the UGS two terms prior to applying for this fellowship (**Summer 2025 UGS approved candidacy and proposal**)
5. Have completed all data collection for the dissertation.
6. If applicant has an approved Dissertation and Request for Oral Defense on file, they are **not** eligible to receive the DF.
7. If awarded, recipients must attest that they will work full-time on their dissertation during the period of the fellowship and will not hold any other employment during that time.

Applicants should submit their complete online application (including recommendation letters) through [Academic Works](#) by **11:59pm on Sunday, February 8, 2026.**

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Primary consideration is given to students who are conducting outstanding research in their discipline and have established a notable record of scholarship during their doctoral studies (in comparison to others in their discipline)
- A clear and detailed timeline that indicates the student will finish dissertation in two terms
- Outstanding level of publication and presentation of dissertation research
- History of student's applications for external funding

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

- The application must be initiated and completed online by accessing the Academic Works portal (<https://fiu.academicworks.com/>) using their MyAccounts username (i.e. jdoe001@fiu.edu) and password.
- Complete "General Application" (**NOTE:** Academic Works requires that a general application [resume and personal statement] be completed before applying to **ANY** fellowship in the system. Since this is a system requirement and not a UGS requirement, students can upload [this document](#) to bypass this requirement. If you choose to upload a resume and personal statement, please keep in mind they will **NOT** be reviewed or taken into consideration by the Graduate Program Director or Selection Committee).
- Once General application is complete, the applicant may proceed to apply for the DF.
- Applicants will assign **two** recommenders through the online application by providing the name and e-mail address of each recommender.
- Letters must be provided by the **major professor AND one faculty member** to be submitted online by **11:59pm on Sunday, February 8, 2026**.
- Applicants may check the status of the recommendation letters by logging into Academic Works and clicking on "My applications".
 - **NOTE:** If you have applied to either the DEA or DF opportunities previously, please be sure to request **new** letters of recommendation by inputting the name and e-mail address of the recommenders **again**. **Do not select a prepopulated recommender as this will attach old recommendation letters instead of prompting the system to create a new request.**
- Applicants have the option of resending reference requests to recommenders, and/or changing the recommender if necessary.

- Applicants will receive a confirmation e-mail once the recommender has submitted the letter of recommendation.
- Applicants may go back to make changes to the application (even after submitting) until the submission deadline of **Sunday, February 8, 2026.**

GUIDELINES FOR MAJOR PROFESSOR/ RECOMMENDERS

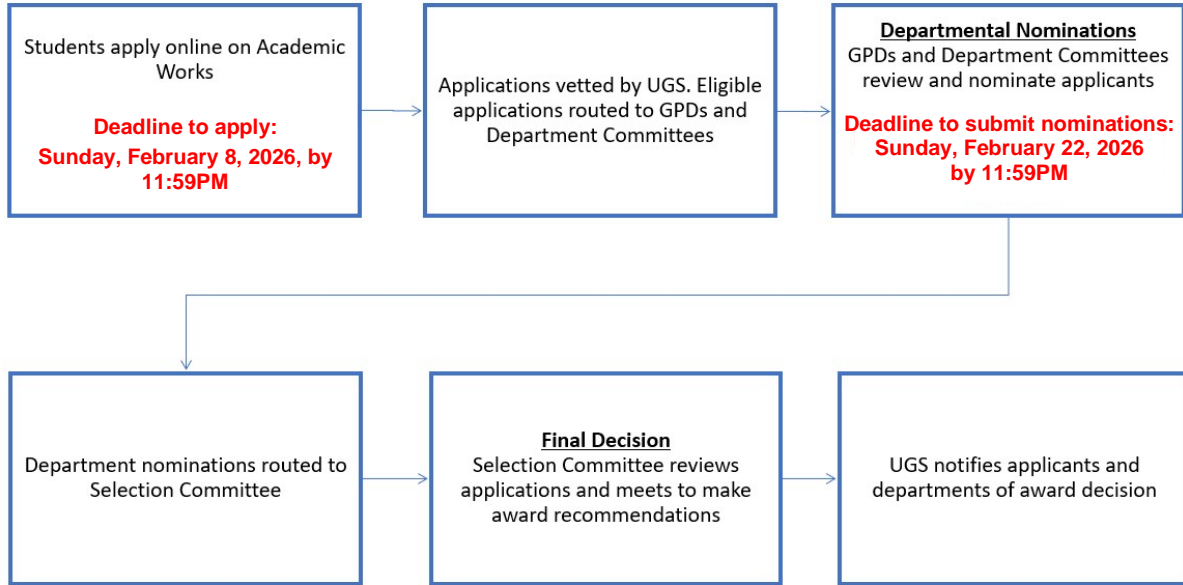
- Major Professors and Recommenders will receive an automated email from “FIU Scholarships” with a link to complete a questionnaire and upload the letter of recommendation.
- To access the online reference portal please follow the link and click on the **reference and reviewer tab** on the top right corner. **Do not sign in using MyAccounts.** You will see your e-mail address populated and will need to create a password. Enter your desired password, then enter it a second time and select create to enter the portal. This password is not connected to your FIU credentials.
- Strong letters of recommendation will emphasize the recommender’s knowledge of the applicant and their research and explain how the fellowship will make a difference in the applicant’s timeline to degree completion.

GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENTS

- Each doctoral degree-granting program may submit unlimited DF nominations.
- Graduate Program Directors (GPDs) and departmental committees will be notified once applications pertaining to their department are ready for review in the Academic Works portal. Note: Only student applications that meet eligibility requirements will be routed.
- In addition to endorsing the application, Graduate Program Directors (GPDs) and departmental committees will be asked to provide an overall impression score according to their discipline’s standards.
- To access the portal, GPDs and departmental committee members will use their MyAccounts username (i.e. jdoe001@fiu.edu) and password. Once logged in:
 - GPDs and departmental committee members will be able to see the applications assigned for their review.

GPDs must submit nominations through **Academic Works** by **11:59pm on Sunday, February 22, 2026.**

SUMMER 2026 DF APPLICATION WORKFLOW AND AWARD TIMELINE



Sunday, February 8, 2026 by 11:59pm

Deadline for students **and** recommenders to submit completed documents through Academic Works

Sunday, February 22, 2026 by 11:59pm

Deadline for Graduate Program Directors to submit nominations through Academic Works

Week of Monday, March 16, 2026

Selection Committee meets to make award recommendations

Week of Monday, March 23, 2026

The UGS notifies departments of awards and sends official letter to all applicants

SUMMER 2026 DF APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Do you have an approved Program for Doctoral Degree and Application for **Candidacy** Form on file in the UGS at least two terms prior to applying for this fellowship (Summer 2025 UGS approved candidacy)?
2. Do you have an approved Doctoral Dissertation **Proposal** Form on file in the UGS at least one term prior to applying for this fellowship (Fall 2025 UGS approved proposal)*? *Programs for which the dissertation proposal is part of candidacy, BOTH candidacy and proposal forms must have Summer 2025 UGS approved candidacy and proposal.
3. Do you have an approved Dissertation and Request for Oral Defense on file? If yes, you do not qualify for this fellowship.
4. Proposed title of dissertation
5. Summarize the significance of the project in **non-specialist** language.
6. Provide a timeline for completion of your doctoral work. Please be specific and clear about where the research currently stands.
7. Numbered list of **published** or **accepted** manuscripts from work done at FIU. Provide full citation and number of pages. Indicate clearly if manuscript is an original article, book chapter, or refereed conference proceeding.
8. Numbered list of professional presentations (given or accepted) from work done at FIU. Provide full citation including the list of authors as they appear. Do not repeat citations. Provide meeting, location, and date.
9. Summary of previous and ongoing financial support during Doctoral Studies at FIU while as a student (e.g. TA, RA, Fellowships, scholarships, etc.).
10. List all external funding applied for by the student. Indicate if funding was awarded, the **amount awarded**, and period of support provided.
11. Please request a reference from your Major Professor (Letter of recommendation from Major Professor is **required**).
12. Please request one reference from a faculty member other than your major professor (Letter of recommendation from one more faculty member is **required**).
13. Please type in your first and last name acknowledging that you understand and attest all information provided is accurate to the best of your knowledge.

DF RUBRIC
Rubric for the Assessment of Performance

Criteria	Score Descriptions										Weight
Academic Performance	GPA ≤ 3.50	GPA 3.51 to 3.55	GPA 3.56 to 3.60	GPA 3.61 to 3.65	GPA 3.66 to 3.70	GPA 3.71 to 3.75	GPA 3.76 to 3.80	GPA 3.81 to 3.85	GPA 3.86 to 3.90	GPA ≥ 3.91	(x1)
Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Project Significance	Significance of research is not clearly described in non-specialist language		Significance is somewhat described in non-specialist language		Significance is described in non-specialist language		Significance is clearly described in non-specialist language.		Significance of the research is clearly described in non-specialist language & is compelling		(x2)
Score	1		2		3		4		5		
Timeline to Graduation	Weak project plan and timeline is not reasonable		Project plan and timeline are somewhat reasonable		Project plan is good and timeline is reasonable		Project plan is very good and timeline is reasonable		Project plan is excellent and timely graduation is guaranteed		(x2)
Score	1		2		3		4		5		
Productivity (This category takes into consideration discipline standards for productivity. Competitive conference presentations and applications for external funding could be considered)	No productivity	Potential for future scholarly products	One scholarly product <u>under review</u>	Multiple scholarly products <u>under review</u>	At least one accepted non-first author peer reviewed paper or scholarly product	More than one accepted non-first author peer reviewed paper or scholarly product	At least one accepted first author peer reviewed paper or scholarly product	At least two accepted first author peer reviewed papers or scholarly products	At least three accepted first author peer reviewed papers or scholarly products	At least four accepted first author peer reviewed papers or scholarly products	(x2)
Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Progress (Includes time since beginning of program, and GPD overall impression score based on discipline's standards)	Poor Progress	Somewhat Good Progress	Good Progress	Very Good Progress	Excellent Progress	(x1)
<i>Score</i>	1	2	3	4	5	
Overall Impression	Not Qualified	Somewhat Qualified	Qualified	Very Qualified	Extremely Qualified	(x1)
<i>Score</i>	1	2	3	4	5	

Revised January 2026