

Department of Sociology Fact Sheet on Dissertation Completion Fellowship (DCF) Funding

What is it?

The Graduate School created the Dissertation Completion Fellowship (DCF) to support doctoral students in their last year. The purpose of the DCF is to help alleviate financial concerns so students may devote themselves full time to writing and preparing to defend their dissertation. Each year the Graduate School provides funding that makes available approximately 170 fellowships across the university. Colleges set the conditions and application procedures for their DCFs and ultimately select their DCF recipients. The Graduate School then disperses the awards to the recipients. Unlike a graduate assistantship, the DCF does not include a tuition/fee waiver or health insurance.

What can it fund?

Depending upon the semester and available funds, DCF awards are typically between \$7,000 and \$7500.¹ Students can use the monies as they see necessary, toward their dissertation research or for personal support during this time. During their DCF semester, students:

- may not accept other employment or University funds in excess of a 1/4-time Graduate Assistantship without the written permission of the College of Social Science Dean,
- may receive departmental Graduate Office Fellowship (GOF) conference travel funding to present their dissertation work at conferences, and
- may not receive departmental GOF dissertation funding.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible, doctoral students must:

- be currently enrolled,
- be in good academic standing (i.e., achieving program benchmarks in a timely fashion),
- have successfully completed and defended their dissertation proposal,
- plan to complete their dissertation and all final requirements for their doctoral degree in the semester they receive their DCF (or the very next semester at the latest),
- have approval from both their major advisor (i.e., graduate committee chair) and the SOC Graduate Program Director (GPD), and
- submit a complete application by the departmental deadline.

What is required for a complete application?

A complete application for the DCF must include (in order in a single PDF):

- a completed and signed nomination form,
- no more than 6 pages of an abstract and outline of the dissertation, with a 1-paragraph summary of each chapter and a brief description of the specific status of each chapter (e.g., being revised based on advisor's comments; drafted but not submitted to advisor; not yet drafted),
- documentation of IRB approval for the dissertation,
- documentation of successful defense of the dissertation proposal,
- a work plan with a schedule for completion of the dissertation, and
- a letter of support and a statement of progress from your major advisor (with details about the student's current level of funding within and outside of the university).

¹ DCF award monies will first be applied toward any unpaid tuition or other funds owed to the University or may be subtracted from any federal financial aid/loan funds. Please seek advice from your Office of Financial Aid counselor before you turn down a fellowship. Any remaining funds will be disbursed to you after the fellowship form has been approved via whatever method you have set up in your STUINFO account.

When are the deadlines?

In the past, the College of Social Science distributed calls for DCF applications three times a year. More recently, the College has distributed two calls: one in June (with a July deadline) for a fall DCF; and one in September (with an October deadline) for a spring or summer DCF. Starting in summer 2020, the College is only sending one call for DCF applications each year—most likely in May or June (with a July deadline).

What happens after the complete application is submitted?

1. Student submits a complete application via e-mail to the SOC Graduate Academic Program Coordinator (APC) by the Department deadline (which is typically two weeks before the College deadline).
 - *Student prepares the materials.*
 - *Student meets with their major advisor to secure a letter of support.*
 - *Student submits a single PDF version of their complete application.*
2. SOC Graduate APC reviews the application for completeness (and returns it to the student for additional work, as necessary).
3. SOC Graduate Education Committee (GEC) meets to review complete applications and determine a rank-ordering of applications selected by the Department to forward to the College for submission. (The SOC GPD and Chair can decide not to submit to the College any applications they believe are not strong.)
4. SOC Chair provides Department endorsement for selected applications, and SOC Graduate APC submitted the selected applications to the College.
5. The College's Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies evaluates submitted applications and decides which will receive a DCF.
6. The College contacts student applicants with the final decision on their applications.
7. If an application is successful, the student's awarded funds will be processed approximately two weeks prior to the beginning of their DCF semester.

What is due after the award monies are used?

Near the end of their DCF semester, the recipient must submit a progress report on departmental letterhead via e-mail to the College of Social Science Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies. This report should describe the status of their dissertation and the expected completion date of their degree. If, by the middle of the next semester, the recipient has still not successfully defended their dissertation, then they must submit a second progress report with updated information about the status of their dissertation and the expected completion date of their degree.