

2009-2010 Social Science Dissertation Fellowships

The College of Arts and Science and the Vanderbilt Center for Nashville Studies (VCNS) invites applications for **2009-2010 Social Science Dissertation Fellowships**. These awards are designed to support innovation and excellence in graduate student research. They will offer graduate students a service-free year of support to enable full-time work on the dissertation.

Six fellowships will be awarded. Four of them are open to all social science dissertation students and two are designed for students pursuing doctoral dissertation research that addresses social scientific or historical themes on Nashville as an urban community. In the latter case, Nashville must be the central focus of the research or one of multiple communities studied.

Each award will include tuition, health insurance, a stipend of \$17,000-\$21,000, and a research fund of \$1,000-\$5,000. The sum total of the stipend and research fund will equal \$22,000 and the student in consultation with her/his dissertation adviser will determine the appropriate balance between the stipend and research fund. Research expenses eligible for funding include costs associated with pilot interviews or surveys, focus group discussions, transcription, travel to archives or field sites, or software and other equipment for data collection and analysis. Projects using qualitative methods, quantitative methods, or a combination of the two are eligible for the award. The competition is open to those students in the social sciences whose dissertation director and Director of Graduate Studies approve a timetable for the dissertation's completion. The student will be eligible to receive the research funding to explore preliminary data collection during the summer of 2009. The stipend will be available for the 2009-2010 academic year, following a successful defense of the student's dissertation proposal.

During the fellowship year, students will be expected to dedicate themselves full-time to dissertation research and writing. They may not be supported by other funds—with the exception of a Dissertation Enhancement Award or a departmental or Graduate School travel award—or hold other employment, including any type of teaching, during the course of the stipend award, which is September 1, 2009-May 30, 2010.

Also, during the fellowship year, students receiving the fellowships will collaborate to organize a methods workshop to be held in the spring semester. The workshop will be for other social science graduate students, especially less-advanced students, and will allow the fellowship recipients to discuss the methods they used for data collection. The Social Science Dissertation Fellowship recipients will thus engage in “peer teaching” as they share lessons with other students about the procedures necessary to locate, discern the viability of, and gather original data for their dissertation projects. Staff in the Dean's Office will assist the fellowship recipients in organizing the workshop.

Each application must include:

- A cover sheet (which can be downloaded at: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/gspdpd/pdf/SSDF.pdf>)
- The candidate's *curriculum vitae*.

- A dissertation description of no more than five single-spaced pages, including an account of the dissertation's original contribution to the field.
- Two letters of recommendation, including one from the dissertation director that addresses both the candidate's qualifications for the award and his or her ability to finish the dissertation in a timely fashion.
- A cover letter from the Director of Graduate Studies describing the applicant's academic record and ability to finish the dissertation in a timely fashion.

Applications for this award should be delivered to Dean Marc Hetherington, 301 Kirkland Hall. Applications will not be accepted by e-mail. The deadline for applications is February 2, 2009. Please contact Brando.Fox@vanderbilt.edu (322-7360) with any questions.