

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
DISSERTATION COMPLETION FELLOWSHIPS

**CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING APPLICATIONS**

1. **Evidence that completion of the dissertation will take place** during the fellowship period or the summer immediately after must be included. Departments must submit applicants in rank fashion (if more than one). A complete application must also include, in this order:

- a. the completed cover page (see enclosed);
- b. checklist to be completed by the student and confirmed by the department (see enclosed);
- c. the proposal;
- d. list of references (bibliography);
- e. IRB or IACUC approval (when applicable)
- f. applicant's vita;
- g. evaluation letter by the dissertation director;
- h. second evaluation letter by a faculty member;
- i. third evaluation letter by a faculty member.

2. **Proposal Criteria**

- a. All proposals must be written in language understandable to non-experts; jargon and overly specialized technical language must be avoided.
- b. The proposal must not exceed five typed pages, double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12-point typeface. An additional page that lists key references (bibliography) must follow the proposal (not to exceed two pages). Disciplinary norms must govern the structure of the reference section. References are **not** included in the proposal page count.
- c. Proposals must include as a heading on the first page with a working title for the dissertation, the student's name, and the student's academic program.
- d. Components of the proposal must be labeled; the proposal must include the following labeled components, though 2.d.4 is optional:

1. **Abstract:** A one-paragraph abstract of the dissertation proposal written to be understood by educated lay readers who are likely untrained in the field of study and placed at the beginning of the proposal.
2. **Significance of the Research:** Describe the intellectual significance of the dissertation and its original/novel contribution to the discipline. Provide an overview of the dissertation that describes the questions, problems, or ideas examined. Explain how the dissertation will enhance

or challenge existing knowledge. Make certain to locate the significance of the project within the context of literature about the topic. If the dissertation project involves substantial collaborative work with others, the specific contributions of the student should be described.

**3. Methods and Work Plan:** Describe the methodology you will use in the project and justify its use in the dissertation. Describe what research has been conducted and what will be accomplished during the fellowship period. Clearly state when you will defend the dissertation.

**4. Access and Competence (Optional):** If the project requires access to specialized equipment, supplies, human or animal subjects, or research facilities provide assurances that the materials, etc. will be available to you; or if it requires competence in languages or methodology provide assurances of competence.

3. Proposals that do not meet the above criteria will be rejected.
4. Evidence of applicant's past performance and potential as determined by:
  - a. Applicant's vita, to be enclosed.
  - b. Evaluation of applicant and project by the dissertation director.
  - c. Two letters of evaluation from faculty other than the dissertation director.
5. Financial need is not a criterion for these awards.