



Office of the Dean

Memorandum

January 14, 2021

TO: College of Arts and Sciences Department Chairs and Program Directors

FROM: Joel Samuels, Interim Dean 

RE: Bilinski Fellowships
Call for Nominations due Friday, **April 16, 2021**

One of the longstanding strategic goals of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) is “to provide high quality educational and state of the art research experiences to prepare them [graduate students] for citizenship, future success, and fulfillment in a competitive world.” Through the generosity of the Bilinski Foundation, we are able to offer up to twelve (12) Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Fellowships during the 2021-22 academic year to doctoral students beginning the final stage of their studies in the *humanities and social sciences*.

Each Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Fellowship is worth \$35,000; this year fellows will also receive a \$2,000 stipend for travel on behalf of their dissertation research. Students enrolled in any of the College’s Doctor of Philosophy programs in the *humanities and social sciences* may be nominated, although students in the social sciences should be pursuing research with a humanistic focus. Students must be admitted to candidacy in their degree program, have passed comprehensive exams, and have received approval of their dissertation proposal. They also must meet additional criteria related to citizenship and financial need. Fellowships are for 2021-22 and are not renewable. Please see **the Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Dissertation Fellowships Administrative Guidelines** (attached) for eligibility requirements.

The Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Fellowships will be awarded by a competitive process. Nominations must be made by the unit offering the degree program. A maximum of eight (8) nominations for Bilinski Fellowships may be submitted by any eligible doctoral program. In cases of multiple nominations, a letter ranking the nominations and *justifying the ranking* must be supplied by the unit.

Two-Stage Evaluation Process

A full description of the two-stage evaluation process is included in the attached ***Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Dissertation Fellowships Administrative Guidelines***. The first stage of the process occurs at the unit level and must take place well in advance of the submission deadline of **April 16, 2021**. We strongly suggest that an internal plan be established in January 2021 and that the unit's stage of the process be initiated that same month with completion by **Monday, March 8, 2021**. Nominees selected by the unit during this internal stage of the process will need to complete the FAFSA form by **March 15, 2021**.

The second stage of the selection process takes place at the College level, beginning with receipt of nominations no later than **April 16, 2021** and concluding with notifications of results by **May 14, 2021**.

The ***Timeline***, Appendix A, included at the end of this memorandum may be helpful in organizing the requisite tasks.

Nominations

Nominations sent forward by units to the College must include the materials listed below. Nomination guidelines and forms can also be found on the [Bilinski Fellowship website](#).

All the forms are in fillable PDF format. Nominees should right click the download icon or right click on the document link to save the file and then open the file with [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) to complete.

1. **Student's Bilinski Fellowship Application Cover Sheet** with the student's full name, contact information, program information, dissertation abstract, student's and graduate director's signatures. By signing this form, the director of graduate studies certifies that the applicant has advanced to candidacy, passed all comprehensive exams, and successfully defended a dissertation proposal prior to the application deadline. This form is available online at https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/artsandsciences/internal/documents/bilinski/forms/bilinski_applicationcover_sheet.pdf
2. **Student's Fellowship Financial Disclosure Form**, available for downloading online at https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/artsandsciences/internal/documents/bilinski/forms/bilinski_financialdisclosureform.pdf.
3. **Student's statement of professional goals** (maximum one page, double spaced.)
4. **Student's proposal** describing the dissertation that includes the following sections: proposal narrative (2-3 pages, double spaced) and a timetable for completion (maximum one page, double spaced.)
5. **Student's curriculum vitae** containing information on previous education, teaching and research experience, professional publications, and awards or honors.

6. **Letter of recommendation** from the student's dissertation director addressing the significance of the dissertation topic and the nominee's ability to complete the dissertation in the time period allowed by the fellowship.
7. **Bilinski Fellow's Agreement on Use of Fellowship Funds** signed by the student. This form is available online at https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/artsandsciences/internal/documents/bilinski/forms/bilinski_fellows_agreement_use_of_funds.pdf.
8. All nominees selected by units to move forward to the Office of the Dean must complete an online **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** filed by no later than **March 15, 2021**.

Please be sure that each nomination packet is prepared separately. If there are multiple nominations, a separate letter ranking the nominations and justifying the ranking must be submitted in addition to the individual nomination packets.

Nominations must be received by the Office of the Dean by **Friday, April 16, 2021**. Please submit nomination packets in electronic form. Electronic copies (PDF, labeled with degree program, student's last name, student's first name) should be emailed to CASPROG@mailbox.sc.edu.

We look forward to receiving nominations. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Cynthia Davis, Associate Dean for Arts, Humanities, and Academic Initiatives, at cjdavis@mailbox.sc.edu or Elise Ahyi, Assistant Dean for Academic Policy, Planning, and Administration, at eahyi@mailbox.sc.edu.

Attachments

- c: Tracey Weldon, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School
- Cynthia Davis, Associate Dean
- Claudia Benitez-Nelson, Associate Dean
- Todd Shaw, Associate Dean
- Jeff Twiss, Associate Dean
- Qiana Whitted, Associate Dean
- Elise Ahyi, Assistant Dean

Appendix A

TIMELINE

- January
- ◆ Dean's office issues call for nominations.
 - ◆ Units establish process for Stage 1 of the evaluation process.
 - ◆ Units solicit nominees internally.
- February
- ◆ Units work with nominees, dissertation directors, and directors of graduate studies to assemble nomination packets.
 - ◆ Units evaluate nominations according to established process.
- March 8**
- ◆ Unit nomination process should be completed. Units select no more than 8 nominations to forward to the College level.
 - ◆ Units notify all nominees of internal decisions and instruct those whose packets will move forward to the College level to complete the FAFSA.
- March 15**
- ◆ Students whose nominations will be forwarded to the College level must have completed the FAFSA.
- March-early April
- ◆ In the case of multiple nominations, department chair or, where relevant, program director writes separate letter both ranking and explaining the unit's ranking of the nominees.
 - ◆ Units ensure that nomination packets are complete.
- April 16**
- ◆ Units submit nomination packets electronically to the College. Electronic copies (single pdf, labeled with degree program, student's last name, student's first name) should be e-mailed to CASPROG@mailbox.sc.edu.
 - ◆ In cases of multiple nominations, units submit letter explaining ranking of nominations and include letter with **each** nomination packet. (Letter should be included with **each** paper copy and attached to **each** electronic copy.)
- May 14**
- ◆ College notifies nominees and units of results.