

## GRADUATE EQUITY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2023-2024

Please direct any questions regarding the Graduate Equity Fellowship to [graduate.studies@sonoma.edu](mailto:graduate.studies@sonoma.edu)

### Eligibility

Eligible students are those who are economically and/or educationally disadvantaged. They must also meet and maintain the following criteria:

1. Be classified as a California resident for fee purposes.
2. Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application (CADAA). In order to be eligible for the Graduate Equity Fellowship this application must demonstrate a minimum financial need of \$1,000 using Federal Methodology. **NOTE:** If you meet all other criteria and have missed the deadline for the FAFSA or CADAA you are still encouraged to submit your FAFSA or CADAA application late and apply for the Graduate Equity Fellowship. You will be eligible for the fellowship if you meet all other criteria and your FAFSA or CADAA are processed by the time fellowship applications are reviewed.
3. Be admitted to the University and to a graduate degree program (i.e., be classified or conditionally classified).
4. Be enrolled in a **minimum of 6 units per semester**. **NOTE:** Students whose enrollment drops below 6 units during a semester will forfeit eligibility and may be required to repay the amount of the award.
5. Demonstrate satisfactory academic progress (3.0 GPA).
6. Students may receive the Graduate Equity Fellowship for a maximum of two years.

**Application Materials to be Submitted to [graduate.studies@sonoma.edu](mailto:graduate.studies@sonoma.edu) to later than Friday, May 12, 2023:**

1. Graduate Equity Fellowship Application Form, 2023-2024
2. Narrative (3 pages maximum). See selection criteria below for items to be addressed in the narrative.
3. If not a recipient of an undergraduate degree from SSU, please submit unofficial transcripts from your undergraduate institution. SSU undergraduate graduates will

have their transcripts pulled by Graduate Studies and do not need to submit undergraduate SSU transcripts.

4. Recommendation Form (to be completed by the faculty member recommenders and submitted directly to [graduate.studies@sonoma.edu](mailto:graduate.studies@sonoma.edu)). Indicate who will submit faculty recommendations on the appropriate lines in the Application Form and request two faculty recommendations using the attached Recommendation Form and ensure the recommenders submit their recommendations via email by **Friday, May 12, 2023**. If you are not a recent graduate of your undergraduate institution, professional recommendations are accepted and will be given equal weight to faculty recommendations.

### **Checklist of Selection Criteria**

Please address all criteria clearly in your narrative. This should be in essay format, not numbered answers. (Note: financial need will be determined using federal methodology based on the FAFSA or CADAA). Please use the following checklist to ensure you address all of the criteria in the essay.

- Economic hardship or disadvantaged background
- Member of an underrepresented group (Note: this can include being a member of a specific race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status, among other categories, and can depend on your discipline)
- First generation college or graduate student
- Performance and potential. (Note: this is also evaluated using transcripts and letters of recommendation). Please address your academic and/or career goals.
- Professional development. What professional development activities have you participated in and how have they shaped you?

### **Purpose of the Graduate Equity Fellowship:**

The intent of the fellowship is to minimize the debt burden and time to degree completion by replacing loans with grants. Preference will be given to those who are likely to complete master's degrees in a timely manner. Graduate Fellowship recipients are encouraged to continue on to doctoral programs, and to consider university faculty careers. The continued funding of the program will ultimately depend on success in achieving these goals.

Updated 4/2023