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To: Head Graduate Advisers and GSAOs

From: Susan J. Muller, Associate Dean of the Graduate Division

Re: Advising Students Eligible for the Doctoral Completion Fellowship

With the beginning of eligibility for the Doctoral Completion Fellowship (DCF) in departments that previously participated in the Dean's Normative Time Fellowship (DNTF), departments should be aware of differences between these two fellowships and factor them into advising, including making changes in program handbooks if needed. While the DNTF focused on motivating students to advance to candidacy within Normative Time for Advancement (NTA) within their program, the DCF provides an incentive for students to file their dissertations within a reasonable time, namely within a year of their program's Normative Time to Degree (NTD).

In light of this goal, *the Graduate Division is removing advancement to candidacy within NTA as an eligibility requirement for the DCF*. Note that this is the only change to the DCF program and applies retroactively to all students eligible for the DCF (those in participating programs who entered in Fall 2010 or later). All other eligibility requirements and terms remain unchanged. This change does not apply to the DNTF.

Here we highlight the main differences between the two fellowship programs so that you can use them in advising.

Doctoral Completion Fellowship	Dean's Normative Time Fellowship
must be advanced to candidacy	must be advanced to candidacy within Normative Time for Advancement
two semester stipend and in-state tuition	<i>same</i>
must be used by Normative Time to Degree plus one year	must be used by Normative Time to Degree
to activate fellowship, must have satisfactory or better Academic Progress Report on file from most recent year after advancement	
once used , no further university funding allowed after Normative Time to Degree plus one year, including all types of university employment	

The main implication for students is that when they use the DCF, they are agreeing that they will receive no university support, including employment, after normative time to degree plus one year. If they are uncertain that they will actually complete the dissertation within that time frame, and wish to continue to be eligible for department support, such as GSI or GSR appointments, students should defer taking up the fellowship. Students must plan on completing the new online Academic Progress Report every year after advancement (unless a department requires semesterly reports). At least one satisfactory report must be on file the semester before a student may elect to take the fellowship.

The main implication for departments is that it may not be advisable to plan on the DCF as a support year or include it in departmental funding communications, except as a pure dissertation writing year (normally beyond the five years for which many covered departments outline funding for students). Departments may need to remind faculty to complete the Academic Progress Report, a Graduate Council requirement for students advanced to candidacy, which is now an online process. Departments also should review the professional development activities they outlined when they opted into the DCF program, to ensure that statement accurately reflects the programs presently offered to students.