

Award for Excellence in Scholarship in the Sciences and Engineering

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The purpose of this program is to reward outstanding research and scholarship among graduate students in the sciences and engineering. This program complements the *Fellowship Enhancement for Outstanding Doctoral Candidates*, which targets the recruitment of outstanding applicants to U.Va. doctoral programs. The University's desire is to achieve excellence in all aspects of graduate education. One-time fellowship awards of \$5,000 will be made to reward current Ph.D. students in the sciences and engineering who have demonstrated rigorous scholarship in their discipline. Departments with fewer than 50 Ph.D. students may nominate one student; departments with more than 50 Ph.D. students may nominate two students.[†] VPR anticipates making approximately 15 awards. The Commonwealth of Virginia, the source of funding for this program, requires that at least one-half of the awards be made to Virginia residents.

Criteria: Nominees should be Ph.D. students who are sufficiently advanced in their program to have demonstrated excellence in original research and scholarship. The purpose is to reward students that are bringing recognition to graduate programs at the University of Virginia as a result of their innovation, intellect, dedication, creativity, and passion. Students also should have strong academic credentials, as evidenced by performance in coursework and on comprehensive examinations.

This award is intended to recognize demonstrated achievement, not future potential, in original scholarship. Successful nominees generally have significant track-records of peer-reviewed scholarship and/or award-winning presentations at national conferences. Financial need is not a criterion used in the evaluation of nominations.

Students who previously have won an *Award for Excellence* are not eligible. Nominees must be enrolled as a student during the spring semester of the current academic year. A significant portion of award-relevant research should have been completed while enrolled, as a graduate student, at U.Va.

Previous award recipients may be found through *Research News* ([2006](#), [2007](#), [2008](#), [2009](#)).

[†] Ph.D. enrollment, in individual departments, may be found at:

http://www.web.virginia.edu/IAAS/data_catalog/institutional/historical/enrollment/major_by_gender.htm.

For programs in the biomedical sciences, the number of allowable nominations is based on Ph.D. enrollment in the individual program (e.g. biochemistry, etc.), not enrollment in the biomedical sciences, writ large.

Application Materials: Applications must include a nomination cover letter from a departmental representative, curriculum vitae, and current transcript of the student. The nomination letter should describe the scholarship of the student, articulate the meaningful nature of the work, and make the case for the award in language understandable to those outside the particular discipline. Examples of scholarship may include journal publications, award-winning presentations at national meetings, computer software, patents, etc. In the case of multiple author papers, please describe the specific contribution of the student. Please note in the nomination letter whether or not the student is a Virginia resident.

Submission Deadlines: Application materials are due to the Office of the Vice President for Research by December 16, 2010. We anticipate announcing award recipients by January 31, 2011. Electronic submission of application materials to gradstudies@virginia.edu is strongly encouraged. Paper materials may be hand delivered to Thornton Hall A123 or sent by messenger mail to P.O. Box 400882.

Questions:

1. *Does this award include a health insurance subsidy?* No.
2. *May the fellowship be used for travel or research?* The funds will be awarded as a fellowship. If students choose to use the fellowship to pay for travel, they may do so, but we will not award the funds as a travel reimbursement. In addition, need for travel or research expenses are not considerations in the evaluation of nominees.
3. *How will this affect student financial aid?* Students should check with Student Financial Services, prior to submission of their nomination, to determine what impact, if any, this award may have on their current aid situation and/or ramifications for future aid.
4. *Are there tax implications for those receiving the award?* Federal and/or state taxes are not withheld from the award. Awardees should review *IRS Publication 970: Tax Benefits for Education* to ascertain the tax implications of the award. Awardees may find additional information on the taxability of scholarships and fellowships at www.virginia.edu/studentaccounts/tax_topics.html. Please note that the University cannot provide tax advice.