



GRADUATE STUDIES

Instructions for the UNMC Graduate Studies Assistantship/Fellowship Application

Eligibility Requirements:

- Be enrolled full-time in a PhD-granting program at UNMC
- Have completed at least 12 months at the time of application. MD/PhD students must have been enrolled as a full-time PhD student for at least one complete semester (excluding summer terms) at the time of application.
- Be in good academic standing with a GPA > 3.0 **and** not on remediation for course grade(s).
- Have your permanent supervisor selected, along with a supervisory committee approved in Seguidor.
 - Your supervisor must have primary employment in the NU system.

Note: Only students who submit a Letter of Intent form by February 1st are eligible to apply for UNMC Assistantship/Fellowship support.

LETTER OF INTENT (Deadline 11:59 PM on Feb 1st):

2026 UNMC GRADUATE STUDIES Assistantship/Fellowship Letter of Intent – Fill out form

Be prepared to upload the following-

- 1) Proof of supervisory committee approval completed in Seguidor. (Either a screenshot or a pdf file is fine.)
- 2) A completed Project Funding Affirmation form signed by your Advisor and Department Chair.
https://www.unmc.edu/gradstudies/_documents/project-funding-affirmation_revised_jan_2026_v2.pdf
- 3) A tentative title for your proposal.
- 4) An abstract for your proposal (max 250 words).

After submission of the Letter of Intent, students, along with their research advisors, will be notified if they do not meet all of the above listed eligibility requirements.

APPLICATION (Deadline 11:59 PM on March 1st):

Funding through this mechanism will be awarded for a period of 1 year, or until the student completes their fifth year of study (whichever comes first).

Applicants must complete the following Microsoft Form in which they will upload one (1) composite electronic pdf copy of items A-F: 2026 UNMC GRADUATE STUDIES Assistantship/Fellowship Submission
— [Fill out form](#)

A. **Research Plan** (written by the student, not the mentor), prepared using Arial 11 pt font, with margins of at least 0.5 inch on each side, single-spaced. The research plan information is similar to that required by the NIH F31 Individual Predoctoral Fellowship. **Note: Although the funding period is for 1 year, applicants can choose to propose work that extends beyond that year but should limit the plans to that which can be completed during their PhD.** The Research Plan should be arranged into the following sections.

1. **Specific Aims** (max 1 page). Starting with a title at the top, the Specific Aims page should give a brief background, state the central hypothesis and/or the purpose of the proposed research, and list the specific aims of the project.
2. **Research Strategy** (max 6 pages). The Research Strategy should start on a new page and include subsections for Significance and Approach. The Significance should provide any additional background information that is necessary for the reviewers to understand the project and appreciate its importance. The Approach should describe the research design and the procedures that will be used to accomplish each specific aim of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed (including statistics), and interpreted, as well as potential difficulties and limitations along with alternative approaches.
3. **Literature Cited** (no page limit). List all references cited in the body of the proposal. The references should include author(s), year, title, journal name, volume, and page numbers.
4. **Respective Contributions** (max 2 pages). This section should include a paragraph defining who wrote the application and describing the collaborative process between the applicant and their advisor in the development, review, and editing of the proposal. It should also include a table listing each figure panel, and who generated the data/analysis. For example:

Figure Panel	Respective Contribution
Figure 1A	Me
Figure 1B	Mentor
Figure 1C	Me (data generation) + Collaborator (analysis)
Figure 2A	From the Literature.

5. **Applications for Concurrent Support** (max 1 page). This section should indicate the type, dates, sources, and amount of any funding for which the applicant has applied, or for which they plan to apply.
6. **Training Plan** (max 2 pages). This section should be collaboratively developed by both the student and mentor. Include the following elements:
 - **Activities Planned Under This Award.** Describe how the proposed aims and related activities will provide the training and experience necessary for success. Provide concrete details and timing of any training activities, opportunities, and/or unique resources that will be utilized.
 - **Career Goals and Professional Development.** Describe the applicant's overall career goals and any plans for professional development. Explain how the proposed research training synergizes with the professional development activities to achieve the career goals.
 - **Responsible Conduct of Research.** State whether the UNMC Responsible Conduct in Research Training Program has already been completed or an expected date of completion. Detail ongoing training in research ethics, responsibility, rigor, and reproducibility, including concrete plans and the specific role of the Advisor/mentor in the applicant's instruction in these areas
7. **Optional Appendix** (maximum 10 pages). Only surveys, questionnaires, clinical protocols, and informed consent documents relevant to the application may be submitted.

B. **List of awards** received, while enrolled in the UNMC graduate program, from local, regional, or national

organizations.

- C. **List of research presentations.** List only those presentations made by the applicant after enrolling as UNMC graduate student. Include the full list of authors, the title of the presentation, and the meeting at which the work was presented.
- D. **List of research publications resulting from work performed as a Ph.D. student at UNMC.** Provide complete citations, including the full list of authors and title of the paper. Do not include manuscripts "In preparation." Categorize publications as full-length research manuscripts, abstracts, review articles, etc. Indicate which publications were peer-reviewed and indicate the status of any paper not yet published (i.e., submitted, in revision, in press, epub ahead of print, etc.).
- E. **List of professional development activities** (including leadership positions) since enrolling as a Ph.D. student at UNMC.
- F. **Optional brief statement** (< 200 words) indicating any personal circumstances that should be taken into account when the application is reviewed.

Once you have assembled the components, submit the materials to the Microsoft form: [2026 UNMC GRADUATE STUDIES Assistantship/Fellowship Submission – Fill out form](#)

----- **It is the applicant's responsibility to see that they meet the eligibility requirements and that all of the above-listed application materials are submitted correctly by each deadline. INCOMPLETE OR IMPROPERLY PREPARED APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.** -----

REVIEW CRITERIA AND SCORE COMPONENTS:

Scientific Potential, Productivity, and Preparedness of the applicant (Scored 1-9) – Evaluate the preparedness of the applicant to undertake the proposed training and their capacity to benefit from the fellowship. Evaluate the applicant's accomplishments in the context of their stage of training. Evaluate the application's scientific potential based on their current trajectory and whether they are the active drivers of their education/training.

Science and Scientific Resources (Scored 1-9) – Evaluate the breadth and depth of scientific understanding that the applicant conveys. Evaluate to what extent the applicant articulates the importance of their science and demonstrates an ability to study that problem in a rigorous scientific manner. Evaluate the quality of the proposed science and assess the depth of understanding demonstrated by the student regarding the scientific background, rigor, and feasibility of the approach. Evaluate the extent to which necessary technical, scientific, and clinical resources are specified and are realistically available to the applicant.

Training Plan (Scored 1-9) – Evaluate how well the proposed scientific project serves the applicant's training goals. Evaluate how the proposed training plan matches that of the research aims and whether it will prepare the applicant for a successful career. Evaluate whether the applicant has clearly defined areas of needed growth and/or weakness. Evaluate whether the applicant articulates a concrete, coherent, and cohesive plan for interacting with the Advisor/Mentor(s). Evaluate and comment on what

impact completion of the training plan will make in meeting the scientific development needs of the applicant and aid them in achieving their career goals.

When the review process has been completed, each applicant will be provided with the following:

- The detailed critiques of his/her application written by the reviewers, including their suggested scores (scale of 1-9) for Productivity/Preparation, Research Proposal, and Training Plan.
- Total Percentile Score (35% Productivity/Preparation, 30% Research Proposal, 35% Training Plan)

Unfortunately, we always receive many more meritorious proposals than can be supported with available funds. Total Percentile Scores for the entire applicant pool are ranked and, barring unusual circumstances, funding will be awarded from the most meritorious score downward until the funds are exhausted.

Submission of Extramural Predoctoral Fellowship Applications:

In addition to the UNMC Graduate Studies Assistantship/Fellowship program, students are encouraged to submit fellowship applications to the NIH or other granting agencies. In particular, any eligible student (US citizen or permanent resident) who receives UNMC Graduate Studies Assistantship/Fellowship support should apply to NIH for an F award. The UNMC Graduate Council has established several incentives for students who apply for extramural funding (as well as their mentors).

. In addition to these financial incentives, each student who successfully competes on a national or international level for a fellowship, grant or scholarship is eligible to be named a UNMC Graduate Student of Distinction.