

Competitive Fellowships Factors

Factors that may be considered in graduate admissions & the awarding of competitive fellowships

The faculty of the individual graduate programs has the primary responsibility for the selection of candidates for admission to these programs and the nomination of individuals for competitive fellowships. Typically the criteria utilized for these decisions focus on the prior educational attainment of the applicant, demonstrated interest in and preparation for the course of study, and evidence of the applicant's ability to successfully matriculate in the program. These decisions, by their very nature, require a comprehensive review of multiple factors by the faculty charged with selecting students for admission and/or the awarding of competitive fellowships

The actual procedures utilized by graduate program faculty to admit students and/or nominate them for competitive fellowships will differ according to the volume of applicants, the materials requested from applicants, and the specific criteria developed by the disciplinary faculty. The Texas Legislature has authorized graduate and professional programs to also consider various factors in the decision process and to prohibit the use of single measures as the sole factor in determining the outcomes of these decisions. This list is not exhaustive and programs are urged to utilize multiple relevant factors in making admission decisions. The additional factors that may be considered during the admission/competitive award process are:

- 1) an applicant's academic record as a high school student;
- 2) the socioeconomic background of the applicant while the applicant attended elementary and secondary school and was an undergraduate student, including any change in that background;
- 3) whether the applicant would be the first generation of the applicant's family to attend or graduate from an undergraduate program or from a graduate or professional program;
- 4) whether the applicant has multilingual proficiency;
- 5) the applicant's responsibilities while attending elementary and secondary school and as an undergraduate student, including whether the applicant was employed, whether the applicant helped to raise children, and other similar factors;
- 6) to achieve geographic diversity, the applicant's region of residence at the time of application and, if the applicant graduated from a public high school in this state within the preceding 20 years, the region in which the applicant's school district is located;
- 7) the applicant's involvement in community activities;
- 8) for admission into a professional program, the current comparative availability of members of that profession in the applicant's region of residence while the applicant attended elementary and secondary school;

- 9) whether the applicant was automatically admitted to a general academic teaching institution as an undergraduate student under Section 51.803 (the 10% rule); and
- 10) the applicant's personal interview.

In addition, the Texas Legislature has prohibited the use of scores from standardized admission tests as the sole criterion for consideration of an applicant for admission or awarding of a competitive fellowship, or as the primary criterion to end consideration of an applicant.

Applicants for admission to a graduate or professional program or applicants for competitive graduate fellowships are directed to the individual graduate/professional program of their choice to get complete information on the application process for that specific program.