



Prospective Fellow Information, Spring 2021

About the Self Graduate Fellowship

The Madison and Lila Self Graduate Fellowship (SGF) offers a unique opportunity for students seeking a Ph.D. at the University of Kansas. SGF selects students with the attributes that will put them on track to make a difference in the world and in their professions. Self Graduate Fellows demonstrate initiative, passion for achievement and devotion to lifelong learning. Specifically, SGF is looking for high potential individuals who have a clear vision, career goals, leadership potential, motivation and a strong work ethic.

Outstanding Ph.D. applicants and first-year Ph.D. students in eligible disciplines may be nominated by their departments for a Self Graduate Fellowship. Nominees must be U.S. citizens and must have received their first bachelor's degree within the last eight years.

Nomination Process

KU academic departments identify and nominate applicants for doctoral study and first-year doctoral students who are potential Self Graduate Fellows. Students who are a strong fit to the program are welcome and encouraged to ask their department for a nomination. The nomination file that is submitted by the department will include a letter of nomination from the department, your graduate school application, academic letters of recommendation, transcripts of all college or university work, GRE scores (if required), your application statement to the department, your resume, and other supporting materials from your file. The department may contact you to get additional documents specifically for the Self Graduate Fellowship. For example, letters of recommendation that specifically address your fit to SGF. The department will also ask you to submit a SGF personal statement. *This is one of the most important documents in the nomination process.* SGF relies on this file to tell how you match the attributes of a Self Graduate Fellow.

Instructions

As a nominee, you will need to submit to your nominating department three items:

1. Self Graduate Fellowship Personal Statement
2. Access/Waiver form
3. Current Resume
4. Letters of Recommendation specific to SGF (optional, but strongly encouraged)



1. Self Graduate Fellowship Personal Statement

Your personal statement is critical to your success in the Self Graduate Fellowship selection process. This is your opportunity to demonstrate how you fit the profile of a Self Graduate Fellow. Your statement should be authentic and should tell your story in your own words. Remember that through this document you will try to convince the evaluation committee that you deserve an interview. Edit the statement carefully and don't be afraid to rewrite it. Before you begin, be sure to review the SGF website (selfgraduate.ku.edu). Your statement should be two to three pages long and in 12-point type. Your personal statement must address the following points:

- The academic and professional choices you have made to date and why
- Your career goals, both short-term and long-term (Do you plan to pursue a career in government, the private sector, or higher education?)
- How you envision yourself in a leadership role- expanding human knowledge and/or benefiting society as a whole
- How you match the Self Graduate Fellow profile (see below)

Self Graduate Fellow Profile:

“The ideal candidate possesses unusual motivation, passion, and potential to make significant contributions to their profession and to society. In addition to a strong academic record, the candidate has leadership, communication, and decision-making skills. Should display personal attributes including self-awareness, emotional maturity, initiative, tenacity, energy, vision, risk-taking, and interpersonal effectiveness. The ideal candidate is interested in personal development and lifelong learning and is committed to participation in the Fellow Development Program.”

2. Access/Waiver Form

A completed access/waiver form is required. A form submitted to your department from your email address will be accepted in lieu of a signed hard copy. The access/waiver form is the last page of this document.

3. Current Resume

All nominees for 2021 should submit a resume to the nominating department. The resume should highlight experiences and significant achievements from work, school, volunteer projects, and extracurricular activities. Awards and honors, and research experiences should be listed. Memberships and offices held should be noted.

4. SGF Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation are not required, however, students are strongly encouraged to include SGF specific letters in their nomination. This provides additional materials for reviewers to refer when determining student fit to profile. It also provides students with the option to include letter writers who may not traditionally be included in graduate admissions, but can offer information on SGF attributes and program fit.



Deadline

Your SGF personal statement and access/waiver form must be submitted to your nominating department prior to the nomination deadline. **The deadline for departments to nominate students is February 3, 2021 at noon CST.** Please contact your department for additional details as they may require students to submit additional materials before the SGF deadline.

The Selection Process

The Self Graduate Fellowship Board of Trustees and a faculty evaluation committee work to fulfill the mission and goals of the fellowship when selecting students to interview for the fellowship. Their responsibility is to select individuals whose academic preparation, vision, and commitment to career goals match the Self Graduate Fellow profile. A brief telephone interview may be used in the initial review.

Self Graduate Fellowship Interview

Candidates selected for on-campus interviews will be notified via email by mid-February 2021.

Selected individuals will be invited to campus for interviews, which will be held March 1-5, 2021. Please block this time since no alternate dates will be scheduled.

Those invited to interview will be asked to provide proof of U.S. citizenship prior to the interview. Acceptable documents are a copy of a birth certificate, a passport, or proof of naturalization.

You will be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred for the interview trip to Lawrence. However, it is important to remain in direct contact with Self Graduate Fellowship Office after interview invitation has been extended, in order to coordinate travel accommodations.

The interview is an ideal time to explore the KU campus and the city of Lawrence. During the visit, interviewees may have the opportunity to interact with faculty, other graduate students and Self Graduate Fellows. If you are visiting on campus for a scheduled department event, there is no guarantee your interview time slot will coordinate with the department schedule. The Self Graduate Fellowship is an independent office and will be scheduling a wide range of students.

The Self Graduate Fellowship interview will take approximately one hour. During this time, students will have the opportunity to describe their accomplishments and their goals to the interview team. The setting is a small conference room. No audio visual equipment will be used and handouts are not necessary. Business attire is appropriate.

Self Graduate Fellowship Offers

After the interviews are completed, the SGF Board of Trustees makes final selections. Offers are extended in cooperation with academic departments by mid-March 2021.

The deadline for student acceptance of offers is April 15, 2021. Students are encouraged to communicate their decisions as soon as possible as their decision may impact other candidates.

If you have questions, please contact our office, 785-864-7238, or email sgf@ku.edu.



Access/Waiver Form for Student Files and Recommendation Letters

Letters of Recommendation, Fellowship Selection Documents

Madison and Lila Self Graduate Fellowship at The University of Kansas

Public Law 93-380 permits students or alumni to have access to their files or to waive their right to see recommendations written concerning them after January 1, 1975. Please indicate your preference by signing one of the following:

_____ I understand that Public Law 93-380 provides for access to my file, and **I wish to retain my right to access all letters of recommendation and evaluation documents in conjunction with the nomination for a Self Graduate Fellowship.**

Date _____

Signature _____

OR:

In accordance with 438 (a) (1) (B) (iii) of Public Law 93-380, **I hereby freely waive my right to access all letters of recommendation and evaluation documents in conjunction with the nomination for a Self Graduate Fellowship.**

_____ I understand that these documents may not be used for any purpose other than evaluation of my qualifications for the fellowship, and that by signing this waiver, I retain the right to learn the names of any and all persons submitting such letters and documents.

Date _____

Signature _____