

## Dr. Dionel Avilés '53 and Dr. James Johnson '67 Fellowship Program 2023-2024 Nomination Guidelines

### *Deadlines for master's and doctoral submissions\*:*

*5 p.m. CST, Wednesday, February 1, 2023, and*

*5 p.m. CST, Wednesday, March 1, 2023*

*\*Departments/Interdisciplinary Degree Programs must identify which round they wish to submit master's and doctoral nominations by Monday, January 23, 2023 at: <https://tx.ag/AvilesJohnsonRoundSelection>  
Master's and doctoral nominations may not be submitted to both rounds.*

Texas A&M University believes that diversity is an indispensable component of academic excellence. The Dr. Dionel Avilés '53 and Dr. James Johnson '67 Fellowship Program seeks to increase diversity in the graduate and professional student population at Texas A&M University and support the development of high achieving scholars who show promise of distinguished careers for the benefit of all students.

**Nominees must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents who will earn bachelor's or master's degrees no later than August 2023 and have applied for graduate admission to Texas A&M University (TAMU) for the Summer or Fall 2023.** While it is not required that nominees be admitted at the time of nomination, the nominating department is expected to offer admission to nominees and execute an "admit" decision code in the admission portal should they be awarded the fellowship. **Master's students currently enrolled at TAMU are eligible for doctoral nominations.**

Nominees should have a superior academic record and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- 1) Belong to gender, racial or ethnic groups that have been historically under-represented in graduate study in their discipline, in the United States, or at TAMU;
- 2) Have attended a minority serving institution for at least two years of their undergraduate degree or have an undergraduate degree conferred from a minority serving institution, as defined by the [U.S. Department of Education](#);
- 3) Have a disability defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, as described in [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#), as amended;
- 4) Be a veteran of the U.S. military; or
- 5) Come from a disadvantaged background, as defined by the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#), for those who meet **two or more** of the following criteria:
  - Were or are currently homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act;
  - Were or are currently in the foster care system, as defined by the Administration for Children and Families;
  - Were eligible for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program for two or more years;
  - Have/had no parents or legal guardians who completed a bachelor's degree;
  - Were or are currently eligible for Federal Pell grants;
  - Received support from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) as a parent or child;
  - Grew up in one of the following areas: (a) a U.S. rural area, as designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer, or (b) a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services-designated Low-Income and Health Professional Shortage Areas (qualifying zip codes are included [here](#)). Only one of the two possibilities (a or b) can be used as a criterion for the disadvantaged background definition.

**Nominations must include a diversity statement and relevant supporting data and narrative, correlating with criteria items (1) – (5), about the basis of the nominee’s eligibility.** For example, if females are underrepresented in electrical and computer engineering (criteria item (1)), data provided should show the percentage of women in electrical and computer engineering in their department/program and/or profession.

In addition to meeting the stated criteria of eligibility, nominees for the 2023-2024 Avilés-Johnson Fellowship must be applying for enrollment in the following colleges/schools or interdisciplinary degree programs:

1. **Colleges/Schools:** Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture, Arts and Sciences, Bush School of Government and Public Service, Education and Human Development, Engineering, Mays Business School, Performance, Visualization and Fine Arts, or Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.
2. **Interdisciplinary Degree Programs:** Biotechnology, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences, Genetics, Neuroscience, Toxicology, or Water Management and Hydrological Science.

**The Avilés-Johnson Doctoral Fellowship provides four years of funding for domestic doctoral students enrolling for the first time in a doctoral program in Summer or Fall 2023.**

<b>Avilés-Johnson Doctoral Fellowship Collaborative Funding Details</b>
<b>Years 1-3: \$20,000 annual stipend, 25% or 50% assistantship, and tuition and required fees</b>
<p>\$20,000 stipend paid by the Graduate and Professional School in years 1-3</p> <p><b>25% FTE college/school, department, or program-funded assistantship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grad School and college/school, collaboratively, pay tuition as well as required university and college/school fees for full-time enrollment.</li> <li>▪ Grad School will reimburse awardees participating in a Texas A&amp;M University System (TAMUS) insurance program for medical insurance at an amount equivalent to the cost of the employer contribution for the same premium category on the A&amp;M Grad Plan. For fellows participating in a non-TAMUS insurance program, the Grad School will reimburse the cost of medical insurance at an amount equivalent to the cost of the employer contribution for the employee only premium category on the A&amp;M Grad Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>50% FTE college/school, department, or program-funded assistantship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grad School and college/school, collaboratively, pay tuition as well as required university and college/school fees for full-time enrollment.</li> <li>▪ Employing unit pays employer contribution for graduate student employee health plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 4: 50% assistantship (mandatory) and tuition and required fees</b>
<p><b>50% FTE college/school, department, or program-funded assistantship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assistantship payee and college/school, collaboratively, pay tuition as well as required university and college/school fees for full-time enrollment.</li> <li>▪ Employing unit pays employer contribution for graduate student employee health plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 5: 50% assistantship (optional)</b>
<p><b>50% FTE college/school, department, or program-funded assistantship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assistantship payee and college/school, collaboratively, pay tuition as well as required university and college/school fees for full-time enrollment.</li> <li>▪ Employing unit pays employer contribution for graduate student employee health plan.</li> </ul>

**The Avilés-Johnson Master’s Fellowship provides two years of funding for domestic master’s students enrolling for the first time in a master’s program in Summer or Fall 2023.**

<b>Avilés-Johnson Master’s Fellowship Collaborative Funding Details</b>
<b>Years 1 and 2: \$15,000 annual stipend, 25% or 50% assistantship, and tuition and required fees</b>
<p>\$15,000 stipend paid by the Graduate and Professional School in year 1 and year 2</p> <p><b>25% FTE college/school, department, or program-funded assistantship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grad School and college/school, collaboratively, pay tuition as well as required university and college/school fees for full-time enrollment.</li> <li>▪ Grad School will reimburse awardees participating in a Texas A&amp;M University System (TAMUS) insurance program for medical insurance at an amount equivalent to the cost of the employer contribution for the same premium category on the A&amp;M Grad Plan. For fellows participating in a non-TAMUS insurance program, the Grad School will reimburse the cost of medical insurance at an amount equivalent to the cost of the employer contribution for the employee only premium category on the A&amp;M Grad Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>50% FTE college/school, department, or program-funded assistantship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grad School and college/school, collaboratively, pay tuition as well as required university and college/school fees for full-time enrollment.</li> <li>▪ Employing unit pays employer contribution for graduate student employee health plan.</li> </ul>

Some exceptions may be approved by the Grad School for a department/program to offer a scholarship instead of an assistantship. The scholarship amount must, at a minimum match a 25% FTE assistantship at the department’s standard assistantship rate. **In those cases, the department/program must also provide payment for the student health insurance plan.** The request to offer a scholarship instead of an assistantship must be submitted to and approved by the Grad School **before** the nomination is submitted. Approved scholarships, to date, are noted below.

<b>Mays Business School (MBA)</b>
<b>Year 1: \$15,000 stipend, approved scholarship, and tuition and required fees</b>
<b>Year 2 (fall only): \$7,500 stipend, approved scholarship, and tuition and required fees</b>
<p>\$15,000 stipend in year 1 and \$7,500 stipend in fall of year 2 paid by the Graduate and Professional School</p> <p><b>Approved scholarship (at a minimum, equivalent to department’s 25% FTE assistantship rate) in year 1 and in Fall of year 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grad School and college/school, collaboratively, pay tuition as well as required university and college/school fees for full-time enrollment.</li> <li>▪ Scholarship unit will reimburse awardees participating in a Texas A&amp;M University System (TAMUS) insurance program for medical insurance at an amount equivalent to the cost of the employer contribution for the same premium category on the A&amp;M Grad Plan. For fellows participating in a non-TAMUS insurance program, the Grad School will reimburse the cost of medical insurance at an amount equivalent to the cost of the employer contribution for the employee only premium category on the A&amp;M Grad Plan.</li> </ul>

**The Bush School of Government and Public Service (INTA and MPSA)**

**Years 1 and 2: \$15,000 stipend, approved scholarship, and tuition and required fees**

\$15,000 stipend paid by the Graduate and Professional School in year 1 and year 2

**Approved scholarship (at a minimum, equivalent to department's 25% FTE assistantship rate) in year 1 and year 2**

- Grad School and college/school, collaboratively, pay tuition as well as required university and college/school fees for full-time enrollment.
- Scholarship unit will reimburse awardees participating in a Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) insurance program for medical insurance at an amount equivalent to the cost of the employer contribution for the same premium category on the A&M Grad Plan. For fellows participating in a non-TAMUS insurance program, the Grad School will reimburse the cost of medical insurance at an amount equivalent to the cost of the employer contribution for the employee only premium category on the A&M Grad Plan.

**For both the master's and doctoral level awards, work effort for the assistantship should be consistent with FTE (e.g. standard work effort for 25% FTE equals 10 hours/week). Funding begins Fall 2023.**

As part of the nomination process, nominators must submit the student's GraduateCAS, EngineeringCAS or BusinessCAS application materials **and** a two-page letter of nomination that provides an evaluation of the applicant's 1) superior academic performance, 2) relevant experiences outside the classroom, 3) other indicators of future success; and, finally, 4) how this applicant will contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program, the university, and to the future profession. In addition, each nomination should include a diversity statement with supporting data and narrative. **Attached is a checklist of items that MUST be included in the nomination packet. The deadlines for submitting Avilés-Johnson Fellowship master's and doctoral nominations are 5 p.m. CST, February 1, 2023, and March 1, 2023.**

**Reviewers will consider master's and doctoral nominations separately.** Departments or Interdisciplinary Degree Programs may submit **up to five (5) master's nominations and up to fifteen (15) doctoral nominations** in either round 1 or round 2. Master's and doctoral nominations may not be submitted to both rounds. The award selection committee will complete reviews following each submission deadline (February 1, 2023, and March 1, 2023). Nominators, graduate advisors, department heads, and graduate deans will be notified of which applicants have been selected for the Avilés-Johnson Fellowship within three (3) weeks of the nomination deadline.

## 2023-2024 Dr. Dionel Avilés '53 and Dr. James Johnson '67

### FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM EVALUATION CRITERIA

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Reviewers will consider all aspects of the applicant's experiences in the evaluation process with a focus on excellence and how the applicant will contribute to diversity at Texas A&M. The review elements noted below may be gauged in multiple parts of the nomination application. Such measures include but are not limited to: cumulative grade point average in the wider context of the academic record; the maturity and sophistication of the personal statement; the extent and quality of prior research experience; recommendations from faculty; and correspondence between research interests and available faculty expertise.

- **Evidence of superior academic achievement** such as class rank; GPA; honors or other awards; etc.
- **Relevant experiences outside of the classroom** such as extracurricular experiences related to course of study; leadership experiences; work experiences; military experiences; internships; personal history; international experiences (i.e., study abroad, semester at sea, etc.); research experiences (either at their own university or in summer undergraduate research opportunities at other universities); oral or poster presentations; publications; etc.
- **Non-cognitive and personal attributes** that speak to the nominee's research potential, adaptability, creativity, and collegiality; motivation and experience; persistence in and commitment to educational success; social and emotional skills and character traits; etc.

## 2023-2024 Dr. Dionel Avilés '53 and Dr. James Johnson '67 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM NOMINATOR CHECKLIST

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All nominations will be submitted via the InfoReady application submission system and **MUST** include the items noted below.

**For master's and doctoral nominations of students NOT currently enrolled at TAMU:**

1. Nomination application entry fields regarding nominee.
2. A **nomination letter** clearly describing the nominee's: 1) superior academic performance, 2) relevant experiences outside the classroom, and 3) other indicators of future success (**no more than two (2) pages**).
3. A **diversity statement** addressing how the nominee will contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program, university, and/or future profession. The diversity statement **must** include relevant supporting data and narrative, **correlating with criteria items (1) – (5)**, about the basis of the nominee's eligibility regarding noted markers of diversity (**no more than one (1) page**).
4. At least one, but no more than three (3), letters of recommendation for the nominee.\*
5. **Financial Commitment** summary noting the department/program's financial offer to complement the collaborative funding package.\*\*
6. Nominee's resume or curriculum vitae.
7. GraduateCAS, EngineeringCAS or BusinessCAS application materials (e.g. application, personal statement, transcripts, etc.).

*\*Letters of recommendation included in GraduateCAS, EngineeringCAS, or BusinessCAS application materials are sufficient.*

*\*\*Information from the Financial Commitment will be entered directly into the InfoReady nomination application. A Financial Commitment document should not be uploaded with the supporting documents.*

## 2023-2024 Dr. Dionel Avilés '53 and Dr. James Johnson '67 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM NOMINATOR CHECKLIST

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All nominations will be submitted via the InfoReady application submission system and MUST include the items noted below.

**For master's nominations of students currently enrolled in a TAMU undergraduate program:**

1. Nomination application entry fields regarding nominee.
2. A **nomination letter** clearly describing the nominee's: 1) superior academic performance, 2) relevant experiences outside the classroom, and 3) other indicators of future success (**no more than two (2) pages**).
3. A **diversity statement** that addresses how the nominee will contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program, university, and/or future profession. The diversity statement **must** include relevant supporting data and narrative, **correlating with criteria items (1) – (5)**, about the basis of the nominee's eligibility regarding noted markers of diversity (**no more than one (1) page**).
4. At least one, but no more than three (3), letters of recommendation for the nominee.\*
5. **Financial Commitment** summary noting the department/program's financial offer to complement the collaborative funding package.\*\*
6. Student's resume or curriculum vitae.
7. Copy of undergraduate degree transcript.

*\*Letters of recommendation included in GraduateCAS, EngineeringCAS, or BusinessCAS application materials are sufficient.*

*\*\*Information from the Financial Commitment will be entered directly into the InfoReady nomination application. A Financial Commitment document should not be uploaded with the supporting documents.*



## 2023-2024 Dr. Dionel Avilés '53 and Dr. James Johnson '67 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM NOMINATOR CHECKLIST

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All nominations will be submitted via the InfoReady application submission system and MUST include the items noted below.

**For doctoral nominations of students currently enrolled in a TAMU undergraduate or master's program:**

1. Nomination application entry fields regarding nominee.
2. A **nomination letter** clearly describing the nominee's: 1) superior academic performance, 2) relevant experiences outside the classroom, and 3) other indicators of future success (**no more than two (2) pages**).
3. A **diversity statement** that addresses how the nominee will contribute to diversity in the nominating department/program, university, and/or future profession. The diversity statement **must** include relevant supporting data and narrative, **correlating with criteria items (1) – (5)**, about the basis of the nominee's eligibility regarding noted markers of diversity (**no more than one (1) page**).
4. **Letters of Recommendation:**
  - For nominations of students currently enrolled in a TAMU undergraduate program:
    - At least one, but no more than three (3), letters of recommendation for the nominee. Letters of recommendation included in GraduateCAS, EngineeringCAS, or BusinessCAS application materials are sufficient.
  - For nominations of students currently enrolled in a TAMU master's program:
    - Two (2) **new** letters of recommendation for the student if currently enrolled in a TAMU master's program (**no more than four (4) total pages**).
5. **Financial Commitment** summary noting the department/program's financial offer to complement the collaborative funding package.\*
6. Student's resume or curriculum vitae.
7. Copy of undergraduate degree transcript.
8. Copy of TAMU master's degree transcript (if applicable).

*\*Information from the Financial Commitment will be entered directly into the InfoReady nomination application. A Financial Commitment document should not be uploaded with the supporting documents.*