


APPLICATION

2009/2010



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Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois 2009-2010

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Program (DFI) was established by the Illinois General Assembly and signed as Public Act 093-0862 on August 4, 2004. The purpose of DFI is to diversify the faculties and professional staffs at higher education institutions in the state of Illinois with the major emphasis being on the diversification of faculty.

Completed applications are to be submitted to the Institutional Representative at your participating institution (as listed at the back of this application packet).

*Please note that information and requirements contained in this document are subject to modifications by the DFI Program Board, as incorporated in the DFI Program administrative rules.

DFI provides financial assistance, based on demonstrated financial need, for members of traditionally underrepresented groups to pursue and complete graduate degrees at Illinois institutions of higher education. DFI is a program for graduate students traditionally underrepresented in higher education who have received high school diplomas or postsecondary degrees from educational institutions in Illinois or who have three or more years of residency in Illinois and are citizens or permanent residents of the United States. Applicants compete in a statewide competition for DFI awards at over 30 Illinois institutions.

Selection of award recipients in this rigorous competition is based on a comprehensive review of the application materials. All academic fields at the master's and doctoral level will be considered for this award; however, the DFI Program Board has established the following priorities: applicants interested in obtaining a full-time instructional position in Illinois higher education, applicants in the first year of their graduate program, applicants pursuing degrees in any of the sciences, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) fields, and applicants pursuing a doctorate or other appropriate terminal degree. Stipend levels are subject to change, but are projected to be up to \$20,000 for full-time enrollment. Full-time enrollment is required while on fellowship. Some participating institutions also provide a tuition waiver/scholarship. Applicants should check with the DFI Institutional Representative for specific information. The award is renewable for one year for master's students and up to three years for doctoral students, contingent upon the recipient making satisfactory academic progress toward completion of the degree. Renewal definitions also are subject to revision by the DFI Program Board and administrative rules.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Terms of the Award

Upon graduation or separation from the DFI institution, an award recipient must agree to actively seek and accept when offered a teaching or non-teaching full-time appointment at an Illinois postsecondary educational institution, or accept a position as an employee of this state in an administrative, educational-related position equal to the number of years for which he or she receives the DFI fellowship. Students failing to fulfill this condition of the award shall be required to repay 20 percent of their cumulative award amount, subject to revision by the DFI Program Board.

The DFI Award is available for a maximum of four years:

Doctorate	four (4) years
Master's	two (2) years

Master's degree holders funded through DFI are eligible to apply for additional years of support for doctoral study. Total DFI funding is not to exceed four years.

Participant Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- **ILLINOIS RESIDENCY.** To be classified as an Illinois resident, an applicant must have received a high school diploma or postsecondary degree from an accredited educational institution in Illinois or have three or more years of residency in Illinois.
- **UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS.** “Traditionally underrepresented minority group” means any of the minority groups designated in the Act which are represented in Illinois post-baccalaureate enrollment at a percentage rate less than the percentage of the minority group’s representation in the total Illinois population.
- **ACADEMIC ABILITY.** Applicants must possess above average academic ability as evidenced by:
 1. An earned baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher learning;
 2. A minimum grade point average of 2.75 (scale 4.0 = A) in the last 60 hours of undergraduate work or over a 3.2 (scale 4.0 = A) in at least 9 hours of graduate study;
 3. Unconditional admission to a post-baccalaureate degree program.
- **ACADEMIC PURSUIT.** Applicants in all academic disciplines are eligible. Candidates pursuing degrees in any of the sciences, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) fields are encouraged to apply. Applicants must be pursuing a doctorate, terminal master’s, or master’s degree.
- **FINANCIAL NEED.** Applicants must demonstrate financial need. A FAFSA must be filed each year (by February 6, 2009) to maintain eligibility.

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GENERAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. The DFI application and required attachments must be submitted directly to the DFI Institutional Representative at the institution the applicant plans to attend* no later than **February 20, 2009 or by the internal deadline set by the applicant's institution.**
2. Applications (or attachments) sent directly to the DFI Administrative Office in Springfield by the applicant will not be considered.
3. Applicants must respond to every item on the DFI Application Form.
4. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.**
5. **Applicants should check with their DFI institutional representative for internal deadlines and any additional information on admission or application procedures.**

*Applicants must be unconditionally admitted to the institution at the time of application.

Proof of Admission

Applicants must be unconditionally admitted to a degree-granting program at the time of application. Applicants admitted probationally or on limited status due to GPA or test scores will not be considered. Proof of admission is demonstrated by including an official letter of admission on institutional letterhead. Copies are acceptable.

Financial Need

1. Applicants must read and complete the Financial Information Form, the Notification of Special Circumstances Form, and provide federal tax forms upon request.
2. Applicants must complete a 2009-2010 FAFSA online no later than February 6, 2009.
3. The applicant's financial need must be certified by the admitting institution.
4. The DFI Program Board reserves the right to request additional financial documentation.
5. If awarded, fellows are required to provide the first two pages of 2008 federal tax forms to the Institutional Representative by May 1, 2009.

Professional Goals Statement/ Statement of Underrepresented Status

The *Professional Goals Statement* must include: (1) intended academic goal(s), including preferred academic work setting (i.e. community college, four-year/research institution, or four-year/teaching institution), (2) intended position in Illinois higher education (faculty or administrative) (3) plans for achieving intended goal(s) and (4) current and/or past professional experiences that would be helpful in achieving intended goal(s).

The *Statement of Underrepresented Status* must include: (1) identification of the applicant's underrepresented group, (2) a description of how the applicant's underrepresented status influenced personal and academic development, and (3) why the applicant should be awarded a fellowship earmarked specifically for underrepresented groups in higher education.

See page 6 for more detailed information regarding essay requirements.

