

For: FAS and FSA National Office Employees

FY 2000 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Congressional Fellowship Program

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Purpose

This notice informs employees that HRD, Training and Development Branch (TDB) is accepting nominations for the FY 2000 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program, formerly known as, The Dr. Elmer D. Ball Congressional Fellowship Program.

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Program Overview

The USDA Graduate School Career Development Programs Division established the Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program in 1996. The Program offers both a 12-month and a 6-month session that provides senior-level Federal employees at the GS/GM 13 through 15 grade level the opportunity to work with Congress. The selectees will gain an in-depth understanding of the legislative processes of the Senate and House of Representatives. The program coordinator maintains regular contact with the Fellows and their congressional sponsors throughout the assignments to ensure the most successful experience possible.

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Disposal Date March 1, 2000	Distribution FAS and FSA National Office Employees
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1 Congressional Fellowship Program (Continued)

**B
Program
Overview
(Continued)**

Assignments. Placements are available in both the Senate and House of Representatives in Members' offices and on the staff of a congressional committee. The Fall/Winter Session assignments begin in February with orientation in January.

Special seminars. Throughout their assignment Fellows attend special seminars on current political and legislative issues.

Credit option. The University of Southern California's Washington Public Affairs Center offers participants who complete the fellowship program the opportunity for graduate credit.

The Congressional Fellowship includes the following components:

- **Congressional assignment** - benefits both the Congressional office and the employee
 - **orientation** - mandatory intensive 1 week training provided in January 2000 for both the 12-month and six-month sessions
 - **special seminars** - Graduate School staff will conduct educational developmental seminars for the Fellows throughout their assignments.
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Program Dates**

Following are major dates for the FY 2000 Fellowship Program.

FY 2000 Fellowship Program	Dates
All nomination packages due in TDB	August 9, 1999
Selected nominees' packages sent to Graduate School	August 27, 1999
Selected Fellows announced by Graduate School	October 29, 1999
Orientation session starts	January 10, 2000
Assignments begin	February 7, 2000
6-month assignments end	August 4, 2000

Note: Nominee may attend only one session.

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1 Congressional Fellowship Program (Continued)

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Cost

Tuition cost for the:

- 12-month session is \$4,300
 - 6-month session is \$2,900.
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Contact

If there are any questions about this notice, contact Claudette Parm, HRD, TDB, on 202-418-9053.

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Accommodation

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in this training shall contact Claudette E. Parm at 202-418-9053 or TDD 202-418-9107 by August 9, 1999.

2 Nomination Process

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Nominee

Prerequisites

Nominee must:

- be grade 13 and above
 - be a career employee in FAS or FSA National Office
 - be interested in an in-depth knowledge of the legislative branch processes and culture
 - have the ability to work independently with minimum supervision
 - be willing to explore new ways of working to achieve results
 - have demonstrated flexibility in work habits.
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2 Nomination Process (Continued)

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Obtaining Nomination Forms

FAS and FSA National Office employees may obtain forms from 1 of the following:

- HRD, TDB training contacts
 - outside of Room 3095-South
 - the u:\wpforms directory under the filename nomconfl.wpd.
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Nomination Procedure

Eligible employees may apply for the Fellows Program by submitting a nomination package containing the following:

- a completed FY 2000 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program Nomination Form (Exhibit 1), including supervisory signature
 - an approved SF-182
 - a current SF-171, OF-612, or detailed resume signed and dated by applicant with current home address
 - a cover letter from the applicant describing the level of specific skills and talents that represent the applicant's strongest professional competencies, and a statement describing how the fellowship will benefit the applicant and the Agency
 - a list of education and training courses taken in the last 5 years
 - writing samples, preferably a report or in-depth memorandum
 - supervisory concurrence/signature is required
 - cover letter from applicant's supervisor assessing the applicant's executive potential and need for this training/developmental experience.
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2 Nomination Process (Continued)

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**Submitting
Nomination
Packages**

Send the original and 6 copies of the completed nomination package to HRD, TDB using either of the following methods.

Method of Delivery	Address
regular U.S. Mail	CLAUDETTE PARM USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB STOP 0574 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20250-0574
Special delivery, hand carry, or FEDEX	CLAUDETTE PARM 2101 L Street NW Suite 303-A Washington, DC 20037

Note: FAXED copies of nomination packages will **not** be accepted.

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**Deadline for
Submitting
Nomination**

HRD, TDB must **receive** all completed nomination packages by **COB August 9, 1999. Nominations received after this date will not be considered. Substitution of items will not be permitted after the deadline.**

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3 Agency Selection Process

**A
Participants by
Organization**

Employees selected will be organizationally distributed as follows:

- FAS may support up to 3 nominees
 - FSA may support 1 nominee.
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**B
Selecting
Nominees**

Nominees will be selected as follows:

- HRD, TDB reviews applications for eligibility
- a panel will review and rank applicants using criteria established agency-wide
- each Administrator, or designee, shall select final nominees.

Note: Applicants will be considered without discrimination for any non-merit reason such as race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status.

Recommendations are made to the Administrator based on the following table.

IF the nominee is an employee of...	THEN...
FSA	Administrator, or designee, selects final participant based on panel rankings.
FAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Advisory Group makes recommendation based on panel rankings• Administrator, or designee, selects final participants based on recommendation.

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3 Agency Selection Process (Continued)

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Panel Membership

HRD, TDB will select and facilitate panels to review and rank applicants. A separate panel will be established for each Agency consisting of:

- 3 voting agency employees
- 1 nonvoting HRD, TDB representative
- 1 nonvoting EEO representative
- 1 nonvoting AFSCME or AFSA Union representative, based on the agency's selection panel.

Note: A panel will be used **only** if the number of applicants exceeds the number of positions available.

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Agency Nomination

HRD, TDB notifies employees of the nomination decision and submits the completed nomination package to the USDA Graduate School for review and selection decision.

5 Selection Process

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USDA Graduate School

Graduate School staff selects Fellows as follows:

- reviews each nomination package
 - compares individual's skills, experience, and preferences, to the requirements for each assignment received from the Congressional office
 - makes the selections for fellowships
 - notifies Agency and employee of assignment.
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FY 2000 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program Nomination Form

REPRODUCE LOCALLY. Include form number and date on reproductions.

**FY 2000 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program
NOMINATION FORM**

(Formerly Dr. Elmer D. Ball Congressional Fellowship Program)

NOTE: Deadline - Must be received in the Training and Development Branch by COB August 9, 1999

1. Indicate appropriate Agency (Check): FSA <input type="checkbox"/> FAS <input type="checkbox"/>		2. Name	
3. Division/Staff (Include Office Address)	4. Room No. and STOP Code	5. E-Mail Address	6. Telephone Number
7. Title	8. Full-Time Federal Employee Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		9. Grade
			10. FAX Number

11. Please notify your supervisor that you are submitting your name for consideration of the Congressional Fellowship Program. Have your supervisor sign below to indicate that they have been notified and are aware that selectees are away from their job for a minimum of 5 months.

Supervisor's Signature	Date	Supervisor's Telephone Number
Print Supervisor's Name and Title	Supervisor's Mailing Address	

12. Required information for the Completed FY 2000 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program Nomination Form

Please put this completed FY 2000 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program Nomination Form, including supervisory signature on top of the other required information listed below:

- A. an approved SF 182, Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of training form
- B. current SF 171, OF-612, or detailed resume signed and dated by applicant with current home address.
- C. a cover letter from the applicant describing the level of specific skills and talents that represent their strongest professional competencies, and a statement describing how the fellowship will benefit them and their agency.
- D. list of relevant educational and training courses taken in the last 5 years.
- E. writing samples preferably a report or in-depth memorandum
- F. supervisory concurrence/signature is required
- G. cover letter from applicant' supervisor assessing their executive potential and need for this training/development experience.

Please submit this nomination form and information listed in Item 12 (the original and 6 copies). All completed nomination packages must be received in the Training and Development Branch by COB August 9, 1999.

13. Please send the original and six copies of the completed nomination package using either of the methods listed below:

If sending by..... Regular U.S. mail	THEN use the address..... Claudette Parm USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB STOP 0574 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington DC 20250-0574
Special delivery, hand carry or FEDEX	Claudette Parm USDA-FSA-HRD-TDB 2101 L Street, NW, Suite 303-A Washington, DC 20037

NOTE: FAXED copies are not excepted.

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