

**For:** FSA Federal Employees and FAS National Office Employees

**FY 2001 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program**

**Approved by:** Acting Deputy Administrator, Management



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**1 Overview**

**A**

**Purpose**

This notice informs employees that HRD, Training and Development Branch (TDB) is accepting nominations for the 2001 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program (formerly known as The Dr. Elmer D. Ball Congressional Fellowship Program). The USDA Graduate School Career Development Programs Division sponsors this Program.

**B**

**Contact**

If there are any questions about this notice, contact Claudette Parm, HRD, TDB, at 202-418-9053 or TDD 202-418-9107.

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**2 Fellowship Program Information**

**A**

**Fellowship Program Overview**

The USDA Graduate School Career Development Programs Division established the Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program, in 1966. FSA and FAS are participating in the 6-month session that provides senior-level Federal employees at the GS/GM 13 through 15 or equivalent 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.

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<p><b>Disposal Date</b></p> <p>May 1, 2001</p>	<p><b>Distribution</b></p> <p>FAS National Office employees; FSA Federal employees; State Offices relay to County Offices</p>
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2 Fellowship Program Information (Continued)

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**A**  
**Fellowship  
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.

**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 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program includes the following components:

- **Congressional assignment** - benefits both the Congressional office and the employee
  - **Orientation** - mandatory intensive 2 weeks' training provided in January 2001 for 6-month session
  - **Special seminars** - Graduate School staff will conduct educational developmental seminars for the Fellows throughout their assignments
  - **Mentoring** - a senior faculty member will serve as a mentor to provide support and guidance during the fellowship.
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**B**  
**Program Costs**

Tuition costs for the 6-month session is \$2,900.

- Tuition for employees should be coded to their originating office and costs will be covered from National-level funding.
  - Tuition does **not** include travel and lodging costs. Travel and lodging costs will be funded by the employee's office travel budget.
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**2 Fellowship Program Information (Continued)**

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**C**

**Program Dates**

Following are major dates for the FY 2001 Fellowship Program.

<b>FY 2001 Fellowship Program</b>	<b>Dates</b>
All nomination packages due in TDB	August 18, 2000
Selected nominee	August 31, 2000
Selection nomination packages sent to Graduate School	October 9, 2000
Selections announced by Graduate School	October 27, 2000
2-week orientation session starts (mandatory)	January 11, 2001
Assignments begin (estimated date)	Late January, 2001

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**D**

**Obtaining  
Nomination  
Forms**

The nomination form is available as follows.

<b>Office Location</b>	<b>Form Location</b>	<b>File Name</b>
Kansas City offices	K:\wpforms	nomconfl.pdf
FAS and FSA National Offices	u:\wpforms	
State and other Field Offices	On BBS, National Forms Library	

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**E**

**Accommodation**

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in this training should contact Claudette E. Parm at 202-418-9053 or TDD 202-418-9107 by Friday, August 18, 2000.

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## Notice PM-2196

### 3 Nomination Process

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#### **A Nominee Qualifications**

Nominee must:

- be grade 13-15 or equivalent level
  - be a career employee in an FAS National Office or FSA Federal employee
  - be interested in an in-depth knowledge of the legislative branch processes and culture
  - have 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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#### **B How to Apply**

Eligible employees must submit a nomination package containing the following:

- original and 6 copies of the 2001 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Program Nomination Form (Exhibit 1), with supervisory concurrence
  - an approved SF-182
  - 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 specific skills that represent his or her strongest professional competencies
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3 Nomination Process (Continued)

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**B**  
**How to Apply**  
**(Continued)**

- a written statement from the applicant of up to 2 pages addressing how this training will improve performance in current and expected job assignments

**Note:** Emphasis should be on how their abilities or competencies in the following areas contributed to their success:

- oral, written, and interpersonal communication
  - leadership
  - initiative
  - technical competence.
- a listing of education and training courses taken in the last 5 years
  - a letter from applicant's supervisor assessing his or her potential and need for this training and development experience.
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**C**  
**Where to Send**  
**Nomination**  
**Package**

Send the original and 6 copies according to the following table.

Method of Delivery	Address
U.S. Mail	CLAUDETTE PARM USDA FSA HRD TDB STOP 0574 1400 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE SW WASHINGTON DC 20250-0574
FedEx	CLAUDETTE PARM 2101 L STREET NW, SUITE 303-A WASHINGTON, DC 20037

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**D**  
**Deadline for**  
**Submitting**  
**Nominations**

HRD, TDB **must receive** all nominations with a completed package by **COB Friday, August 18, 2000**. **Nominations received after this date will not be considered. Substitution of items will not be permitted after the deadline.**

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**Notice PM-2196**

**4 Selection Process**

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**A  
Participants by  
Organization**

Employees selected will be organizationally distributed as follows.

- FAS may nominate up to 1 employee.
  - FSA may nominate up to 1 employee.
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**B  
Participant  
Selection**

Participants will be selected for nomination as follows.

- Training and Development Branch reviews applications for eligibility.
- Candidates will be considered without discrimination for any nonmerit reason such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, or disability.
- A panel will review and rank employee nominations using criteria established Agencywide.
- The panel will submit recommendations to appropriate Administrator or designee.
- Each Administrator or designee will select no more than 1 nominee.
- Recommendations are made to the Administrator based on the following table.

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

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## Notice PM-2196

### 4 Selection Process (Continued)

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#### C

##### **Panel Membership**

HRD, TDB will select and facilitate panels and make recommendations for the allotted number of spaces. 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 Union representative.
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#### D

##### **Labor Management Obligation**

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language already addresses these policies and procedure for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

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#### E

##### **Agency Nomination**

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

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#### F

##### **USDA Graduate School**

Graduate School staff selects Fellows as follows:

- reviews each nomination package
  - matches 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 employees of assignment.
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**FY 2001 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program Nomination Form**

**REPRODUCE LOCALLY.** Include form number and date on reproductions.

**FY 2001 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program  
NOMINATION FORM**

**NOTE: Deadline - Completed Nomination Package must be received in the Training and Development Branch  
by COB Friday, August 18, 2000**

1. Indicate appropriate Agency (Check): <b>This is a 6-month program.</b> 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 6 months plus 2 weeks for mandatory orientation. NOTE: The travel and lodging costs will be funded by the employee's office travel budget.**

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 2001 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program Nomination Form**

Please put this completed FY 2001 Graduate School, USDA Congressional Fellowship Program Nomination Form, including supervisory signature on top of the other required information listed below:

- An approved SF-182, Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training.
- Current SF 171, OF-612, or detailed resume signed and dated by applicant with current home address.
- A cover letter from the applicant describing how the level of specific skills represent their strongest professional competencies.
- A written statement addressing how this training will also improve performance in current and expected job assignments. Emphasis should be on how your abilities or competencies in the following areas contributed you your success:
  - oral, written, and interpersonal communication
  - leadership
  - initiative
  - technical competence
  - list of education and training courses taken in the last 5 years.
- A letter from applicant's supervisor or Agency Executive Resources Board assessing his or her potential and need for this training and 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 Friday, August 18, 2000.**

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

If sending by....	THEN use the 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 USDA-FSA-HRD-TDB 2101 L Street, NW, Suite 303-A Washington, DC 20037

**NOTE: FAXED copies are not accepted.**

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