

Marcus W. Orr Center for the Humanities
Freeburg Fellows Program
Dissertation Fellowships for Spring 2027

The purpose of the Dissertation Fellowships in the Marcus W. Orr Center for the Humanities (MOCH) Freeburg Fellows Program is to assist advanced Ph.D. students in the humanities by enabling them to focus on researching, writing, and preparing to defend and submit their dissertations. In so doing, this program supports students in improving the quality of their work and helps to shorten the time to degree-completion. Operated in tandem with the Freeburg Fellows Faculty Fellowships, this program also allows recipients to conduct their work in a collaborative, interdisciplinary environment alongside other advanced doctoral students and research-active faculty members who will provide mentorship and guidance.

Award Details

Up to two fellowships will be awarded to advanced doctoral students in one of the humanities departments in the College of Arts and Sciences (English, History, Philosophy). Fellowships allow students to devote their energies to their dissertations by providing one semester of leave from teaching responsibilities in Spring 2027 and a supportive cohort of fellows with whom to share their work. Dissertation Fellows remain under the terms of their departmental graduate contracts and will not receive additional funding in the form of tuition or other financial support, but they will be relieved of all teaching or teaching-assistant duties. Fellows will also receive a modest stipend to be used for research-related activities and supplies. These fellowships are generously funded by a bequest from Catherine and Charles Freeburg.

Eligibility

Eligibility for this fellowship requires (1) that you be fully enrolled and in good standing in a humanities Ph.D. program; (2) that you have completed all requirements for the Ph.D. except the dissertation (this includes all coursework for your degree or any certificate programs, examinations, and dissertation proposal); (3) that you are prepared to workshop a chapter or other significant portion of your dissertation and are well positioned to make substantial progress toward completion of your dissertation during the fellowship term; and (4) that you have secured the support of both your department chair and dissertation director(s). This fellowship may only be held simultaneously with other external or internal support with permission. Fellows are chosen based on the quality of their applications, their readiness to fully participate in and benefit from the fellows' workshops, and the overall fit of their projects within the fellows' cohort. Fellows who have been rejected in previous years may apply again with the same project. (Please note: each humanities department is permitted to nominate no more than three students per award cycle.)

Fellowship Requirements

Dissertation Fellows are required to remain in residence throughout the fellowship period and to participate in all MOCH-sponsored events and fellows' meetings. At the conclusion of Spring 2027, fellows will be asked to submit a brief report summarizing the work they completed during their period of research leave.

Application

Applications must include the following materials:

- (1) Completed application form (below)
- (2) Current CV
- (3) Statement of approval from the applicant's department chair, emailed directly to moch@memphis.edu
- (4) Letter of support from the applicant's dissertation director(s), emailed directly to moch@memphis.edu
- (5) Project narrative (see guidelines below)
- (6) Bibliography (not to exceed two pages)

Project Narrative Guidelines

In a narrative not to exceed three single-spaced pages, please address the following areas:

- (a) *Dissertation Description* – Describe your dissertation project and its significance for your field of study. Depending on your subject, you may wish to address your methodology, theoretical framework, relationship to extant scholarship, guiding questions, key concepts, scope of inquiry, etc.
- (b) *Progress to Date* – Provide an outline of your dissertation, specifying the degree of completion for each part or chapter. Be as specific as possible.
- (c) *Work Plan* – Describe the research and/or writing that remains to be done, the work you will do during the fellowship term, and your timetable for completing the dissertation.

Deadline

All application materials must be submitted electronically via PDF to moch@memphis.edu by 5:00 PM on Friday, March 13, 2026. The subject line must read "Dissertation Fellowship." Please have your department chair and dissertation director(s) email their materials directly to moch@memphis.edu.

Marcus W. Orr Center for the Humanities
Freeburg Dissertation Fellowship Program Application

Name: _____ UUID: _____

Department: _____ Email: _____

Name of Department Chair: _____ Email: _____

Name of Dissertation Director/Co-Director: _____ Email: _____

Name of Dissertation Director/Co-Director: _____ Email: _____

Dissertation Title: _____

Funding for Graduate Study

Please specify the amount(s) and source(s) of funding you have received in support of your graduate study at the University of Memphis.

Dissertation Abstract

Please provide a brief abstract (350 words maximum) of your dissertation.