

# Eligibility and Application About The Award

Four **Distinguished Dissertation Awards**, consisting of a cash prize of \$500 each and a recognition plaque, may be presented annually at an event co-sponsored by the Graduate Council and the Office of Research.

**One award may be given in each of the following four subject areas:**

- Physical and Biological Sciences
- Social Sciences
- Humanities and Fine Arts
- Pharmacy, Health Sciences, and Nursing

**The following list, although not all-inclusive, represents the fields considered under each dissertation area:**

- Physical and Biological Sciences: chemistry and biology;
- Social Sciences: psychology, counseling, education, health care ethics;
- Humanities and Fine Arts: English, rhetoric, philosophy, systematic theology;
- Pharmacy, Health Sciences, and Nursing: pharmacy, rehabilitation science, and nursing.

## Eligibility and Application

Self-nominations are accepted, provided the application package includes the required recommendation letters and the signature of the Dean. While the award subject areas align with particular disciplines and fields, a candidate and their Director may determine whether a particular project would fit better in one subject area rather than another when submitting it for consideration. Dissertations will only be considered once.

The nomination packet will consist of:

- Abstract of the nominee's dissertation (not to exceed 5 single spaced pages). Appendices consisting of charts, tables, or references may be attached).
- Nominee CV (five pages maximum)
- Letters of Recommendation: one from Dissertation Advisor, one from a committee member, and a third letter from a person of the nominee's choice

**The application deadline is May 15.** To be eligible students must have submitted their ETD within two years the current competition cycle. Completed applications should be submitted here via the Application Form (<https://form.jotform.com/210828589229063>)

Students enrolled in dual degree programs who have completed the dissertation but who have not yet met all the degree requirements for the second degree are also eligible.

# Selection Criteria

**Award winners are selected based upon the following criteria:**

## Originality

- The research filled a unique gap in the science/literature/field of study.
- Contributed new knowledge to the field.
- Study population/sampling offered rare insights.

## Innovativeness

- The research challenged and sought to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
- Research provided refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed.

## Scholarly excellence

- Research design was adequately described and appropriate to address research aims and questions.
- Sampling was adequate and representative.
- Data collection was reliable and valid.
- Analysis was appropriate.
- Interpretation of data based on data obtained. No unwarranted generalizations were made. Conclusions justified.
- Limitations, implications, and recommendations were adequately addressed.

## Methodological sophistication

- Overall strategy, methodology, and analyses were well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
- Each aim of the project addressed and discussed.
- Potential problems or actual challenges were met through alternative strategies.
- The work is sustainable/fundable.

## Significant contribution to the discipline

- The research question/s were significant to the field.
- The project addressed an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field.
- The project had a substantial effect on strengthening the research environment of the respective school.
- The work is publishable.

## Quality of writing

- The abstract offers a clear overview of the study.
- Writing is clear, accurate and unambiguous.

- The research follows the steps of the research process in a logical manner.
- The work flows naturally.
- Headings are clearly defined.
- References follow a particular style germane to the field.

#### Overall Impact Score

- Submissions will be scored for each of criteria below to yield an Overall Impact Score. The Overall Impact Score will be range from 1- 9, with 1 being the highest. Scores above a 3 are not eligible for award.

## **Selection Committee**

Selection Committees are established for each of the four subject areas, comprised of faculty with content expertise and appointments in the Schools which are relevant to the subject area.

### **Physical and Biological Sciences**

Dr. Amin Ghorbanpour  
Dr. Wook Kim  
Dr. Stephanie Wetzel  
Dr. Raffaele Romagnoli

### **Social Sciences**

Dr. Matthew Joseph  
Dr. Ara Schmitt  
Dr. Elizabeth Pienkos

### **Humanities and Fine Arts**

Dr. Faith Barrett  
Dr. Michael Harrington  
Dr. Inci Sayrak

### **Pharmacy, Health Sciences, and Nursing**

Dr. Ira Buckner  
Dr. Yang Chen  
Dr. Aleem Gangjee  
Dr. Joseph Shaffer  
Dr. Elizabeth Skrovanek

## **Council of Graduate Schools/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award**

Two of the recipients of the Distinguished Dissertation Award may be subsequently nominated by the Provost or Office of Research for the national competition for the Council of Graduate Schools/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award. This award operates on a two-year cycle in regards to the dissertation areas (social sciences and math, physical sciences and engineering one year and biological and life sciences and humanities and fine arts the next year).

Duquesne's application process/deadline, selection criteria, and award categories are modeled after the Council of Graduate Schools/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Awards so that selected award-winners from Duquesne may also be nominated for these national awards at the appropriate time.

Learn more about the Council of Graduate Schools/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Awards (<https://cgsnet.org/about/awards/cgs-proquest-distinguished-dissertation>).