

## **The Nikki R. Wooten Dissertation Award for Research with Military, Veterans, and Vulnerable Populations**

The Nikki R. Wooten Dissertation Award for Research with Military, Veterans, and Vulnerable Populations (hereafter Wooten Dissertation Award) will provide a \$1000 dissertation research award to doctoral candidates enrolled in the University of Maryland, School of Social Work Doctoral Program who are conducting dissertation research with military, veterans, or vulnerable populations. Research with military and veteran populations will be given preference and include any dissertation research involving military personnel, veterans, and their families as well as military social workers to improve the well-being of military personnel, veterans, and their families and/or advance military social work practice. Vulnerable populations will include the following populations: families living in poverty, families involved in the child welfare system, victims of trauma, substance abusers, uninsured/underinsured, and racial/ethnic minorities. Proposed research can utilize any research methodology (quantitative, qualitative, mixed, program evaluation) using primary or secondary data. Award criteria, application materials, and review process are outlined below.

### **Applicant Criteria:**

1. Doctoral Candidate at the University of Maryland School of Social Work.
2. Good academic standing according the University of Maryland Graduate School.
3. Successful defense of the doctoral dissertation proposal.
4. Proposed dissertation research is with military, veterans, or vulnerable populations as defined above.

### **Application Materials:**

1. Personal statement/statement of research interests and goals (1-2 pages; focusing on how proposed dissertation research is related to current research interests and future research goals)
2. Research Proposal (3-5 pages; background/significance, theory, research methodology, implications)
3. *Curriculum vitae* (no more than 5 pages focusing on achievements during doctoral program as well as post-master's experience)
4. Research Timeline (1 page)
5. Budget/budget justification (1 page)
6. Unofficial Transcript (most recent)
7. Two letters of recommendations (at least one from dissertation chair)

### **Applicable Research Expenses:**

Funds from the Wooten Dissertation Award can be utilized for the following research purposes:

1. Data analytic training (e.g., registration, books, course material fees)
2. Statistical consultation fees
3. Data access or data sharing agreement fees and expenses.

4. Primary data collection (e.g., postage, copy fees)
5. Statistical software
6. Research assistant
7. Other research expenses with prior written approval (with PhD Program Director endorsement) from the donor.

Please note that the award will be paid as a \$1,000 stipend and the awardee will need to keep any necessary records for personal tax purposes.

### **Funding Restrictions:**

Funds from the Wooten Dissertation Award cannot be utilized for the following:

1. University administrative and overhead costs.
2. Honorariums for University of Maryland School of Social Work dissertation chair, mentor, faculty training or consultation.

### **Award Review Committee:**

Dissertation Award Review Committee will consists of 3 reviewers comprised of 2 tenure-track faculty members (at least one tenured faculty, excluding PhD Program Director), 1 military and/or veterans researcher (someone with prior military or veterans research experience, can be a University of Maryland faculty or staff). The PhD Program Director and donor will provide consultation to the committee as needed. Donor will review applications annually. Reviewers will not be dissertation chairpersons of applicants being considered for the award. All other conflicts of interest regarding applicant selection should be avoided.

### **Logistics:**

1. Applications will be due 1 October annually.
2. Decisions will be made by 15 November (or earlier) annually.
3. Applications should strictly adhere to page limits.
4. Two letters of recommendation should be submitted as part of the PDF application packet.
5. Application packets will be submitted in one Adobe PDF to the Dissertation Review Committee chair (or administrative designee). Application packets can be transmitted to the committee members and donor electronically for review.

**Reporting Requirements:** Annual reporting of research progress and expenditures (1 page) by applicant. Doctoral program will maintain records (electronic is acceptable) of the applications and rating sheets for quality control and in the event of unforeseen circumstances (e.g., awarded applicant unable to accept award during the award period). (Is there an IRS requirement for recordkeeping? If so, we can change to adhere to IRS requirements.)

**Review and Rating Criteria:** See attached rating sheet.

Awards committee will also consider and comment on the following:

1. The compatibility of the proposed work with the research focus of dissertation award listed above.
2. The significance, impact, or expected benefit to military personnel, veterans, their families and/or vulnerable populations. This includes the scope of the problem addressed (how many people are potentially affected?); salience or severity of the problem addressed (is this social problem of major importance in the lives or of those affected?); and the certainty of the payoff (how likely is it that the study will have an impact on those affected by the problems addressed?).
3. The conceptual and technical merit of the proposed study. This includes the clarity and soundness of the logic of the study and the appropriateness of the methodology. Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approaches are welcomed, as long as the research approach is appropriate to the goals of the study.
4. The likelihood of successful and timely completion of the proposed work. This is based on an assessment of the applicant's education, experience, achievements, and ability, and on the feasibility and timeline of the proposed study.
5. Does the proposed dissertation research require specialized training? Has the applicant acquired the training? Or is the applicant proposing to use the award to acquire the specialized training?

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**Review and Rating Sheet**

1. Application Packet Checklist. Are all application materials included in packet?

- Personal statement/statement of research interests and goals (1-2 pages)
- Research Proposal (3-5 pages)
- Curriculum vitae* (no more than 5 pages)
- Research Timeline (1 page)
- Budget/budget justification (1 page)
- Transcript (most recent unofficial transcript)
- Two letters of reference

2. Weighted Rating Criteria (based on 300 points possible)

- Personal statement/ Statement of research interests and goals (20 points) \_\_\_\_\_ x 2
- Strength of proposed research method (40 points)
  - military/veterans research \_\_\_\_\_ x 5
  - non-military research \_\_\_\_\_ x 3
- Curriculum vitae (10 points) \_\_\_\_\_ x 1
- Research timeline feasibility (10 points) \_\_\_\_\_ x 2
- Budget/budget justification (5 points) \_\_\_\_\_ x 3
- Transcript (i.e., GPA and relevance of electives, particularly in research methods and data analysis) (5 points) \_\_\_\_\_ x 1
- Letters of Reference (10 points) \_\_\_\_\_ x 1

3. Reviewer's Comments