2026-27 Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program (CDIP) Application Guide

Introduction

The Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program (CDIP) provides an opportunity for exceptional applicants interested in faculty careers in the CSU or institutions similarly focused on economic and social mobility to receive comprehensive support during their doctoral studies. This program is designed for aspiring professors who want to prepare for rewarding careers that balance student-centered teaching and research while earning a doctorate. Through career development programming and mentoring by CSU faculty, we train doctoral students across the United States to become professors who promote the academic success of all students. If you believe in the transformative power of public higher education, we encourage you to apply.

Program Overview

CDIP helps doctoral students turn their faculty aspirations into reality through CSU Faculty mentorship, professional development, and financial assistance.

Each of the selected will be designated as a CDIP Fellow and will work closely with their CSU faculty mentor to develop an overall plan that leads to a faculty career focused on student-centered teaching and research. This plan should be tailored to the specific goals and career objectives of the doctoral student.

Additionally, the program provides access to internal funding (which is competitive):

1. **Professional Development** for fellows to prepare for an academic career as faculty in the CSU.
2. **Development Funds** for academic and professional development (student membership in professional organizations, subscriptions to academic journals, and the cost of minor research materials).
3. Access to an **Optional Loan** that is forgivable if the CDIP Fellow has an instructional faculty position in the CSU system.

Eligibility

Interested applicants are strongly recommended to contact a CDIP campus coordinator for guidance.

Individuals applying to or currently enrolled in accredited doctoral programs in the United States with a goal of becoming student-centered faculty are eligible.

Individuals must identify a CSU Faculty Mentor who is on the tenure track or tenured at the time of application. You can contact a CSU Campus coordinator to help you identify a faculty member.

Selection Criteria

Applicants will be selected based on five primary criteria: doctoral field of study interests and plans, doctoral field of study preparation experiences, faculty career interests and plans, faculty career preparation and plans, and commitment to collaboration and preparation with CSU faculty mentor.

Submission

Applications will be submitted through Smartsheet. The online application can be found on the CDIP website. An application is considered complete when the online form is submitted before the deadline with all supporting documents: three essays, Curriculum Vitae, Collaborative Plan of Support (CPS), and two letters of recommendation (one must be from a CSU faculty mentor).

Due Date

Applications are due electronically by 11:59pm (end of day) on **Monday, February 16, 2026**.

Application Components

Use the following list to prepare for the application.

1. **Personal Contact Information** (e.g., name, mailing address, current school, enrollment status)
2. **Essays** (300-600 words each)

   Essay #1. Describe a field of study you would like to pursue for a doctoral degree. What are the specific research questions or theoretical perspectives that interest you? What activities or achievements from past experiences have helped you develop important knowledge and skills related to these research interests? Be specific about your interests, but please use language that someone outside of your discipline would understand.

   Essay #2. Describe your interest in a faculty career serving a diverse student body and your interest in a university system that centers inclusive excellence, student success, and social mobility. What experiences in your education draw you to this career? What specific research, mentoring, or teaching activities interest you based on your past experiences? How have these experiences developed interpersonal skills related to working with people from different backgrounds? Be specific with concrete examples of leadership or group activities related to educational, research, work, and/or community service settings.

   Essay #3. Describe how the teaching, research, and service activities outlined in your Collaborative Plan of Support (CPS) will support your career as a future faculty committed to helping students from diverse backgrounds achieve their aspirations. What specific mentoring activities (e.g. collaboration in teaching, research, and service) outlined in your CPS will prepare you for a role as a future faculty in the CSU? What past experiences support your CPS? How will the duration of the proposed CPS help you develop important teaching, research, and service skills that will prepare you for faculty position in the CSU? Be specific with concrete examples of collaborative mentorship activities.
3. **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
   - A current CV (max 4 pages, 12pt font) should highlight your education, research, teaching, service, awards, and other experiences that demonstrate your preparation and dedication to a faculty career. Include the following, as applicable:
     - Education: Degrees earned or in progress.
     - Research: Presentations, publications, work(s) in progress, or research assistant experience.
     - Teaching: Teaching assistant or instructional experience, tutoring, or supplemental instruction.
     - Service and Leadership: Student leadership, campus involvement, or community service activities.
     - Awards and Honors: Scholarships, fellowships, or recognition(s) related to your academic work.

   You may also include any employment or professional experience relevant to your scholarly or teaching development.
4. **Collaborative Plan of Support (CPS)**
   - Each applicant must identify a full-time tenured or tenure-track CSU faculty member to serve as their mentor. Together, the applicant and mentor will develop a Collaborative Plan of Support (CPS) that outlines how they will work together to support the applicant's preparation for a faculty career in the CSU.

   We encourage applicants to align planned activities with CDIP opportunities such as the Doctoral Education Support Grant (DESG), Conference Travel Grant, Dissertation Year Award, or Optional Loan. The CPS should describe specific yearly activities and timelines focused on the three areas of faculty development:
     - Teaching (e.g., co-developing syllabi, participating in teaching workshops, engaging in accessible and inclusive pedagogy)
     - Research and Scholarly Activities (e.g., joint research, publications, conference presentations, grant development)
     - Service and Leadership (e.g., mentoring students, participating in professional organizations, or community-engaged projects)
5. **Two Letters of recommendation**, one must be from a CSU faculty mentor (due two weeks after app deadline).