CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF FELLOWS TO THE CENTER FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Center for Social Sciences of the College of Liberal Arts supports scholarly endeavors in the social sciences, broadly defined, with either human or animal populations. Proposals are welcome from full-time, tenured faculty who has records of sustained scholarly achievement in the social sciences appropriate for their academic rank. Proposals are judged in terms of scholarly merit, clarity of presentation, and either the potential for integrating some existing body of literature or experimentation, or the potential for defining and elucidating new problems and areas for research. Above all, emphasis will be placed on supporting projects with an important and well-defined contribution to their discipline.

As these criteria suggest, the selection committee will give highest priority to the following kinds of work:

Projects that integrate some existing body of literature or experimentation collected by the fellow. Such a project might lead to a new or revised theoretical point of view of the domain in question. The resulting synthesis should go beyond the narrower confines of the specific research, highlighting generalizations or implications for wider issues in the discipline under consideration. Publication of these projects should be such that the usual (for the discipline involved) critical review by peers is applicable.

Projects that are designed to open new areas of research by the fellow. These "start-up" projects would require that the applicant demonstrate familiarity with the existing literature of the relevant area(s). The applicant should show how that literature or research is deficient in some significant way or explicate a scheme by which a new view might lead to an expansion of knowledge and understanding (including how to test and evaluate such propositions).

The above descriptions are not meant to impose limits on projects the committee might support in the future. Important empirical work focusing on data gathering could receive favorable consideration. However, such work would have to have important theoretical or social implications. A director or member of a research team who submits a proposal should take care to identify how the work represents a unique contribution apart from the team project. In addition, the work should represent the creative efforts of the individual submitting the proposal. Participation of other individuals in a proposed project, whether by technical support staff, graduate students, or other faculty members, should be of a supportive nature only.

The selection committee will also evaluate the originality of the project and whether it can be realized during the fellowship term. This evaluation will be based, in part, on a review of the applicant’s proposed schedule, the applicant's scholarly record, and letters of recommendation by outstanding scholars in the applicant's specific area of study (none of whom may be on the faculty of Purdue University-West Lafayette). The selection committee will give greatest weight to letters authored by scholarly experts who do not have a personal history of collaborating, teaching, or working with the applicant.

Up to two fellowships are awarded each academic year. The selection committee, however, will grant fellowships only for proposals that clearly meet the stated criteria. This guideline means that the maximum of two fellowships may not be granted in some academic years. No formal critiques of proposals are provided.

Faculty whose proposals are selected become fellows in the Center for Social Sciences and are expected to devote full time to the approved project during that semester. The fellow will remain in residence at the University, receive full salary (unless otherwise funded), and be free to pursue scholarly work.

During the semester following the fellowship period, fellows are expected to present their projects in a public panel with other fellows. The panel presentation (like the proposal itself) should be directed to a broad audience of social scientists, not to specialists in the fellow's own field.

Recipients of fellowships should acknowledge the Center for Social Sciences in any publications that result from their work while a member of the center.
Six semesters must elapse before a fellow may be re-appointed to the Center for Social Sciences or appointed to any of the other faculty development centers in the College of Liberal Arts.