

GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
Fulbright, Marshall, Mitchell, and Rhodes Scholarships

Student: _____

Major/Minor: _____ **Class:** _____

The student above has requested a letter of recommendation for the following scholarship(s):

The letter(s) of recommendation are due on **June 30, 2009** to the Scholarship Advising office to accompany the student's *preliminary application*. This allows the Committee on Graduate Fellowships time to review the completed application materials and provide the students with feedback over the summer to improve their applications. If you are not able to provide a letter by June 30, please send it in as soon as possible after that date or contact Scholarship Advising with an approximate date. If you email or fax a letter, you may be asked to provide a final updated recommendation letter on letterhead with signature or else upload a letter online in September.

General Guidelines for Strong Fellowship Letters:

- Letters should be 1-2 pages single-spaced in length. These scholarships appreciate longer letters of recommendation that give the sense of the student as an individual.
- Address the student's academic performance or extracurricular engagements in detail and with examples. This gives a stronger impression and demonstrates personal knowledge of the student beyond their grade (the student should indicate what your letter should address, i.e., will your letter be an academic recommendation, leadership skills recommendation, etc.).
- Provide a context in which you know the applicant and for what length of time.
- Situate the applicant's performance in a larger context of your experience.
- Discuss why the student would be a strong candidate for a specific scholarship (see information below)
- Be candid but not negative. These grant foundations are looking for realistic evaluations of students rather than overly positive hyperbole which may be unfounded or unsupported.

Weak Fellowship Letters:

- Too short, too vague, no specific examples for points made
- Generic letters or letters for other purposes (grad school admission, for example)
- Letters that merely summarize information from application
- Letters that focus on courses taken or descriptions of activities/organizations rather than the work that the applicant did within those contexts
- Letters that evaluate the student as mediocre or average or too many negative evaluations

Do NOT agree to write a letter if:

- You are not strongly positive in support of the applicant
- You do not feel that you know the applicant well enough or you do not remember enough to provide a good letter
- You do not feel that you are the right person to recommend him/her for the fellowship
- You do not have the time to write it

When writing the recommendation, the foundations ask you to please provide concrete evidence to support one or more of the following criteria specific to each fellowship. Don't feel that you should address all criteria. It is best to speak to your own experience of the student and his/her work:

Fulbright

- A proposed project that is feasible and has merit
- Strong level of knowledge and potential for future growth in the chosen field
- Ability to carry out research and think and write analytically
- Maturity, motivation, and seriousness of purpose
- Appropriate linguistic preparation and ability to adapt to a different cultural environment
- Likelihood of making a favorable impression as a United States citizen abroad

Marshall, Mitchell

- High academic achievement and intellectual promise
- Strength of character as demonstrated through community/campus service
- Demonstrated leadership ability and potential for leadership

Rhodes,

- High academic achievement and intellectual promise
- Strength of character as demonstrated through community/campus service
- Demonstrated leadership ability and potential for leadership
- Physical vigor, i.e., sports or other related activity (Rhodes only)

Additional Guidelines

- Please address the letter to the scholarship selection committee to which the student is applying, i.e., "To the Rhodes Selection Committee" or "To the Fulbright Selection Committee"
- In the letter please write specifically that you are recommending the student for the Fulbright, Marshall, Mitchell, or Rhodes
- If the student requests a letter for more than one Scholarship, please address each specifically.
- Please mail, send through Hinman mail, email, or fax the letter(s) by June 30, 2009 to:

**If you have further questions about letters of recommendation for these fellowships or if you would like to submit a draft, please contact Kristin O'Rourke, Scholarship Advisor, 646-6489.

Mail to/Drop off at:
Scholarship Advising
Dartmouth College
HB 6201 Wentworth Hall, Rm. 211
Hanover, NH 03755

Fax to: (603) 646-3488

Blitz to: scholarship advising

Scholarship Advising, Office of Undergraduate Advising and Research
HB 6201, Wentworth Hall
Tel: 646-1302 Fax: 646-3488 Blitz: Scholarship Advising
www.dartmouth.edu/~scholarship/