How Udall Selection Committee Readers Read

What Works - What Doesn't

When assessing a nominee's commitment to a career related to the environment, tribal public policy or Native American health care, readers look for:

- A well thought out, detailed, realistic yet ambitious educational and professional plan that will enable nominee to address environmental, tribal public policy or health care issues;
- Involvement in and leadership of community-related environmental, natural resource or Native American organizations, societies, research projects, campaigns;
- Involvement in and leadership of campus environmental or Native American clubs, organizations, societies, research projects, student/faculty initiatives.

Readers also look for:

- Involvement in and leadership of traditional Native American ceremonies or cultural preservation;
- Courses with an environmental, natural resource, Native American or health care focus, whether in policy, science, economics, literature, philosophy, or art;
- Summer jobs, internships, or assistantships with an environmental, natural resource or Native American focus;
- If nominee has heavy workload or family responsibilities, evidence that he or she has made an effort to be involved in extracurricular activities with environmental, tribal or health care focus.

Commitment - What Works

- **Focused** commitment, supported by relevant experience
- **Commitment** that extends to community
- **Career** goals that involve working with tribe, on reservation, or that otherwise benefit Indian Country
- **Diverse** environmental commitments, both on campus and in community
- **History** of involvement with area of interest
- **Traditional** tribal activities (rituals, dances, etc)
- **Jobs** and internships in area of interest
- **Commitment** recognized by letters of recommendation
- **Clearly** articulated passion for field of study
- **Goals** that span disciplines and aim to solve problems/build consensus

Commitment - What Doesn't

- **Goals** unsupported by the application (activities, jobs/internships, research, coursework, letters of recommendation...)
- **No** leadership in focus area
• **Unclear** commitment to issues related to the environment, tribal public policy or health care (nominee shows more commitment in other areas)
• **Career** goals that are naïve and unrealistic
• **Goals** that are too broad, or not consistent with aims of scholarship
• **Nominees** who don't explain why they're focused in one area
• **For** tribal public policy or health care nominees: no relationship with Native community; uninformed regarding tribal or Indian Country issues

When assessing a nominee's **personal characteristics**, such as leadership, service, integrity, readers look for:

• The desire to "make a difference": to address problems and arrive at solutions (whether through policy-making, community service/activism, or scientific research);
• An ability to be a "problem solver" and not just a "problem identifier";
• Compassion and integrity as manifested through service to others and to the larger community;
• The assumption of leadership roles in extracurricular activities;
• Recognition by peers, faculty, or community.

**Personal Characteristics - What Works**

• **Solid** record of service
• **Leadership** roles assumed in a variety of activities/organizations
• **Personal** choices that "walk the walk"
• **Ability** to combine theory and application, research and practice
• **Nominees** who actively seek solutions to problems
• **Nominees** working 20+ hours a week and still demonstrating commitment to field outside coursework
• **Good** balance among academics, extracurricular activities, or research
• "Well-rounded" nominees: those who are involved in sports, music, art, etc.
• **References** that attest to character and intellect

**Personal Characteristics - What Doesn’t**

• **Few activities** (campus, community, research, OR jobs/internships) outside coursework related to the nominee's interest in the environment, tribal public policy or Native American health care
• **No** demonstrated leadership
• **No** service of any kind
• **Nominees** who point out problems but pose no solutions
• **Unhelpful** letters of recommendation that don't help nominee to stand out

When assessing a nominee's **academic** record, readers look for:

• A GPA of at least 3.0 with upward trend, particularly in the nominee's major and in environmental, Native American studies, policy or health care courses;
- Courses with an environmental, natural resource, Native American studies or health care focus, whether in policy, science, economics, literature, philosophy, or art;
- Recommenders' assessments (best in class, best in 20 years of teaching);
- Substantive, independent research;
- College honors and/or external, national awards.

**Academics - What Works**

- **Coursework** that is relevant to goals
- **Combining** diverse areas of study
- **High** grades in difficult courses/multiple majors
- **Difficult** courses taken but not required by major/career goal statement (i.e. science courses)
- **Research** presented at conferences; publications
- **National** honors/recognition in field of study
- **National** honors/recognition in general

**Academics - What Doesn't**

- **No** coursework in area of stated career goal
- **B's** and lower in major
- **Downward** trending GPA
- **History** of W's on transcript

When readers assess the nominee's essay, they look for:

- An understanding of Morris K. Udall's contribution to and legacy of environmental, tribal governance or Native American health care issues;
- A choice of speech or legislation that is clearly related to the nominee's goals and interests;
- A discussion of how the chosen speech or legislation informs, influences or relates to nominee's interests and goals;
- A critical analysis of the chosen speech or legislation that goes beyond a summary of content;
- A sophisticated understanding of past or current environmental, tribal or health care issues;
- Exemplary writing style and presentation

**The Essay - What Works**

- **Critical** analysis (nominee really *thought* about Udall's message, applied it to contemporary or current situations)
- **Fresh** perspective on familiar topic
- **Chosen** topic appropriate to and well integrated with nominee's goals and interests
- **Different**, unique approach
- **Well** written
The Essay - What Doesn't

- **Glorified** "personal statement"
- **Didn't** take the time to analyze the topic
- **Didn't** get deeper than "Udall said this...and then he said this...and I think this is good."
- ** Doesn't** connect to career goal
- **Poorly** written