GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP
IMPORTANT APPLICATION NOTES
FROM NATIONAL SELECTION COMMITTEE READERS

Applicants: Please read over the following information. The insights provided below will help you put together a strong, competitive application. Feel free to share this information with your faculty mentors and recommenders.

Evaluation Criteria:
- Academic: Grades; level/difficulty of courses; awards, scholarships, publications and/or presentations
- Progress Toward Research Goals: Research activities; career goals; coursework
- Research Essay: Technical content, bibliography, organization/grammar; balanced detail (background, study, results, next step & implications of research)
- Letters of Recommendation: Comment on applicant’s commitment to research, intellectual curiosity, potential for research contributions (see “letters of reference” below)

Scholar Characteristics:
- Coursework consistent to meet graduate school goals (Make sure to have PhD level goals!)
- Research experience OR well developed research plan (Include research publications and/or presentations, including those in-progress/to be presented)
- Application Responses where EVERY response suggests a research career; provide detailed account of professional aspirations
- STRONG letters of recommendation (Research activities on application must match up with letters of recommendation; obtain appropriate letters!)

Research Activities:
- Outline EACH activity, on- & off-campus, summer programs, research component(s) of internships, etc.
- Identify research that leads/led to presentations, publications, etc.

Professional Aspirations:
- Detail current & future academic programs that will lead to career goal
- Outline plans for graduate school at PhD level (identify possible graduate schools and, if appropriate, postdoc experiences)
- Indicate sources of research experience (e.g., independent study, internships, proposed honors thesis, REU/SURF/EXCEL, etc.)

Personal Information: (Although optional, it should be completed)

Research Essay:
- Essay must demonstrate knowledge base and reinforce research career
- Write to the expertise of the reviewer; detailed, technical language is expected; bibliography/references are essential
- Diagrams & figures can be helpful
- Background should not exceed 50% of essay; interpretation of obtained/expected results is an important part of the essay
- Faculty/research mentor input/review of your application essay is essential: Work with
your faculty prior to completion of this essay!