PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION CRITERIA

INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY

When evaluating this category, our readers look for evidence of applicants’ engagement with ideas in and beyond the classroom. To do this, we encourage our committee members to consider the degree to which applicants have demonstrated:

- creativity or innovation in their approach to problem-solving
- a connection to questions, problems or ideas emerging from their interaction with academic work and self-directed study
- a willingness to seek out answers, resources, experts, or opportunities in their pursuit of the knowledge or understanding necessary to satisfy their intellectual curiosity

EXCEPTIONAL ACADEMIC ABILITY

When evaluating this category, our readers look for the highest level of measurable achievement in an applicants’ course work. To do this, we encourage our committee members to consider the degree to which applicants have:

- consistently pursued the most challenging academic opportunities offered by their high school and/or partnering institutions such as community colleges or honors academies
- successfully engaged with a broad range of subjects, including the humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and the biological and physical sciences
- thoroughly demonstrated their academic knowledge and skill through the achievement of our established standards in ACT/SAT scoring

INTEGRITY IN SCHOLARSHIP, SERVICE, AND LEADERSHIP

When evaluating this category, our readers are considering applicants’ relationship to honesty, credibility, character, and ethical behavior in the contexts of their academic work, extracurricular activities and community engagement. To do this, we encourage our committee members to consider the degree to which applicants have demonstrated:

- authenticity in their engagement with their chosen extracurricular, employment, or service activities
- persistence and determination in pursuit of their goals
- willingness to acknowledge the impact of their own personal struggles, feelings of uncertainty, and the contributions of others when reflecting on formal or informal leadership roles
COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

When evaluating this category, our readers look for evidence of applicants’ consistent, purposeful investment in an organization, team, neighborhood, cause, or goal. To do this, we encourage our committee members to consider the degree to which applicants have demonstrated:

- awareness of their role in their community as well as their potential for impacting other’s lives and experiences
- insight into the value of their connections to their family, school, faith community, team, organization or place of employment
- commitment to the cultivation of informal and formal leaders or collaborative relationships (or opportunities for leadership) inside of their chosen communities and/or peer groups to foster group sustainability and function

RESPECT FOR DIFFERENCE

When evaluating this category, our readers look for evidence of thoughtful engagement with difference. This experience can be explored through the discussion of interactions with a diverse range of ideas, experiences, and perspectives, which may include, but are not limited to:

- race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preference
- a broad spectrum of communication, learning, and leadership styles
- a range of approaches to training, collaborating, or planning
- personal aesthetics, standards of etiquette, and class dynamics

To do this, we encourage our committee members to consider the degree to which applicants have demonstrated:

- ability to acknowledge their own experience and perspective while considering those of other individuals and groups
- openness in the face of challenge emotional or intellectual challenge, even when there is a risk of rejection or failure