RECOMMENDER GUIDANCE | 2017 MARSHALL SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

IMPORTANT DATES:

☐ September 5, 2017 | Campus Nomination Deadline
Recommenders are asked to share DRAFT versions of their letters with the nominating committee by this date. The nominating committee requests that recommenders DO NOT submit their letters prior to committee review.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Given the importance of letters of recommendation in the application process, students may NOT move forward as nominees without the participation of their recommenders in this step of our process. Faculty are encouraged to contact the Director of Scholar Development directly should they have questions or concerns about this requirement.

☐ September 28, 2017 | Deadline for sharing FINAL recommendations with the DSD
Thank you for sharing (the final version) of your recommendation with me by email at kelly-thornburg@uiowa.edu by this date to allow me to include your perspective in our institutional nomination letter as requested by the Marshall Foundation.

☐ October 2, 2017 | Submission of final nominee applications and recommendations
Because online application portals can and do malfunction, I encourage writers to upload their letters into the system by **Sunday, October 1, 2017**, but letters MUST be in the application system by **5 PM Central Time (CST) on Monday, October 2, 2017**.

RESOURCES FOR RECOMMENDERS:

☐ The Marshall Foundation’s **2017 Referee Instructions included below, but may also be found here:**
  [http://www.marshallscholarship.org/applications/recommendersinfo](http://www.marshallscholarship.org/applications/recommendersinfo)

The following is the official advice provided by the Marshall Commission on the contents of the Letters of Recommendation:

"To access the secure “recommenders” section of the Marshall application system you will be sent a url. Once you login you will be given a form which will allow you to type or copy and paste your recommendation in, you will also be able to view a copy of the candidate’s full application. Please note that the word limit for the letter of recommendation is 1000 words, a word count facility has been provided. Once you have completed the letter you must submit it electronically in a timely fashion. A deadline will be provided with the request for the letter.

If a candidate is selected as a Marshall Scholar, you will be sent a second e-mail with a pdf of your letter attached. We ask that you print this on headed paper, sign it and mail it to the address provided in the e-mail. We ask again that you do this in a timely manner.

The following is the advice provided by the Marshall Commission on the contents of the Letters of Recommendation:

"Please use the form provided for a letter of recommendation commenting on the candidate’s general fitness for the course proposed and the suitability of the university chosen as well as considering how they meet the Commission’s criteria of Academic Merit, Leadership and Ambassadorial Potential. Confidential observations,
negative as well as positive, on the candidate’s general character as well as academic standing and ability will be of great value to the selection authorities in their task of deciding which candidates should be summoned to the Regional Centre for interview."

In appointing Scholars the Selectors will look for candidates who have the potential to excel as scholars, as leaders and as contributors to improved UK-US understanding. Assessment will be based on academic merit, leadership potential and ambassadorial potential. We ask that you consider our criteria when completing your letter.

The Selectors will also look for adequate preparation for the proposed course of study, particularly in the upper-level course work and real strength in the major field. Preference will be given to candidates who combine high academic ability with the capacity to play an active part in the life of the United Kingdom university to which they go, and to those who display a potential to make a significant contribution to their own society."

The nominating committee encourages recommenders to offer selectors:

☐ **An “evidence-based” perspective on their nominee.** At this level of competition, saying someone is one of the best students (or even THE best) you have had the pleasure of teaching doesn’t distinguish them. What will help readers understand the extraordinary value and potential of your nominee is EVIDENCE. Use illustrative example or a quick story to help the readers SEE whatever unusual combination of knowledge, skill or insight your nominee possesses and understand HOW they might develop or use it more fully with the investment and support of the opportunity.

☐ **Some context** – Experience has taught me that recommenders in the Midwest usually give too little information about themselves. Do not forget to include a few sentences that provide the reader with a sense of your expertise and your background as a scholar, educator, or mentor. This adds clarity to the narrative and can elevate the readers’ impressions of a nominee’s accomplishments and experiences.

☐ **No more than two pages, but no less than one** – Selectors have a great deal to read and they must read quickly. For the Marshall, I do recommend that writers go with a two-page letter if they feel that they are able to do so with authenticity. The opportunity only requires four recommendations and our endorsement, so we want to give the committee as full of a view of the student as is possible.

**Address and Salutation:**

I’ve included the appropriate address and salutation information for your final letter. Because most online application portals request that the text of letters be copied and pasted into an electronic form, it is no longer necessary to save the final recommendation on letterhead or submit it with a formal signature.

**Address for Iowa’s Marshall Regional Committee:**
Chicago Regional Committee, Marshall Scholarship, British Consulate-General, 625 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2200, Chicago, IL 60611

**Sample Salutation for the Marshall District Committee:**
To the 2017 Chicago Regional Marshall Scholarship Committee: