# Good fit for the Goldwater?

2023-24 Competition Info Session

Fall 2023

IOWA OFFICE OF SCHOLAR DEVELOPMENT

# THE OFFICE OF SCHOLAR DEVELOPMENT

OPPORTUNITY EXPLORATION

ESSAY DEVELOPMENT

APPLICATION STRATEGY

RECOMMENDER SUPPORT

DRAFT REVIEW

INTERVIEW PREP

CAMPUS NOMINATION

PRE-WRITING WORKSHOPS

assists undergraduates and alumni in their pursuit of national fellowship and funding opportunities.

**IOWA**

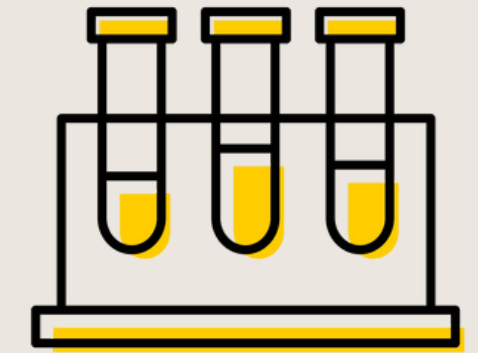**Campus:** 205 Calvin Hall
**Email:** scholar-dev@uiowa.edu
**Web:** scholardev.sites.uiowa.edu
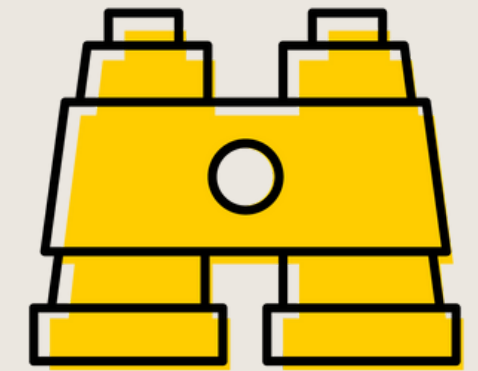**Social:** uiowascholardev

SCAN ME

# Eligibility

Applicants must be **currently enrolled undergraduates** in their **second** or **third** year of study who are already engaged in STEM research and who plan to pursue a career in scientific research.

- Eligible areas of study include the natural, physical, and computational sciences, mathematics, engineering
  - **See the full list of eligible fields** at https://bit.ly/3DfJjrY

- The Goldwater's mission is to support individuals pursuing careers in **basic science research**. The organization does not require that research be conducted inside of academia, or in the public or private sectors.

- **Prospective MD/PHD candidates are eligible if the medical degree is necessary to conduct research** in the chosen field with credibility. If direct patient care is the applicant's primary goal, that priority doesn't line up with the Goldwater's mission.

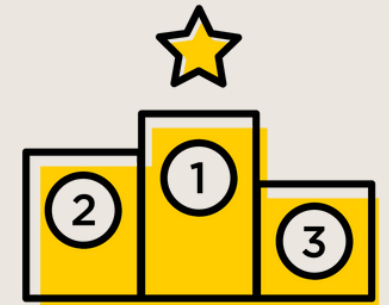**IOWA** OFFICE OF SCHOLAR DEVELOPMENT

# Goldwater selectors prioritize the following:

- **Academic and intellectual achievement** – UI Applicants typically have **at least** a 3.7 GPA

- **Substantive undergraduate research experience** - typically a minimum of 2 (for Second Years) or 3 semesters (for 3rd Years)

- **Demonstrated vision and leadership** within their chosen fields of study

- **Clearly articulated plans** to pursue a post-graduate degree in a STEM field and a career in basic science research

- Evidence of coursework, research, and experiential learning **experiences that support their post-graduate plan**

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# Factors that contribute to competitiveness:

- **GPA of 3.9 or above** - Not a stated requirement, but perhaps an unspoken one in many cases. We've supported a few exceptionally experienced nominees with lower GPAs over the years, so don't take yourself out of the game until you've talked with us.

- **Demonstrated history of choosing challenging coursework** - grad courses, honors contracts, courses outside of major requirements that show intentional development of knowledge and skill are all common occurrances.

- **Early engagement with undergraduate research** - It isn't uncommon for applicants to have HS research experience or to begin working with an investigator at Iowa in the summer before or at the open of their first semester.  This isn't a requirement, but it is considered.

- **National or complementary research or training experiences** - Many of our nominees participate in programs like NSF REU and Amgen Scholars or choose to work with an external investigator or group.

- **Publications** - In some disciplines, being a first, second, or third author on a paper early enough to apply for the Goldwater is almost impossible, but having at least one publication is common for a lot of scholars.

- **Community engagement** - Telling the story of science isn't an easy task, but is valuable one.  Helping others connect with and let go of fear or assumptions that keep them from engaging with science and math is one way to demonstrate leadership in your field.

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# Benefits of the award and the application process

- Funds **undergraduate study** up to equal to the cost of tuition, mandatory fees, books, and room and board minus the amount of support provided for by other sources, **up to a maximum of $7,500**. *Scholars who receive the award as sophomores can expect to receive support for two years.*

- **Connection to a community of current and past scholars** through the Office of Scholar Development and the recently expanded activities supported by the Goldwater organization.

- **Kick start your scholar development -** Applying for the Goldwater creates an early and low pressure opening for more substantive conversations with your PI, faculty advisors, and research collaborators about:
  - how to effectively describe your research to reviewers inside and outside of your field
  - choosing graduate schools/programs,
  - taking on more responsibility or developing new skills,
  - your summer 2024 plans

- More **testimony from past Goldwater scholars** can be found at https://bit.ly/30r9jlV

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# Application Components:

- **Online questionnaire** - View the full questionnaire at https://bit.ly/3oqA55W

  - **Three short personal essays are included in this questionnaire.**
    We'll discuss them later in the presentation

- **Research Essay** - View guidance on writing this essay at https://bit.ly/3c4Vtrx

- **Three letters of Recommendation**
  - (PI, Academic, Additional Research/Scientific Perspective)

- **Transcripts** (Formal transcripts from Iowa as well as transfer schools)

- **For Permanent Residents** - a copy of your Permanent Resident Card

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# Personal Essay Prompts

**What are your career goals and professional aspirations?**
Indicate which area(s) of mathematics, science or engineering you are considering pursuing in your research career,specify how your current academic program and your overall educational plans will assist you in achieving your career goals and professional aspirations. *(3000 characters including spaces)*

**Describe an activity or experience that has been important in helping shape or reinforce your desire to pursue a research career in science, mathematics, or engineering?** *(1500 characters including spaces)*

Goldwater Scholars will be representative of the diverse economic, ethnic and occupational backgrounds of families in the United States. **Describe any social and/or economic impacts you have encountered that influenced your education - either positively or negatively - and how you have dealt with them.** *(1500 characters including spaces)*

*Please note that OSD requires that candidates respond to the optional essay at the campus level.*

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# Steps in the nomination process

**STEP 1: Consider your eligibility**
Do you meet the college sophomore or junior definition? Does your GPA meet the requirement? Do you intend to pursue a research career in the natural sciences, engineering, or mathematics? Are you a citizen or permanent resident? If you are worried that you are not competitive enough, **do NOT count yourself out without first talking with Office of Scholar Development**.

**STEP 2: Complete a Student Profile and Pre-Application and schedule an initial conference with Kelly**
- Complete the Student Profile and Goldwater Scholarship Pre-Application
- Schedule draft conferences, go to https://calendly.com/scholar-dev-uiowa

**STEP 3: Work with Kelly to develop your application** and support your recommenders in advance of the campus nomination deadline.

**STEP 4 – Submit a full DRAFT application via the Goldwater Scholarship Portal by 12 NOON on November 14, 2023**. Campus applicants are required to submit at least **two of three letters of recommendation** for review by Iowa's Goldwater nominators at this stage of the competition. The reference from the Primary Investigator is required by the campus deadline.

**STEP 5 – Nominees continue to work** with the OSD and their community of support to develop the strongest applications possible in advance of the **January 26** national deadline.

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# Important Dates

- Application Opens: **9.23**
- UI Campus Nomination Deadline: **11.14.23**
- Notification of UI Nominees: **11.21.23**
- Deadline for Campus Nominees:**1.26.24**
- Notification of 2022 competition results: **3.25.24**

Campus applicants are encouraged to work independently on their drafts, but should also make time to meet in-person and/or share drafts with the director of OSD in the weeks leading up to 2023-24 Campus Deadline.

- **To schedule draft conferences**, go to https://calendly.com/scholar-dev-uiowa

Nominees will be expected to work closely with the OSD and their research mentors in January, including attendance of weekly meetings with the director of OSD and submission of new drafts twice weekly leading up to the January deadline.

# Thank you for your time and attention!

If you are interested in applying and/or have questions, **put your name in the chat** and **schedule a meeting**!

If you are on the fence, I hope you'll consider the **value of developing your application** even if you don't advance as a nominee or win a scholarship.

You cannot win what you don't apply for and the Goldwater process is a great warm-up for applying for graduate school and post-graduate fellowships like the **NSF-GRFP** (https://www.nsfgrfp.org/) or **NDSEG** (https://ndseg.sysplus.com/).

If you have friends or classmates who you think should apply, trust your instincts and send them my way (or send me their name and I'll reach out)! **Y'all are my best referral sources.**

## Questions?

**Email me at kelly-thornburg@uiowa.edu or call 319-335-1874**

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