Developing a Competitive Application for the John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship

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Zoom Meeting Info

- This webinar is being recorded and will be publicly available on our website following the webinar.
- Save your questions for after the presentation. There will be plenty of time for Q&A.
- To ask a question, click on the chat tab and proceed by typing your question.

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Presented by:
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Most Important Advice?

- Read the Funding Opportunity Announcement.
- Follow the directions.
- Read the Evaluation Criteria pages 12-13.
- Ask questions prior to submission if there is something you do not understand.
- We are here to assist!
- Once the application is submitted, the State Sea Grant Program is required to submit the application as is, unchanged from the applicant's original file.

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Application Components “Required Elements”

1) **Two signed letters of recommendation**, including one from the student's major professor; if no major professor exists, a faculty person academically familiar with the applicant may be substituted.

2) **A personal education and career goal statement** emphasizing the applicant's abilities and the applicant's expectations from the fellowship experience in the way of career development (1000 words or less). Placement preference statement in the legislative or executive branches of the government is no longer required. State Directors may indicate a preference in letter.

3) **Personal and academic curriculum vitae** (two pages maximum).

4) **Transcripts:** Clear, scanned copy of all ***Official*** undergraduate and graduate school transcripts.

5) **Listing of classes and/or plans** for spring 2019, summer 2019, and fall 2019 (not to exceed one page).

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Review Process

Stage 1: State Sea Grant Program Selection Panel reviews all applications and forwards the 6 most competitive applications to the National Sea Grant Office.

Stage 2: National Selection Panel reviews all applications from 33 Sea Grant Programs (max. 198) and selects the top applicants, not less than 35, with approximately 14 assigned to the Legislative branch.

Criteria Used by Selection Panels

(pages 12-13 of the guidelines)

- **15%: Recommendations and/or endorsements.** Three letters: (1) major professor, (2) other letter of recommendation (3) Texas Sea Grant Director (National Selection Panel only).
- **15%: Academic record**. Strength of academic performance based on undergraduate and graduate transcripts.
- **35%: Personal education and career goal statement**.
- **35%: Additional relevant experience** related to: diversity of education, extracurricular activities, honors and awards, and interpersonal, written, and oral communications skills. Based on CV, transcripts, personal education and career goal statement and letters of recommendations.

Who Is on the State Selection Panel?

State Sea Grant Program Selection Panel consists of 3 panelists comprised of:

- Texas Sea Grant Director;
- Former Knauss Fellow; and
- Former Texas Sea Grant-funded Researcher.

Who Is on the National Selection Panel?

- Sea Grant Directors and Associate Directors
- National Sea Grant Advisory Board Members
- Former and current Knauss Fellows

What Are Selection Panels Looking for?

Letters of Recommendation (15%):

- Do the recommendation letters demonstrate knowledge of the applicant and his/her abilities?
- Do letters provide evidence of applicant's leadership potential, such as confidence, maturity, self-direction, creative thinking, analytical skill, openness and capacity to expand experience, and communicate well with ability the ability to convey scientific knowledge in broader, non-scientific contexts.
- Do the letter writers know the applicant more than as a participant in a class?
- Are the letters from diverse sources (i.e. not from 2 professors working in one lab)?

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What Are Selection Panels Looking for?

Academic Record (15%):

What is the strength of the academic achievement?

- Is the education and experience in the applicant's area of expertise appropriate to the career stage;
- Does the applicant display strength in academic performance and competitive course grades;
- Do the records of publications and/or presentations appear appropriate to the career stage, field, and institutional setting.

What Are Selection Panels Looking for?

Personal Education and Career Goal Statement (35%):

- Is a career or life goal stated?
- Is the Statement specific, direct, and concise?
- Does the Statement discuss what the applicant will bring to and gain from the Knauss Fellowship?

Ideas for Personal Education and Career Goal Statement:

- Clear, concise statement of your career or life goal.
- Address how your past experiences relate to the Knauss Fellowship, how this opportunity could enhance your career and what you bring to this Fellowship.
- Provide evidence of creative thinking, analytical skill, and/or capacity and willingness to make connections between science and broader economic, social, and political issues.
- Demonstrate ability to communicate and convey scientific knowledge in broader, non-scientific contexts.
- Stating a placement preference of Legislative or Executive branch is no longer required. Keep options open; State Director may indicate a preference. DO NOT state a particular office.
- Do not tell us what you have already told us in your CV.

Bottom Line:

The panel is looking for a Career Goal Statement that provides an idea of why the applicant wishes to be a Knauss Fellow, what they hope to gain from the fellowship, what they can bring to the fellowship, and how this particular fellowship, as compared to other fellowships, will fit into their career development.

What Specifically Are they Looking for?

Additional *Relevant* Experience (35%):

- Does the applicant have volunteer and extracurricular activities in relevant academic, applied, research, administration outreach, or policy positions?
- Does the applicant have a well-rounded background including a diversity of classes (balanced and appropriate coursework) and appropriate to the career stage?
- Do experiences show prior leadership roles relevant to career stage (student government, faculty committees, advisory committees, professional societies, community initiatives, etc.).
- Received honors and awards that are relevant to the career?
- Shown interest in working with diverse stakeholders and demonstrates a commitment to apply scientific expertise to serve society?
- How much marine and aquatic science and/or policy experience does the applicant have?
- Is the publication record relevant to the applicant's career stage?

What Specifically Are they Looking for?

Listing of classes and/or plans for spring 2019, summer 2019, and fall 2019 (not to exceed one page).

- No specific guidance;
- Do not simply provide a list; use the white space;
- Use this one page document as an opportunity to describe purpose of selection of the classes / plans and how they will impact your career, further your qualifications as a Fellow;
- Sell yourself: what you can bring to the Fellowship as well as what you hope to gain from this Fellowship.

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Ideas for Curriculum Vitae:

- Do not exceed TWO pages. Additional pages will be deleted.
- Choose your words and presentation carefully.
- List your diversity of activities, classes, extracurricular awards, and volunteer activities.
- List publications (in review, in press, or published) and oral/poster presentations. Papers for classes are not considered.

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What Specifically Are they Looking for?

<u>Miscellaneous Things:</u>

Are acronyms defined?

Are there misspelled words and/or grammatical errors?

Most Important Advice?

- Read the Funding Opportunity Announcement!
- Follow the directions!
- Re-read the Evaluation Criteria on pages 12-13!
- Review this presentation and powerpoint file again!
- Ask questions!
- Mia Zwolinski, Texas Sea Grant Assistant Director for Research and Fiscal Administration: mzwolinski@tamu.edu, 979-458-0449.