

IRISH-AMERICAN SCHOLAR PROGRAM

TO: Presidents and International Program Advisors

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SUBJECT: Invitation to Nominate Irish American Scholars

DATE: September 29, 2008

We are writing to you to invite you to nominate up to three students to be considered for selection as Irish-American Scholars for 2009-2010. This opportunity is being made to your institution because of your institution's offer to host a student in the Business Education Initiative (BEI) with the government of Northern Ireland.

In the paragraphs that follow and the documents that are attached, you will find the selection criteria and forms you will need if you wish to nominate students for this opportunity.

CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS

To increase the likelihood of one of your students being selected for the Irish-American Scholars Program, we want to explain the criteria and selection process that will be used to determine which applicants get the opportunity to study in Northern Ireland.

Selection Committee: The ultimate decision of which students are accepted and where they will study rests with a committee of representatives from the five schools in Northern Ireland and from the three denominations named above. The committee reviews the materials submitted by each applicant and relies on that information to make its decisions.

Space Limitations: A limited number of students can be accepted at the five universities in Northern Ireland. Currently the number of study slots for Irish-American Scholars each year cannot exceed 58 semesters divided among the five schools. U.S. colleges should nominate no more than three students in a single year. Students who plan to study in Northern Ireland for a full year receive preference over students who plan to be there only for one semester.

Application Requirements: The selection committee will not consider a student who has less than a 3.2 GPA or fails to submit a complete application including a complete transcript through the fall semester of the current academic year, an essay and two letters of recommendation. Students planning to study art must also submit a work portfolio.

Deadline: The deadline for applications is January 30th. Students whose applications are received by that date will be considered first when placements are made in March.

First, Second, Third Choice: When three students apply from a school in the same year, advisors are asked to rank the applicants. The selection committee will consider the first choice from each school before considering anyone's second or third choice. This enables the greatest number of colleges to send students to Northern Ireland. It means, however, that a school's second choice, though qualified for the program, may not be selected if the total number of applicants exceeds the number of spaces available. Not more than three applicants from a school will be accepted in the same year.

Selection Criteria: The selection committee will consider all of an applicant's information, looking particularly at a student's field of study and whether there are courses that match his or her field of desired study at one of the schools in Northern Ireland. Students will not be accepted who cannot advance their studies in a chosen field. Prior courses in a student's major are required.

Students who have not declared a major or completed courses in their major will not be accepted. For this reason, students should not apply for the program until they are sophomores in the United States. Juniors and seniors generally have a better chance of being accepted in the program. Sophomores who apply should indicate courses in which they are currently enrolled that will not appear on their transcript.

In addition to reviewing a student's course work, the selection committee will consider a student's extra-curricular activities, particularly those that relate to the student's field of study.

Religion Majors: None of the schools that participate in the Irish-American Scholars Program offers a major in religion. Religion majors, therefore, in order to be accepted should identify courses in a related field that would advance their studies such as philosophy, Irish studies, peace studies or politics.

Art Majors: Art majors are required to submit a portfolio in order to be considered. It is the student's responsibility to find out what is required before applying.

Education Majors: Beginning in 2005-2006, spaces became available for education majors (elementary through secondary). Two colleges in Belfast offer spaces for students in education. They are the Stranmillis College of Queens University and St. Mary's College.