

MITCHELL SCHOLARSHIP

APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

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All Big 10 candidates work with Scholarship Opportunities Program (SOP) staff, who run the campus advising, application evaluation and endorsement processes. Read this document while you complete the [Pre-Application](#) and refer to it throughout the application process.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

BE A UCI UNDERGRADUATE

The SOP is funded to advise current UCI undergraduates only. Students at other universities must work with representatives on their campuses.

UCI ALUMNI EXCEPTIONS

In some cases, SOP staff may coach highly motivated recent UCI alumni IF they meet all eligibility requirements and intend to take/are taking a gap year (i.e. year off) before enrolling in a graduate program.

SUBMIT A PRE-APPLICATION BY 4/3/17 (NOON)

You must complete and submit a [Pre-App](#) to begin the [application process](#).

BE A U.S. CITIZEN BETWEEN AGES 18-30

BE A JUNIOR

Submit a [Pre-Application](#) the spring before your final year on campus. **The full application process lasts six months**, so by the time you complete it you'll be in your final year of study at UCI. If you win the Mitchell, you will travel to Ireland shortly after graduating.

You may also submit a Pre-Application the spring of your final year if you plan to take a gap year after graduating.

BE GOAL-FOCUSED

The Mitchell funds 1 year of graduate study at an Irish university. Be able to articulate your graduate program goals.

BE AVAILABLE IN SUMMER 2017

Candidates must participate in draft writing, SOP advising, and correspondence with recommenders and attend an [August campus interview](#) for their application(s) to earn [UCI endorsement consideration](#).

BE WILLING TO WORK HARD

You will submit a series of application drafts to SOP staff and receive advising and editing suggestions. You will also share [drafts of application essays](#) with the faculty who will write your [letters of recommendation](#).

Be ready to devote a minimum of 10 hours/week to the process; the commitment is equivalent to that of a part-time job.

BE DEADLINE-ORIENTED

You are responsible for ensuring SOP staff receives all application components -- including [letters of recommendation](#) written on behalf of your application(s) -- by SOP deadlines.

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Late materials will jeopardize [UCI endorsement](#) consideration, which is necessary to continue the process.

COMMUNICATE WITH SOP STAFF

Candidates must maintain regular communication with SOP staff and with recommendation letter writers. [Email ALL staff](#) to submit drafts or ask questions.

APPLYING FOR MULTIPLE AWARDS

Candidates may apply for multiple scholarships simultaneously. However, consider the work required to apply for each, the variances in application components, letters of recommendation and interview scheduling and the time constraints you'll face this summer.

IS MITCHELL RIGHT FOR YOU?

SELECTING A PROGRAM AND INSTITUTION

Ask your faculty which institutions/programs are considered competitive.

FACTORS TO WEIGH

Consider location preference, strength of particular overseas programs and institutions, field of study, long-term academic focus, and eligibility requirements relating to GPA and age.

IRELAND = MITCHELL SCHOLARSHIP

Read the U.S.-Ireland Alliance's [description of Institutions of Higher Learning and Fields of Study](#).

Funds one year of postgraduate study in any field at a university in the Republic of Ireland. Award covers tuition, housing, living expenses and an international travel stipend.

Candidates must be U.S. citizens aged 18 to 30.

Administered by the US-Ireland Alliance, the scholarship aims to connect the next generation of young leaders to Ireland while creating a community of Scholars committed to service, integrity, intellectual curiosity, and imbued with a sense of responsibility to each other and society.

Up to 12 annual winners. No minimum GPA required, but the average winner has a 3.7 or higher.

Candidates should examine the degree residence requirements at each university, as master's programs can be for 1 or 2 years, but the Mitchell Scholarship funds only 1 year.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Academic excellence
- Leadership
- Sustained commitment to service and community
- Sufficient undergraduate preparation for proposed course of study
- Demonstration of interests in Irish-European-US relationships or in making people-to-people connections across borders.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

- 1 essay: 1000-word personal statement describing your field of interest and the justification for your proposed study in Ireland or Northern Ireland. **Please note that Mitchell forbids others from editing or providing suggestions to improve your personal statement.**

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- Four [letters of recommendation](#) - Two must come from faculty with whom you have done academic work.
- Official transcript(s)
- Proof of U.S. citizenship, scan of signature, and passport-size photo
- Letter of institutional endorsement from UC Irvine if the applicant is a full-time student.

WINNER CHARACTERISTICS

Outstanding cultural ambassadors; demonstrated potential to perform well in chosen Irish program of study (knowing that students are unlikely to find as much support, encouragement, or on-going academic feedback in an Irish university as they have at UCI); ability to contribute as a member of a team yet be independent.

APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE

SUBMIT A PRE-APPLICATION BY 4/3/17 (NOON)

You must complete and submit a [Pre-App](#) to begin the campus [application process](#).

ATTEND BIG 7 INFORMATION SESSION

All students who have submitted pre-applications are required to attend one of three information sessions regarding the application process. (Students who are abroad or have unavoidable scheduling conflicts will watch a video of the presentation and pass a quiz.)

At this meeting, you will receive your Student Deadline Table and crucial information about the scholarship process.

REVIEW PRE-APPLICATION FEEDBACK

You will select a personalized advising appointment time to discuss your plan for crafting a strong application. If you will be abroad, [email SOP staff](#) in advance to make arrangements for a virtual meeting.

SUBMIT SIGNED LETTER OF INTENT AND CONSENT FORM TO SOP

You will be provided a letter of intent and consent form to return with signature and must also register for an appointment to view past winning scholarship applications in EEE.

READ PAST WINNING APPLICATIONS

On file in the SOP office, past winning applications demonstrate successful methods used by past UCI winners to produce compelling and concise research/study proposal and personal statement essays. They also showcase successful formatting amid each application's unique space constraints. **You must request an appointment in advance to view these files**, as we will select the most closely related applications from our extensive archive and have them ready for you.

MEET WITH YOUR FACULTY

After submitting your Pre-Application, meet in person with at least four faculty members.

DISCUSS YOUR PLANS/PROJECT IDEAS

Explain that you'll [furnish him/her with drafts of your application essays](#) as they evolve, and let him/her know when to expect these. Detail your ideas for potential study/research proposals. Ask for advice in narrowing your topic.

REQUEST LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

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Faculty will [send SOP staff](#) two drafts of unique letters for each relevant scholarship. This enables the SOP to complete the process of application evaluation and [campus endorsement](#). **Candidates are responsible for ensuring faculty have submitted their letter drafts to SOP staff by the deadlines.** Ask if s/he is willing to write a comprehensive letter of recommendation on your behalf and participate in the letter draft process. State that SOP staff will follow up with award-specific content and formatting information.

For more information, please see our handout on [letters of recommendation](#).

SOLICIT INTERVIEW PARTICIPATION

Faculty letter writers are enthusiastically encouraged to serve on your [campus endorsement interview](#) committee, which is led by Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education. Faculty participation complements the expertise of SOP staff and the Dean; your professors are uniquely able to support you by providing discipline-specific commentary and offering feedback on the feasibility of your study or project.

Please also identify potential alternate committee members, such as other faculty or teaching assistants in your field of study. If your letter writers cannot attend or decline to participate in the endorsement interview, we may solicit participation from your suggested alternates.

You will be provided with a form to collect contact information (names, titles, department, email, phone) and availability for June dates on which we will schedule your endorsement interview.

SUBMIT FACULTY SUMMER CONTACT INFO & INTERVIEW AVAILABILITY TO SOP

After you submit this information, SOP staff will email a packet to your faculty about the program(s) to which you are applying, deadlines & formatting requirements for letter drafts, and examples of letters written for past scholarship winners. We will also confirm the time and location of your campus endorsement interview.

RECOMMENDED: PROVIDE COPY OF EMAIL TO POTENTIAL LETTER OF AFFILIATION WRITERS

Letters of Affiliation (LOAs) are brief, informal invitations from a faculty member or official at your overseas institution of choice to study in a particular department, lab, etc. *should you receive the scholarship*.

Provide a copy of your initial email to at least one potential letter of affiliation writer. For more information, please see our handout on [letters of affiliation](#).

CONFIRM SCHOLARSHIPS & PROVIDE ROUGH DRAFTS

Confirm scholarships to which applying; list proposed program(s) & institution(s) for each.

Email rough drafts of your essays and updated CV to [SOP staff](#) and your faculty.

REGISTER & BEGIN APPLICATION(S)

[Access this year's application.](#)

REGISTER UCI INFORMATION

This step allows SOP staff to view your application and provide you with edits. You will not be considered for campus endorsement if you do not complete this step.

- ★ **Register Institutional Endorser:** Identify Dr. Michael Dennin; University of California, Irvine; Vice Provost of Teaching and Learning; UC Irvine, 193 Ayala Science Library, Irvine, CA 92697-5695; (949) 824-7765; mctsai@uci.edu.

SUBMIT 1ST APPLICATION DRAFT(S)

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ALL APPLICATION DRAFTS

All drafts must be submitted to SOP, not to scholarship funding agencies. All drafts must include the components (forms & essays) of a complete application.

If you're applying to multiple scholarships, remember that Fulbright drafts are due on different dates.

Save draft in electronic application system so SOP staff may access. DO NOT HIT SUBMIT when saving draft in electronic system. Email essay to your faculty to inform their letter drafts.

Forward to SOP staff email to potential Letter of Affiliation writer from Irish university.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

You'll receive feedback from SOP staff and your faculty on everything but the Personal Statement, as Mitchell forbids feedback on this essay. Incorporate this feedback into your second draft.

SUBMIT 2ND APPLICATION DRAFT(S)

Save draft in electronic application system so SOP staff may access. DO NOT HIT SUBMIT when saving draft in electronic system.

Submit evidence of affiliation, such as an email reply from affiliate. Recommended: Bring hard copy of [letter of affiliation](#) to SOP office (or email a PDF if signed and on official letterhead).

[Email 2nd essay drafts to faculty](#) letter writers.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

You'll receive feedback from SOP staff and your faculty on everything but the Personal Statement, as Mitchell forbids feedback on this essay. Incorporate this feedback into your second draft.

SUBMIT APPLICATION(S) FOR INTERVIEW

Save draft in electronic application system so SOP staff may access. DO NOT HIT SUBMIT when saving draft in electronic system. [Email](#) Personal Statement to SOP.

Scan or bring official transcript(s) to SOP.

Recommended: Bring hard copy of [letter of affiliation](#) to SOP office (or email a PDF if signed and on official letterhead).

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

We will distribute your materials to the members of your interview committee for their review.

After your interview, if the committee decides to endorse your application, you'll receive feedback to incorporate into your final draft.

CAMPUS INTERVIEW: EARN CAMPUS ENDORSEMENT

The US – Ireland Alliance will not accept applications directly from current undergraduate students. They will only review applications that university officials have endorsed (nominated). The SOP evaluates candidate applications and, for endorsed candidates, provides a unique, personalized, comprehensive letter of institutional endorsement, signed by the Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education.

Each candidate is interviewed by a personalized campus committee in August for approximately 60 (for one award) to 90 minutes (if applying for multiple scholarships). The committee evaluates application strength(s) and determines whether it merits endorsement.

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Candidates **MUST** attend in person. If you plan to study abroad or otherwise be outside the U.S. during Summer or Fall 2016, alert SOP staff immediately to discuss alternatives.

SUBMIT AUXILIARY INFORMATION

[Email to SOP](#) details of your future academic & career plans; familiarity with the United Kingdom; senior thesis title, topic, findings & relation to your graduate studies; and plans for engaging in community service while abroad. Using information you provide, SOP staff will complete your campus evaluation.

SUBMIT FINAL DRAFT(S)

Incorporate interview feedback. Upload all items, including proof of citizenship and photograph, to electronic application system. **DO NOT HIT SUBMIT** when saving draft in electronic system. Ensure faculty have submitted all finalized letters via electronic system **AND** have emailed to SOP.

[Email full, finalized application](#) including forms, Activities List, and Personal Statement to SOP.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

SOP staff will confirm receipt of a copy of your complete application and supplementary materials (letters of recommendation, etc.) and will upload your campus endorsement letter.

AFTER you receive confirmation from SOP, submit the complete application via the electronic system. You will have submitted your application to the funding agency.

US – IRELAND ALLIANCE REVIEWS YOUR APPLICATION

VIDEO INTERVIEWS

Mitchell requires a video interview shortly after submission of your application. The interview is approximately 10 minutes, including three randomly selected questions as well as a fourth question at the end where you can clarify any previous response or add new information. The Mitchell website offers the following advice: "We want the answers to be spontaneous and not prepared. The best advice we can give you is to "relax and be yourself." We are not asking complicated questions about nuclear fission. We are asking simple questions to get to know you. You will know the answers."

In late October, the Mitchell conducts additional Skype interviews with semi-finalists.

FINALIST INTERVIEW

20 Mitchell Finalists are interviewed in Washington, D.C. in person on the same Saturday prior to Thanksgiving as the Rhodes interview (you may not interview for both awards). The scholarship program provides hotel but generally does not provide travel costs. Winners will be notified approximately 1 day after interviews conclude.