

# Student Committee for Developing Character Criteria for Katie School Student Scholarships

## Summary of Student Leaders Recommendations on Character Criteria for Scholarships

**Committee Members:** Doug Johnson -Beta Gamma Sigma President; Jeremy Gallico-Gamma Iota Sigma President; Larry Bratton -- MBA Association President, Lauren Widman - Toastmaster's President; Jill Scharringhausen - SHRM President; Meghan Buddemeyer - - Business Week President; Tyler Hall - Delta Sigma Pi President; Mike Carroll- Organizational Leadership Club President; Mike Scholl - Business Administration Association President; Karen Jacquet - COBEC Secretary

**Facilitator:** Jim Jones-Director, Katie School of Insurance

## Committee Goals and Objectives

A group of COBEC leaders discussed the criteria that should be considered in establishing a character criteria for scholarships. These students were tasked with the following:

1. *Define* what character is
  - a. Review existing literature on the subject of character and leadership to find recognized characteristics
  - b. *Determine* attributes which should be considered
2. *Review* the criteria suggested by students in session 1 and then help develop *assessment* criteria for scholarships based on indicators of that character criterion that should ideally be:
  - i. Objective
  - ii. Observable (demonstrable) and
  - iii. Measurable
3. Make recommendations on:
  - a. How to *execute* the scholarship criteria in practice
  - b. How to *communicate* the criteria to students to act as incentive for proper criteria and deterrence for behavior that would negatively reflect on student

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## Process for Arriving at Criteria

A list of four character criteria was presented to the students with definitions. These were culled from multiple sources including Stephen Covey's Principle Centered Leadership, James Kouzes and Barry Posner's, The Leadership Challenge, and Doug Lennick's and Fred Kiel's Moral Intelligence, the ISU *College of Business Standards for Professional Behavior and Ethical Conduct*, as well as several websites from educational institutions that focus on building character. A complete list of these criteria can be found in Appendix Item A.

Criteria were discussed in terms of definitions, importance, and ability to assess for scholarship award purposes. Students also considered evidence of the absence of criteria and negative attributes in developing their final list.

Students defined and consolidated criteria to come up with the following four key criteria:

- Accountability
- Drive for Excellence
- Respect
- Integrity

Table 1 provides a description of the criteria as defined by the students along with suggestions on ways in which the criteria may be assessed. Students were also asked to develop ideas for communicating scholarship requirements to students.

**Table 1- Character Criteria and Suggestions for Assessment and Indicators That May Be Considered**

Criteria	Possible Ways of Assessing
<p><b>Accountability</b> - Defined by students as honoring commitments, being responsible for decisions, accepting consequences, and admitting mistakes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (Ask behavioral questions like:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When was a time when you made a mistake and what did you learn from it?</li> <li>2. When was a time when you disagreed with someone on a project and how did you handle that?</li> <li>3. How do you delegate work to others?                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get references from bosses or faculty</li> <li>• Having a leadership role in organization that requires peers to vote in leadership (Not likely to vote in a person who is not accountable)</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Drive for Excellence</b> - Defined by students as having a good work ethic. Getting results. Continuous improvement. Putting in time above and beyond basic requirements. Being involved in the campus community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement in student organizations (perhaps leadership role)</li> <li>• Reference from faculty on participation in class</li> <li>• Having a double major or a minor</li> <li>• Academic performance</li> <li>• Getting promotions (within organizations and at work)</li> <li>• Completing certifications and professional exams</li> <li>• Working job(s) while going to school (Students felt like this showed drive especially if they had good academic performance even if they did not join clubs or have double major)</li> <li>• Reference from bosses ( Ask if they show pride in work and go beyond basic requirements)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Respect</b> -Defined by students as treating others fairly. Listening to others and accepting input from others. Living up to promises made to another. Maintaining self-control. Exhibiting consideration for things and people that they encounter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• References from faculty AND advisors (sometimes students lose temper and don't treat advisors well. Respect and disrespect sometimes exhibited in classroom as well. )</li> <li>• Interview question.</li> <li>1. (Is there a time when you felt disrespected? How did you respond? Answer will indicate how they treat others who make mistakes. )</li> </ul>
<p><b>Integrity</b> - Defined by students as being honest, trustworthy, caring, and ethical.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community service (especially if it is voluntary and they already have busy life of work and school)</li> <li>• NOT having record of behavior that would indicate an absence of integrity or having unfavorable character attributes, especially those showing fraudulent intent *</li> <li>• A list of behaviors that were considered by students is included in Appendix Item B.</li> </ul>
<p><b>*</b></p> <p>1. With respect to records of violations like those listed in the appendix (notwithstanding convictions of felonies) student leaders felt that there were very few that should bar applicant from obtaining a scholarship. The violations that most concerned students were those related to fraudulent intent such a plagiarism and cheating. With respect to alcohol violations students noted that some colleges, such as the College of Education, expel students after two violations (like "drinking tickets") after they had been given sufficient notice of the penalties. But students provided a host of reasons for why one violation, by itself, should not bar a student from receiving a scholarship. A list of those reasons is found in Appendix Item B number 3.</p> <p>2. There was consensus among all student leaders that students should have a right to explain any violations. (This should be in the application form but may even require more explanation.) Students indicated that they were aware of students receiving an F on an exam for sharing a calculator, or failing to cite one source.</p> <p>3. There was a consensus among student leaders that there should be a time limit for looking back on a record. For example, they believed that it was patently unfair to consider violations occurring in the freshmen year, especially for a senior that had spent the past three years demonstrating accountability, drive for excellence, respect, and integrity through outstanding academic achievement, and community service, student leadership, and professionalism on the job. Several student leaders felt that they matured tremendously since their freshman year.</p> <p>4. A consensus of students felt that more recent violations (for example within the past year) and multiple violations, <u>after having been warned of the possible financial consequences,</u> showed a lack of judgment and maturity and could be something to be considered.</p>	

# Appendix Items

## Appendix Item A- Character Criteria for Student scholarships

Define the following, then choose the best character attributes for scholarship purposes:

1. Courage to “do the right thing”
2. Admits, corrects & learns from mistakes
3. Respectful and considerate of others
4. Honors commitments
5. Honest/sincere/trusting & trustworthy/integrity
6. Service to the community/good citizenship
7. Diligence in daily work
8. Leadership/accepting & managing
9. Reliable/responsible/dependable
10. Fair to others
11. Cares for own mental/physical health/self-control over unhealthy addictions
12. Drives for excellence/high standards
13. Fosters others’ mental well-being & self-esteem/caring/believes in others/empathizes
14. Continually educates self
15. Places the good of the whole above self-interest
16. Prevents & resolves conflicts
17. Financially responsible
18. Manages own emotions/professional/mature
19. Team player/cooperates with and assists others
20. Strong interpersonal skills/plays well with others
21. Good communicator/listener
22. Healthy self-esteem/confidence
23. High initiative/energy/resourcefulness/creativity/productivity
24. Displays compassion for and forgiveness of others
25. Knowledgeable/skilled/has vision and inspires others

## Appendix Item B- Behavior showing an absence of sought after criteria

1. Conviction of Felonies: Robbery, rape, assault, counterfeiting, arson, fraud, embezzlement, selling drugs, DUI, etc
2. Other crimes, misdemeanors, and behavior demonstrating poor judgment

### Alcohol and drug violations

- Underage drinking violation (aka Drinking Ticket)
- Conviction for public drunkenness
- Conviction for possessing illegal drugs

## Fraudulent intent

- Lying on the scholarship application (including failing to mention activities)
- Plagiarism (Even if it did not lead to suspension)
- Cheating on an exam or project (Even if it did not lead to suspension)
- Trespassing
- Smuggling and customs violations (where intent to commit fraud is absent)

## Self-Control Issues

- Disorderly conduct
- Damaging private property
- Yelling at faculty, advisors, or administrators

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## **“Technical” Violations (These were considered but were recommended to not be included in assessing character.)**

- Minor traffic violations (moving violations)
- General university violations (moving dorm furniture, safety violations like possessing fireworks)
- Breaking city ordinance (leaving old furniture on the yard, selling food without a license)

### 3. Issues/Concerns Brought Up By Students in Applying Record of Improper Conduct

- Felt that a time limit for looking back on record should be established as students felt that personal maturity dramatically improved for many students in the junior and senior years
- Felt that intending to commit plagiarism and cheat on exams were real issues, and may be indicative of a lack of character, but proving an intent in a fair way, is very difficult
- Felt that it was a problem in having College of Business character criteria used to try to influence students who are not yet officially taking classes in COB, involved in RSOs, and have minimal contact with COB.
- Felt that there was a fairness issue if records were used against students who declared COB majors early.
- Felt that there was a fairness issue if records were used against students who went to ISU their freshmen and sophomore years, and not against transfer students
- Felt that there was a fairness issue in that students agreed to do required “punishment” in exchange for accepting responsibility and waiving their defenses, and then later were punished again for the same offense by not getting a scholarship. (Double Jeopardy)
- Felt that there was a fairness issue in that punishment (losing out on scholarships) was not proportionate to offense (attending a party where alcohol was being served)

- Felt that drinking was an ingrained cultural issue and it would not be affected by a COB policy. Would need to be university-wide but then might have unintended consequence of more hidden drinking and more resistance to authorities trying to issue “drinking tickets”.
- Felt that if deterrence was a goal of the policy in applying past record, it would not budge the needle at all.
- Felt that if character assessment was the goal of the policy in applying past record, especially drinking tickets, then many, if not a majority, of the students in leadership roles in student organizations would not be deemed having appropriate character as drinking violations are so prevalent. (Students pointed out that there may be a misunderstanding about underage “drinking tickets” in that they are not evidence of public drunkenness, or a DUI. Drinking tickets can be, and are, issued for being in proximity to people drinking.)
- Felt that students should be given a chance to explain their side whenever negative records are used
- Felt that any record checking should be stated up front in a scholarship application, and not be used after a student had applied. Application should have room for explanation.

## **Appendix Item C- Communicating Character Criteria**

The following suggestions were made for communicating scholarship criteria to students in order to help facilitate exemplary behavior and deter behavior that would run counter to criteria sought.

- Include this in communication, and even exercise for Business 100 class
- Include this in junior experience (which would pick up transfer students)
- Communicate this in FIL 185- class on ethics and corporate social responsibility
- Communicate this in FIL 240 when discussing professional standards
- Make sure this is on scholarship application and featured on web page of scholarship information
- Communicate to student on Transfer Day
- Communicate each year to COBEC students to disseminate to all students in RSOs.
- Needs to be part of a much broader university wide policy if the idea is to really raise awareness
- Include in ISU policy for students on I-Campus