

Scholars of Distinction: Economic Program Overview

Program Criteria

To receive a Minnesota Scholars of Distinction award, the student applicant must demonstrate skills necessary to identify, access, analyze, organize, and present complex economic information. They should be able to apply principles of economics to public policy issues and relate relevant economic concepts to other subject areas.

Each applicant is expected to demonstrate knowledge of how economics is used to develop understanding of human behavior, markets, government, and public policy; how events and policies impact individual and firm behavior; and how public policies can have unintended consequences.

Assessment Elements

The assessment process will involve three reviewers who will use a rubric to evaluate evidence of a student's understanding of economics and the ability to research and analyze.

Project Specifics

Applicants must submit an Economics Project demonstrating scholarly excellence and personal experience

Project is to be submitted electronically in a format that is clearly organized. The Project must include all of the following items (see below for more details):

- Annotated resume, with testimonials
- Personal statement
- Project development narrative
- Project content
- Annotated bibliography
- Documentation of public presentation of project

Personal Statements and Supporting Documents

1. Annotated resume

- a. The resume should reflect the pathways and experiences that have led you to qualify as a Scholar of Distinction in Economics.
- b. Outline the educational experiences that prepared you for excellence in economics, including specific coursework or training, independent studies, personal experiences.
- c. Identify two individuals familiar with your research and actions related to the project.
- d. (Obtain permission and submit the individual's name, position/title, telephone number and a sentence on why you identified this person. Contact may be made at the discretion of the reviewers.)
- e. Submit in resume format.

2. Personal statement - one to two pages, double spaced.

- a. In your own words, describe what economics is and why it is important.
- b. Provide your future goals with respect to the study of economics.
- c. List project goal(s) and explain how and why project was initiated and the research and actions taken to accomplish the project goal(s).

3. Project narrative - two to three pages, double spaced

- a. Explain project process from start to finish, outlining key steps that led to project completion.
- b. Describe your project's challenges and successes.
- c. Review the project's impact on your personal growth as well as project results/impact on others.
- d. Scan in supporting material and place within narrative or reference using an addendum. Examples may include photos, press notices, event programs, etc.
- e. Include project journal and self-evaluation.
- f. Conclude narrative with recommendations for others seeking to replicate the project.

4. Project Content

- a. The final format of the project could be one of the following: research paper, documentary video, or interactive web site.
- b. The project content should state a clear thesis statement or argument that explains the relevance of the chosen topic and convincingly support the thesis within the project.
- c. The project should demonstrate the applicant can
 - i. apply principles of economics to public policy issues and/or decision-making,
 - ii. provide well-developed economic analysis, and

- iii. acquire and organize economic primary and/or secondary data
- d. The project should use a variety of sources to analyze and compare perspectives and cite and document sources in a bibliography.

5. Annotated bibliography

- a. Include primary and secondary sources that show depth and breadth of understanding of economics and the research topic.
- b. Citation and annotation formats must be consistent.

6. Documentation of public presentation of project

- a. Documentation may include script/outline, photos, power point slides, program or CD.
- b. Include evidence of feedback, review or evaluation and personal reflection.

Consultation

Economics project consultants are available through the [Center for Social Studies Education](#). Contact Jessica.ellison@mnhs.org, 651-259-3427.

Submission Process

1. Complete the [Intent to Apply](#).
2. View the Scholars of Distinction [Important Dates](#) document for the current award cycle timeline.
3. Students are required to arrange for an official, sealed high school transcript to be sent directly to scholarsofdistinction.MDE@state.mn.us or

Minnesota Department of Education
Attn: Wendy Behrens
1500 Hwy 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Transcript must be a certified copy sent directly from the applicant's school and must be received by the project deadline.

4. If a transcript is not available contact, scholarsofdistinction.MDE@state.mn.us regarding alternative evidence demonstrating required knowledge base.
5. Complete the elements listed under "Project Specifics", clearly label documents and send in PDF format to scholarsofdistinction.MDE@state.mn.us. Zip files, Google documents and redirection and downloads to other sites will not be accepted.

Scholars of Distinction: Economics Scoring Rubric follows this document.

Rubric for Evaluation of Applicants for the Minnesota Scholars of Distinction in Economics

Criterion	Components reflect a level of DISTINCTION	Components reflect a level of HONORABLE MENTION	Components reflect a level of AVERAGE	Components do not qualify
<p style="text-align: center;">Personal Statement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(1 to 2 pages)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 points</p>	<p>Clear and convincing articulation of importance of economics in terms of past experience, present studies and future goals.</p> <p>Scholar clearly and strongly demonstrates the development of skills over time. The work is articulate and shows a longstanding commitment to research in and application of economics knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Substantial evidence of importance of economics in terms of past experience, present studies and future goals.</p> <p>Scholar clearly demonstrates development of skills over time. The work is well-written, and shows a longstanding commitment to research in and application of economics knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Average and predictable evidence of importance of economics in terms of past experience, present studies and future goals.</p> <p>Scholar demonstrates the development of some skills over time. The work shows commitment to a weak or small research project.</p>	<p>Sketchy or undeveloped overview of importance of economics in terms of past experience, present studies and future goals.</p> <p>Scholar has not demonstrated the development of some skills over time. The work does not show commitment to researching the project or the skills to do so.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Annotated K-12 Resume</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 points</p>	<p>Resume reflects education and experiences that have led the student to excel in economics research and application.</p> <p>Academic studies and activities have contributed to significant growth of economics knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Resume preparation demonstrates superior quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Resume reflects education and experiences that have led the student to succeed in economics research and application.</p> <p>Academic studies and activities have contributed to substantial growth of economics knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Resume preparation demonstrates satisfactory quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Resume reflects education and experiences that have led the student to engage in economics research and application.</p> <p>Academic studies and activities have contributed to economics knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Resume preparation demonstrates average quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Resume reflects education and experiences that have led to economics research and application.</p> <p>Academic studies and activities have limited contribution to economics knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Resume preparation demonstrates poor quality for a high school student.</p>

Criterion	Components reflect a level of DISTINCTION	Components reflect a level of HONORABLE MENTION	Components reflect a level of AVERAGE	Components do not qualify
<p align="center">Annotated Bibliography and one page Essay</p> <p align="center">10 points</p>	<p>Extensive annotated bibliography of readings that support a broad and comprehensive study of project components.</p> <p>The essay shows a superior understanding of the impact the research has had on scholar and others.</p> <p>The writing reflects superior quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Substantial annotated bibliography of readings showing a broad and comprehensive study of project components.</p> <p>The essay shows a positive understanding of the impact the research has had on scholar and others.</p> <p>The writing reflects high quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Average annotated bibliography of readings that shows a limited study of project components.</p> <p>The essay shows some understanding of the impact the research has had on scholar and others.</p> <p>The writing reflects average quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Undeveloped annotated bibliography of readings that show a cursory study of project components.</p> <p>The essay shows a weak connection of the impact the research has had on scholar and others.</p> <p>The writing reflects poor quality for a high school student.</p>
<p align="center">Project Narrative</p> <p align="center">40 points</p>	<p>Significant evidence presented that the scholar knows and is able to use key concepts and apply economics as identified in the Project Narrative component of the Project Specifics.</p> <p>Clear and convincing evidence the scholar conducted a valid study including a comprehensive and concise summary of research and activities.</p>	<p>Strong evidence presented that the scholar knows and is able to use concepts and apply economics as identified in the Project Narrative component of the Project Specifics.</p> <p>Substantial evidence the scholar conducted a valid study including a comprehensive and concise summary of research and activities.</p>	<p>Evidence presented that the scholar knows and is able to use key concepts and apply economics as identified in the Project Narrative component of the Project Specifics.</p> <p>Some evidence of scholarly research and activities is provided and process is unclear.</p>	<p>Lack of evidence that the scholar knows and is able to use key concepts and apply economics as identified in the Project Narrative component of the Project Specifics.</p> <p>Evidence of research and activities provided were not organized to inform the reader.</p>
<p align="center">Project Narrative</p> <p align="center">10 points</p>	<p>A superior approach to the project over an appropriate period of time.</p> <p>An innovative or creative project approach, content and methodology.</p>	<p>A valid approach to the project over an appropriate period of time.</p> <p>An innovative or creative project approach, content and methodology.</p>	<p>A limited approach to the project over a short period of time.</p> <p>A narrow project approach, content and methodology.</p>	<p>A sketchy approach to the project over a short period of time.</p> <p>An ordinary project approach, content and methodology.</p>

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Project Narrative (Continue 10 point Value)	<p>Only relevant information and supporting materials were included and reliability was assessed.</p> <p>Thoughtful reflection on the process, future research and recommendations for others seeking to replicate are included.</p> <p>Organization and writing reflects superior quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Relevant information and materials were included and reliability was assessed.</p> <p>Reflection on the process, future research and recommendations for others seeking to replicate are included.</p> <p>Organization and writing reflects high quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Limited relevant information and materials were included, but reliability may be an issue.</p> <p>Limited reflection and recommendations for others seeking to replicate the process are included.</p> <p>Organization and writing reflects average quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Relevance of information and supporting materials was not apparent.</p> <p>Reflection and recommendations for others seeking to replicate were not included.</p> <p>Organization and writing reflects poor quality for a high school student.</p>
Project Presentation 15 points	<p>Scholar made a public presentation, created a strong method to assess feedback received, and has reflected on the process with maturity and objectivity.</p>	<p>Scholar made a public presentation, created a satisfactory method to assess feedback received, and has reflected on the process with maturity and objectivity</p>	<p>Scholar made a public presentation, created a weak method to assess feedback received. Little reflection on the process was evident.</p>	<p>Scholar made a presentation with limited feedback. Little or no reflection on the presentation was evident.</p>
Testimonials 5 points	<p>Identification and contact information provided.</p>	<p>Identification and contact information provided</p>	<p>Identification and contact information was limited.</p>	<p>Identification and contact information was not provided.</p>

Reviewer's Comments:

Level of Recommendation:

_____Project reflects a level of **DISTINCTION**

_____Project reflects a level of **HONORABLE MENTION**

_____Project reflects a level of **AVERAGE**

_____Project does not qualify for recognition