ETIQUETTE FOR REQUESTING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

STEP 1: CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS
- Discuss your options with the office of national and international fellowships.
- Some fellowships state a preference for letters from professors, employers, or internship supervisors; refer to the fellowship website for guidelines.
- Choose individuals who know you well and can speak to your qualifications in detail.
- Consider the individuals who can best speak to your abilities as they relate to the qualifications for the fellowship.

STEP 2: MAKE YOUR REQUESTS
- Approach your recommendation writers at least 4 to 6 weeks before the internal application deadline.
- Avoid making your request in passing. If possible, set up an appointment to meet in person to describe what you are applying for and to make your request.
- If you cannot meet in person, write a formal email describing the fellowship and requesting a letter of recommendation.

STEP 3: COMPILe INFORMATION FOR YOUR RECOMMENDATION WRITERS
- Be organized. Give your recommendation letter writers everything they need in one packet that includes the following materials:
  - Resume (tailored for the fellowship)
  - Academic transcript (unofficial is fine)
  - A paragraph about how they know you (i.e., what courses you have taken, the work you did that stood out to them, etc.)
  - Information about the fellowship and why you are applying
  - The qualifications and accomplishments you would like them to emphasize (doing so can help tailor your letters so that each one has a unique focus)
- Detail the process of how they will submit their letters. Make them aware of the internal and external deadlines for submitting letters of recommendation. If the application requires them to mail their letters, be sure to provide a stamped and addressed envelope. Sometimes our office handles this mailing, so check with us first if your fellowship requires letters of recommendation to be submitted via post.

STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP WITH YOUR RECOMMENDATION WRITERS
- Follow up a week after asking to ensure that they have received the necessary information (e.g., an email triggered via an online application).
- Share your application materials with them (if you do not have your drafts ready, provide a written summary of your motivations and qualifications for pursuing the fellowship).
- Send them a friendly reminder a few days before the deadline.
- Say thank you! Handwritten notes are best, but email is also appropriate.
- Keep your recommendation writers informed of the outcome – whether or not you win!