

Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships (SULI)

Summer 2022 - Application for: Alex Zhang

APPLICANT PROFILE

General Applicant Information

First Name: Alex

Middle Name:

Last Name: Zhang

Previous Last Name(s):

Primary Email Address: azhang@smcm.edu

Alternate Email Address 1: alexzang2000@yahoo.com

Alternate Email Address 2:

ORCID: [0000-0003-2238-8934](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2238-8934)

Current Address

Primary Phone Number: 678-978-0111

Alternate Phone Number: 678-283-3250

Citizenship/Languages/Eligibility Information

I will be 18 years of age or older by the time the internship begins: Yes

Are you a U.S. Citizen? Yes

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EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Academic Information

Are you currently attending a community college or 2-year college?

No

Current academic status:

Junior

If you are selected as a participant in this DOE program, will you receive academic credit from your university/college for participating?

Yes

Undergraduate Institution Information

College/University Country: United States and U.S. Territories

College/University State/Province/Territory: Maryland

College/University Name: St. Mary's College of Maryland

College/University Address: 47645 College Drive

College/University City: Saint Mary's City

College/University Zip Code: 20686-3001

Expected/Declared Major: Biological Sciences - Biological Biochemistry

Expected Degree From This College/University: Bachelor's

Expected/Completed Graduation Date: May / 2023

Transcript: Unofficial transcript Alex Zhang.pdf

Does this institution provide grades? Yes

GPA Scale: 4.0

Total Attempted Credits: 96.00

Total Earned Credits: 51.00

Total Quality Points: 183.30

GPA: 3.59

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Courses

Course Title: Fund Phys Life Sci II

Course Number: PHYS132

Enrollment Status: Recently Completed

Awards or Honors

Award Title: Dean's List

Month & Year Received: July / 2021

Awarding Institution: St. Mary's College of Maryland

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High School Graduation or GED

Date of High School Graduation or GED:	June / 2019
Country:	United States
City:	BELTSVILLE
State/Province/Territory:	MD

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WORK EXPERIENCE & SKILLS

Work Experience

Name of Place of Employment or Activity:	Federal work study St Mary's library
Dates of Employment or Activity:	From 9/27/2021 To 12/16/2021
Hours Per Week:	2.0
Primary Duties:	Customer service, book management, working behind the desk.
Tasks Performed:	answering questions, answering phones, returning and checking out books, achieving books, and reshelving books

Name of Place of Employment or Activity:	Asian Grill and Buffet
Dates of Employment or Activity:	From 5/20/2019 To 8/20/2019
Hours Per Week:	45.0
Primary Duties:	Host, waiter, and cashier
Tasks Performed:	Greet customers, take customers to their seats, clean tables, customer service, working at the register, small kitchen task, cleaning

Professional Associations

Are you a member of any professional organizations?	No
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Computer Skills

Computer related skills:	I've used R-studio in my biology, genetic, and quantitative analysis class. I am very familiar with microsoft programs such as excel, power point, word document. I also use google problems like google sheets, document and slide.
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Laboratory/Technical Skills

Experience with advanced laboratory techniques or equipment:	Bomb Calorimetry, kinetics, computational chemistry, Maxwell relations, MPF, Particle in a Box, Recrystallization, sublimation, TLC, NMR, FTIR, Creation of biochar, titration, some DNA isolation and purification, UV mutation, Metabolization of Lactose and β -galactosidase activity in Mutant Culture.
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PROGRAM INFORMATION

Eligibility

Have you previously participated in 2
SULI appointments? No

Previous DOE Internship/Fellowship Experience

Have you ever had an
internship/fellowship with the
Department of Energy or any of its
National Laboratories? No

Availability

What is the earliest date you can
begin your internship? 5/16/2022

When do you need to complete your
internship? 8/19/2022

First Choice Host DOE Laboratory

DOE Laboratory: National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)

First Choice Research Area: Biochemistry

Second Choice Research Area: Analytical Chemistry

Third Choice Research Area: Organic Chemistry

Second Choice Host DOE Laboratory

DOE Laboratory: Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility (TJNAF)

First Choice Research Area: Engineering Chemical

Second Choice Research Area: Computational Biology

Third Choice Research Area: Physical Chemistry

Relatives Employed at DOE Laboratories

Are you a relative of an employee at
the proposed host DOE laboratories? No

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ESSAYS

Research Experience:	<p>I don't have a lot of research experience other than the laboratory experiments I've done in my science classes. In my physical chemistry class I worked on several labs included computational chemistry in developing UV absorbing sunscreen from an existing molecule, bomb calorimetry for food or fuel, absorption spectra of a 1D and 3D particle in a box, kinetics and reaction mechanism of oxidation of Mg by HCl, and vibrational spectra of HCl and DCl. All of those lab includes a prelab procedure, an in lab session with the supervision of an instructor, and an end of the lab deliverable. The task is self divided within the groups and in the end we were graded based on our deliverables, lab note book, and presentations of one of the topics. All of the assignments for each experiment are done with groups of two to three.</p> <p>In my quantitative analysis lab I worked on a larger project regarding biochar. While it is also a group assignment the groups are mostly independent during the experiment. There is an instructor present if we need to ask a question. In this lab we created biochar with an material of our choice and tested different properties of biochar such as liming potential, pH, conductivity, FTIR, water content, UV-vis, fluorometer, and TGA. All the instruments are provided for us and we had experience working with each of the instruments before this assignment. However most of the procedures we have to obtain ourselves from a published work on biochar. We had about a month and a half period to complete the experiment and write the lab report individually.</p> <p>In my organic chemistry class there was an experiment were I worked independently. However the experiment's lab manual was provided. The students was task to review past experiments on the procedures synthesize and purify ester from unknown carboxylic acid and alcohol. An instructor is present to answer questions, however most of the assignment was independent. The experiment is followed up with a lab report and identification of unknown ester synthesized.</p>
Research Interests:	<p>I've worked with biofuel before in my analytical chemistry class. The experiment was on developing and testing different properties of biochar created from different bio material. The overall subject and experiment was fun and intriguing. I've never thought that a material obtained from burning biomaterial through pyrolysis could be used as a way to reduce carbon in the air and be used as nutrients for plants. I wonder what else I might worked on biofuel wise during my time at the national renewable energy laboratory. It's always exciting to see what new alternative energy we can create as a substitute from fossil fuel. I believe that the environment is very important to preserve. Due to the current issues caused by global warming I believe it's more than ever to research about more efficient ways to protect and restore the environment.</p> <p>In my physics class I've worked on problems with particle accelerators and even have a lecture on them. However I never worked on the actual particle accelerator before. I recently taken physical chemistry at my college and I remember doing a lecture on particle accelerator as a final day lecture. I've learned concepts around a particle accelerator however I never experienced it. These peeked my interest and when I first read the description of each facility it caused flash backs to those lectures. I want to learn more about the particles themselves as I got understanding of what they are, but I don't know how they are applied in the real world.</p>
Personal Experience:	<p>I've a lot of experience working with other people, including people I don't really get along. I frequently worked in groups of two or more in lab sessions and learned communication and leadership skills. I've knowledge of both biology and chemistry from the classes I've taken. I believe that having a more versatile field in a discussion would bring forth, never thought before, ideas. I'm open about sharing my thoughts and to other perspectives. I have a lot of experience working in labs as most of my classes includes a laboratory session along with an lector. So I have experience doing research on topics, writing procedures, creating a lab notebook, formulating a lab report, and presenting the work.</p> <p>I've experience working very long hours. I've worked at my family's restaurant for over 50 hours per week. From my experience at working I learned that there is a lot of things I can't do. When I first started working I kept to the mind set that I should work independently and meet expectations otherwise I'll get fired. However, this mind set wrecked myself both physically and mentally. I slowly learned that asking for help is natural. Instead of forcing myself to coop the stress and the fatigue alone I can ask for advice and help from my seniors. This made my work much efficient and healthy. I shouldn't be afraid of making a mistake or not know how to do something, because that's a part of growing as a person. I believe that this is an important skill I've developed during my times working.</p>
Professional Goals:	<p>My long term goal is have a career in the biochemical science field. There are a lot of options to choose from and I can't decide on a path yet. I was encouraged by my academic advisor that instead of dwelling over possibilities I should go out and do them. For this summer my short term goal is to obtain more experience working in a professional lab. I want to know how is it like to be a scientist and what do they do every day. I want to further develop my research capabilities. One thing I am missing from my resume and essay is professional experience</p>

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working in a laboratory setting under a company. This summer I want to fill that blank and I believe that this internship program will make me work harder than ever to become a more independent researcher.

I never experienced living by myself and attending work at a science facility. While my college does provide something similar it's not the same as an actual career in science. All the locations in this program is out of state from where I am. Additionally SULI provides research opportunities under a mentor. This is also something I've yet experienced.

There are a lot of things I have yet done and all of those things scares me but I have to overcome them eventually. SULI fits many of those fears. My college really make the students work hard and this program was recommended by my advisors who I have for an instructor too. I believe that this program will work me as hard as my instructors to shape me into a scientist.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: **First Name:** Andrew
Last Name: Koch
Email: askoch@smcm.edu
Status: Received 12/31/2021

Recommendation 2: **First Name:** Kelly
Last Name: Neiles
Email: kyneiles@smcm.edu
Status: Received 1/12/2022

Recommendation 3: **First Name:** Randolph
Last Name: Larsen
Email: rklarsen@smcm.edu
Status: Received 1/8/2022

St. Mary's College of Maryland

Unofficial Transcript for: Zhang, Alex

Program	AcademicStatus	Classification	Advisor(s)
Undergraduate Program	Degree-seeking student	Senior	Koch, Andrew S.
First Major: Biochemistry	Second Major:	Degree: Bachelor of Science	

	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA
Transfer	8.000	8.000	8.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Residential	88.000	71.000	20.000	51.000	183.300	3.594
Cumulative	96.000	79.000	28.000	51.000	183.300	3.594

Term: 2019 Spring Term

Spanish Placement into ILCS101 Spanish - ILCS101 ILCS101: 0 2008 EXAM:

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
			Term Totals:	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
			Career Totals:	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	

Term: 2019 Fall Term

English placement in CORE101 Writing English placement in ENGL 101 ENGL101: 0

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
BIOL105	PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY I	C+	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	9.200		
BIOL105L	PRIN OF BIOL I LAB	A	N	1.000	1.000	0.000	1.000	4.000		
CORE101	FIRST YEAR SEMINAR Change over Time: Why Evolution	B+	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	13.200		
ENGL235	TOPICS LITERATURE AND CULTURE Lady Literati: Anglophone Women	B	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	12.000		
PHIL101	INTRO TO PHILOSOPHY	A-	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	14.800		
				Term Totals:	17.000	17.000	0.000	17.000	53.200	3.129
				Career Totals:	17.000	17.000	0.000	17.000	53.200	3.129

Term: 2020 Spring Term

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
ARTH220	ROCK PAPER SWORD: THE MEDIA OF THE ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL WORLD	P	N	4.000	4.000	4.000	0.000	0.000		
BIOL106	PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY II	W	N	4.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
BIOL106L	PRINC OF BIOL II LAB	P	Y	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000		Repeated-under
ILCS101	ELEM SPANISH I	A	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	16.000		
SOCI101	INTRO TO SOCIOLOGY	P	N	4.000	4.000	4.000	0.000	0.000		
Term Totals:				17.000	13.000	9.000	4.000	16.000	4.000	
Career Totals:				34.000	30.000	9.000	21.000	69.200	3.295	

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic during the Spring 2020 semester, St. Mary's College of Maryland moved to online learning mid-semester and allowed students to opt into Pass/D/F grading at their discretion.

Term: 2020 Summer Term

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
CHEM103	GENERAL CHEMISTRY I General Chemistry I	A	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	16.000		
Term Totals:				4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	16.000	4.000	
Career Totals:				38.000	34.000	9.000	25.000	85.200	3.408	

Term: 2020 Fall Term

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
BIOL270	GENETICS	P	N	4.000	4.000	4.000	0.000	0.000		
BIOL270L	GENETICS LAB	A	N	1.000	1.000	0.000	1.000	4.000		
CHEM106	GENERAL CHEMISTRY II	A	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	16.000		
ECON102	PRINCIPLES OF MICROECONOMICS	P	N	4.000	4.000	4.000	0.000	0.000		
MATH151	CALCULUS I	P	N	4.000	4.000	4.000	0.000	0.000		
Term Totals:				17.000	17.000	12.000	5.000	20.000	4.000	
Career Totals:				55.000	51.000	21.000	30.000	105.200	3.507	

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic during the Fall 2020 semester, St. Mary's College of Maryland moved to online learning and allowed students to opt into Pass/D/F grading at their discretion.

Term: 2020 Winter Term

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
ECON251	INTERMEDIATE MACROECONOMICS	A	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	16.000		
Term Totals:				4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	16.000	4.000	
Career Totals:				59.000	55.000	21.000	34.000	121.200	3.565	

Term: 2021 Spring Term

Dean's List

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
BIOL106	PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY II	B	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	12.000		
BIOL106L	PRINC OF BIOL II LAB	B+	Y	1.000	1.000	0.000	1.000	3.300		Replaces A Prior Course
ECON103	PRINCIPLES OF MACROECONOMICS	A	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	16.000		
MATH152	CALCULUS II Calculus for the Life Sciences	A-	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	14.800		
PHIL352	SOUTH ASIAN PHILOSOPHIES: HINDUISM, BUDDHISM, & ISLAM	A	N	4.000	4.000	0.000	4.000	16.000		
Term Totals:				17.000	17.000	0.000	17.000	62.100	3.653	
Career Totals:				76.000	71.000	20.000	51.000	183.300	3.594	

Term: 2021 Summer Term

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
PHYS131	Fund Phys Life Sci I	A	N	4.000	4.000	4.000	0.000	0.000		Transfer Work from Univ Maryland College Park Equivalent Course: PHYS151 FUNDAMENTALS OF PHYSICS I
PHYS132	Fund Phys Life Sci II	A	N	4.000	4.000	4.000	0.000	0.000		Transfer Work from Univ Maryland College Park Equivalent Course: PHYS152 FUNDAMENTALS OF PHYSICS II
Term Totals:				8.000	8.000	8.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Career Totals:				84.000	79.000	28.000	51.000	183.300	3.594	

Term: 2021 Fall Term

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
CHEM305	QUANT ANALYSIS	N/A until 12/26/2021	N	4.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CHEM311	ORGANIC CHEMISTRY I	N/A until 12/26/2021	N	4.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CHEM311L	ORGANIC CHEM I LAB	N/A until 12/26/2021	N	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CHEM451	PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY I	N/A until 12/26/2021	N	4.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CHEM451L	PHYSICAL CHEM I LAB	N/A until 12/26/2021	N	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
Term Totals:				12.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Career Totals:				96.000	79.000	28.000	51.000	183.300	3.594	

Term: 2022 Spring Term

Course	Title	Grade	Repeat	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	Pass Credits	GPA Credits	Quality Points	GPA	Notes
BIOL471	MOLECULAR BIOLOGY	N/A until 05/19/2022	N	4.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
BIOL471L	MOLECULAR BIOLOGY LAB	N/A until 05/19/2022	N	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CHEM306	INSTR ANALYSIS	N/A until 05/19/2022	N	4.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CHEM306L	INSTR ANALYSIS LAB	N/A until 05/19/2022	N	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CHEM312	ORGANIC CHEMISTRY II	N/A until 05/19/2022	N	4.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CHEM312L	ORGANIC CHEM II LAB	N/A until 05/19/2022	N	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
Term Totals:				12.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Career Totals:				96.000	79.000	28.000	51.000	183.300	3.594	

SULI PROGRAM APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION FOR ALEX ZHANG

Recommender Contact Information

- **First Name:** Andrew
- **Last Name:** Koch
- **Title:** Professor of Chemistry
- **Department:** Chemistry and Biochemistry
- **Institution/Organization:** St. Mary's College of Maryland
- **Telephone:** 240-895-4905
- **Email:** askoch@smcm.edu

Applicant Information

Association

Describe your relationship to the applicant, including how long you've known the applicant, where, and in what capacity.

It is my great pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Alex Zhang's application to the Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships. I have known Alex for a little over a year when he contacted me about attending St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM). Alex was interested in health sciences in general, leaning towards pharmacy, and our Admissions set up a zoom meeting with me so I could tell him about our pre-health advising. Alex impressed me with his mature nature and eagerness to listen to advice and share his own interests and ideas of what he wanted to do with his life. He had certainly thought things through, and at the end of our conversation I told him to feel free to contact me if he had any further questions, which he did. I saw from the start that Alex really takes things seriously, and when he accepted SMCM I was happy to serve as his academic advisor. Last semester I had Alex for Organic I, where he placed 19th out of 91 students who enrolled in the course, and tied another student for the second highest B.

Applicant Comments

Please provide substantive comments about the applicant's education, training, aptitude, or promise relevant to the SULI program. Include any relevant additional detail or perspective regarding the applicant's research experience or equivalent experience on complex projects, including the level of independence or other factors that would contribute to the applicant's ability to make an excellent contribution to the SULI program.

Alex performed well throughout the course, which was fairly impressive since he was taking three upper level chemistry courses, all with demanding laboratory requirements. As his academic advisor I was concerned about a student taking Organic I, P-chem I and Quantitative Analysis at the same time; however, Alex is planning on graduating with a Biochemistry degree next year, and will need to take Biochemistry I&II along with his St. Mary's Project (SMP) which is an 8-credit capstone research project. He had originally planned on majoring in biology, but decided to change to biochemistry after finding chemistry more interesting. Since he did not take General Chemistry until his second year, it made the most sense for him to jump into the deep end last semester. I am sure Alex had to adapt to new study habits to accommodate last semester, and I feel his academic performance will improve in the coming semesters.

Like many students, Alex found the remote learning challenging. We were fully in-person last semester and Alex was eager to be back in the classroom. When we had breakout work, Alex took the initiative to pull those around him into a discussion, and his group certainly was diverse. I get the impression that Alex would fit into any group, showing everyone respect and courtesy. He has a sharp mind and is good at

articulating his opinion, but always ready to listen to others. I believe he has a lot of potential as a leader, and recently he has started to think about pursuing a career in medicine or research. Alex knows he will need to turn his grades from good to excellent for his path, and I have the confidence that he will do just that.

Alex is well aware that your program would not only provide him the opportunity to explore different career paths, but also offer him an opportunity to prove he can apply his hardworking nature and keen intellect towards solving research problems. You will find him very appreciative of this opportunity and he will give it his all. I highly recommend him with no reservations at all.

Applicant Rating

In comparison to other undergraduate students, please rate the applicant relative to his/her peers on the following qualifications:

	Do Not Know	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
Analytical and Mathematical				X	
Experimental Research			X		
Overall Academic				X	
Initiative and Self Reliance					X
Motivation toward Scientific Career					X
Originality of Thought	X				
Emotional Maturity					X
Ability to Work with Others					X
Potential for Leadership					X
Oral Communication Skills					X
Written Communication Skills	X				

SULI PROGRAM APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION FOR ALEX ZHANG

Recommender Contact Information

- **First Name:** Randolph
- **Last Name:** Larsen
- **Title:** Professor
- **Department:** Chemistry & Biochemistry
- **Institution/Organization:** St. Mary's College of Maryland
- **Telephone:** 240-895-4597
- **Email:** rklarsen@smcm.edu

Applicant Information

Association

Describe your relationship to the applicant, including how long you've known the applicant, where, and in what capacity.

I have known Alex Zhang for one semester (Fall 2021). I was his instructor for an in-person, upper-level undergraduate course, Analytical Chemistry at St. Mary's College of Maryland.

Applicant Comments

Please provide substantive comments about the applicant's education, training, aptitude, or promise relevant to the SULI program. Include any relevant additional detail or perspective regarding the applicant's research experience or equivalent experience on complex projects, including the level of independence or other factors that would contribute to the applicant's ability to make an excellent contribution to the SULI program.

Alex Zhang recently completed my Analytical Chemistry course. During the course, he showed initiative and good leadership in designing and implementing a multi-week mini-research project. His project created biochar from a renewable feedstock (bamboo) and subsequently tested the biochar for a suite of physical and chemical characteristics including liming equivalent, pH, buffer capacity, energy content, ash content, and extractable organics. His team worked without my direct supervision. I found his work was done safely, effectively, and efficiently. His notebook and the final report were easy to follow and well written. On one occasion in class, Alex gave a 20-minute oral presentation supported by PowerPoint. His presentation was well designed and well-executed. I believe Alex is ready to advance his scientific career with an opportunity to conduct a summer research experience.

Applicant Rating

In comparison to other undergraduate students, please rate the applicant relative to his/her peers on the following qualifications:

	Do Not Know	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
Analytical and Mathematical				X	
Experimental Research				X	
Overall Academic				X	
Initiative and Self Reliance				X	
Motivation toward Scientific Career				X	
Originality of Thought				X	
Emotional Maturity				X	
Ability to Work with Others				X	
Potential for Leadership				X	
Oral Communication Skills				X	
Written Communication Skills				X	