ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Illinois' first public university

Robert G. Bone
SCHOLARSHIP

Guidance for Nomination Letters

What is the Bone Scholarship?

The Bone Scholarship is the highest honor an Illinois State University undergraduate student can receive. Bone Scholars are students who combine broad and excellent academic achievement with campus and community engagement. They are expected to have shown outstanding qualities of character and leadership.

Each department/school may nominate at least one student. For each 200 undergraduate majors (beyond the first 200 majors), each department/school may nominate an additional student. No department/school, however large, may nominate more than four students.

Nominations are accompanied by two letters of nomination, obtained by the department/school. These letters will be considered by the committee in the selection process and will be distinct from letters of recommendation sought out by nominees themselves, as part of their application.

Nomination deadline is Monday, February 1, 2027

Nomination letters are submitted with the online nomination form.

General Guidance

Letters should introduce the nominee to the selection committee and comment on the following, as appropriate:

- The breadth, diversity, and quality of the nominee's academic work.
- The type and extent of activities in which the nominee has been involved, both in the university and the community.
- Personal qualities including dependability, cooperation, initiative, and other characteristics that set the nominee apart from their peers.

Nominees will identify two additional letter writers to submit letters of recommendation as part of the full application. These letters will further comment on the items above and can provide specific details.

Format

1) no more than two single-spaced pages,
2) one-inch margins on all sides,
3) 12-point font,
4) printed on letterhead (letterhead may extend into the one-inch margins), and
5) signed

What is most helpful….

- Examples of how the applicant has gone above and beyond their peers.
- A discussion of impressions of the applicant's character and work ethic.

What is not helpful…

- Letters written for another purpose.
- Positive praise that is not supported with specific examples.
- One page letters with general information.