

MARSHALL-BRENNAN CONSTITUTIONAL LITERACY PROJECT

2018-2019 Application Packet

Application Deadline: 5 PM on February 16, 2018

We welcome your application to be a part of the 2018-2019 **20th Anniversary** Fellowship cohort of the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project!

Marshall-Brennan is a transformative experience, not only for the high school students that our Fellows teach, but also the Fellows themselves. Marshall-Brennan is a hallmark of the law school experience here at the Washington College of Law and at law schools across the country. We are excited to select the next class of Fellows who truly believe in the necessity of constitutional literacy and will continue the challenging work of inspiring that belief in our youth.

Please review the following Marshall-Brennan application timeline, requirements and Frequently Asked Questions.

Should you have any questions please contact Lisa Curtis, associate director of the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project, at curtis@wcl.american.edu.

Best wishes!

2018 – 2019 Marshall-Brennan Application Timeline

Application released	January 29, 2018
Application due	February 16, 2018 by 5 PM (EST)
Notification of selected applicants invited to interview	February 20, 2018
Applicant interviews begin	February 26, 2018
Notification of selected applicants invited to guest teach	March 9, 2018
Applicant guest teaching demonstrations begin	March 19 – 30, 2018
Notification of selected applicants invited to join the 2018-2019 Marshall-Brennan Fellow Cohort	April 13, 2018
Marshall-Brennan commitment forms due	April 17, 2018

Marshall-Brennan Application Components

1. **Completed 2018 – 2019 Marshall-Brennan Application** – available (<https://goo.gl/forms/ZvgGvvBHR1OTQSVr1>).

The application includes:

- Applicant Information Form
- Narrative Application Questions (included for reference in this packet)
- Resume Submission – Please include your GPA and Legal Rhetoric grade.

Should you encounter any technical difficulties submitting your application online, please email marshallbrennan@wcl.american.edu .

2. **Interview** – Selected applicants will be required to participate in an interview with the Associate Director of the program and other Marshall-Brennan staff.
3. **Guest teaching demonstration** – Selected applicants who have participated in an interview will be invited to guest teach a 30-minute lesson in a high-school class.

Additional details and lesson parameters will be provided to those applicants invited to participate in this final step in the Marshall-Brennan Fellow selection process.

4. **Marshall-Brennan Commitment Form** – for applicants invited to join the 2018-2019 Fellowship class.

Marshall-Brennan Application Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project?

The Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project at WCL sends upper-level law students to teach constitutional literacy, civic engagement, and oral advocacy skills in Washington, DC-area public and public charter high schools. Fellows teach year-long courses in local high schools that focus on oral advocacy skills, constitutional law, and criminal justice. Fellows receive support and supervision while in the program through our weekly seminar and one-on-one supervision meetings with Marshall-Brennan faculty.

Congressperson Jamin Raskin founded the Marshall-Brennan program in 1999 to address the well-documented constitutional illiteracy and civic disengagement of America's high school students by mobilizing the idealism and energy of law students.

Marshall-Brennan Fellows are a part of a powerful movement that seeks to reframe the issues present in the daily lives of youth as legal issues that must not be ignored if we want to have an active, questioning, and engaged democratic citizenry. We began with 25 law students, called Marshall-Brennan Fellows in honor of the late United States Supreme Court Justices Thurgood Marshall and William J. Brennan, Jr., and, with the support of their widows, Mrs. Cecilia Marshall and the late Mrs. Mary Brennan. Today, in addition to our WCL chapter, 18 other law schools across the country have formed Marshall-Brennan chapters to join us in this work.

2. How often will I have to teach in the program and how much time is involved?

Most schools have block schedules, this means that the class a Fellow teaches will likely meet 2-3 times a week. The Teaching Fellow pair will teach the class each time it meets. It may be that a Fellow will teach every Tuesday and Thursday, or teach on a rotating schedule where the class meets M/W/F one week and T/Th the next.

Serving as a Marshall-Brennan Fellow while immensely rewarding is a time commitment. In addition to the 2-3 hours you will spend (on average) a week in the classroom, you will spend a few hours each week preparing the lessons and will have to set aside the time to travel to and from your teaching placement. Lesson preparation is shared between you and your partner, but it still requires a regular time commitment. We have a Marshall-Brennan lesson plan bank and encourage Fellows to

share resources, but you will spend a couple of hours each week preparing lessons. Overall, the commitment is **a minimum of 10 hours per week** (on average 12 -15 hours per week) between seminar, lesson planning, teaching, and traveling.

3. Are the Fellows supervised by a teacher who is in the classroom?

Some classes have cooperating teachers directly assigned the classroom but many do not. In some instances, the teacher whose class is being used for the Marshall-Brennan course will remain in the room, but the Marshall-Brennan Fellow will still be responsible for teaching the class.

Marshall-Brennan Fellows are responsible for, among other things, developing lesson plans, classroom management, assigning grades, keeping attendance, attending parent-teacher conferences and are in most cases the teacher of record in their classes.

4. Will I teach alone or with a partner?

All Marshall-Brennan Fellows teach in pairs. Once Fellows are selected, they are matched with a teaching Fellow partner. Fellows may notify the Associate Director of their teaching partner preference(s). Both Fellows are expected to be in class every day and are not permitted to switch off days. With law school and other commitments, team-teaching alleviates some of the stress and responsibility of teaching solo and provides flexibility in the classroom for handling different needs of your students.

5. Is there any training or supervision?

Yes. We know that many of our Fellows do not have formal teaching experience, and we strive to support Fellows as best as possible throughout the year they spend teaching, while respecting the fact that Fellows are law students first. That being said, if you are selected to be part of the 2018-2019 Marshall-Brennan Fellows class, it is expected that your commitment to the program will be a top priority for you during the year.

We have a mandatory three-day orientation the week before WCL classes start in August. During this orientation, we start the process of learning teaching pedagogy and moot court oral advocacy skills.

During the semester, we have a required weekly seminar that meets on Wednesday evenings. Additionally, each teaching pair will be visited by either Marshall-Brennan faculty or a Dean's Fellows twice per semester, which includes a meeting to debrief the lesson and provide techniques for improving the class.

The Marshall-Brennan faculty and staff have an open door policy and Fellows are invited to come discuss issues that arise in their class or lesson plan ideas anytime.

6. What do the fellows teach?

Fellows teach courses in constitutional law and oral advocacy. The fall semester is primarily dedicated to teaching foundational information about the U.S. government and justice system and oral advocacy skills in preparation for the Marshall-Brennan city-wide moot court competition in mid-November. As part of preparation for the competition, all classes will also focus on teaching their students the constitutional law related to that year's moot court competition.

Fellows spend the remainder of the year teaching from two specially designed case books. *We The Students* covers important Supreme Court cases relating to the lives of students at school: locker searches, drug testing, censorship of students' or student newspapers and yearbooks, school desegregation, prayer in the classroom and at football games, gender discrimination and other issues. *Youth Justice in America* closely examines cases involving the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments with the goal of teaching high school students about the criminal justice system.

7. In which schools do the Marshall-Brennan Fellows teach?

We are committed to serving students throughout DC and we teach in almost all wards of the city. Most of our schools are located in under-resourced areas of the city. We teach in public high schools and public charter schools. We do not teach in any private schools.

In recent years, we have taught in the following schools:

Ballou High School

Capital City Public Charter School

Dunbar High School

Eastern High School

Luke C. Moore High School

Paul Public Charter School

School Without Walls

Thurgood Marshall Academy

Wilson High School

8. Am I responsible for my own transportation?

Yes. Most schools are Metro accessible. All schools can be reached by bus. We take transportation into consideration when making teaching assignments to try and alleviate travel stress. However, we cannot guarantee that everyone who does not have a car will be placed at a Metro accessible school. A number of Fellows use Zip Car and Car2Go regularly.

9. Will I have a life on top of Marshall-Brennan?

Yes. Although it does take time to prepare to teach, many fellows are involved in a variety of law school and extra-curricular activities, particularly during the second semester of teaching. Many fellows are also on one of the five journals at WCL, compete on moot court or mock trial teams, work as dean's fellows for professors, work outside of the law school, have families at home, and/or participate in other activities. It is possible and doable to be in more than one of these activities, do well in classes, and be a Teaching Fellow. However, we expect your commitment to Marshall-Brennan and your students to be a priority for you next year and we are looking for people who are

willing and want to commit to being an active part of the Marshall-Brennan family for the entire 2018-19 academic year.

10. How do I apply?

The application process consists of a written application form and a resume. Students will be selected for interviews with Professor Curtis on the basis of their applications. The final step in the process is guest teaching in a Marshall-Brennan class and a meeting to debrief the class. Applications are due on by 5 PM (EST) on **February 16, 2018**.

For more information, contact:

Lisa Curtis, Associate Director, Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project at curtis@wcl.american.edu.

MARSHALL-BRENNAN CONSTITUTIONAL LITERACY PROJECT

2018-2019 Application

Please go [here \(https://goo.gl/forms/ZvgGvwBHR1OTQSVr1\)](https://goo.gl/forms/ZvgGvwBHR1OTQSVr1) to complete and submit your application online. Should you experience any technical difficulties, please answer the following questions in this document and submit them to us at marshallbrennan@wcl.american.edu on or before 5 PM (EST) February 16, 2018. **Please limit your answers to 250 words per question, unless otherwise noted.**

1. *Why do you want to be a Marshall-Brennan Fellow?*

Guiding questions:

- What led you here?
- Why, of all the many commitments you can make in law school, is it important to you to be part of our 2018-2019 Fellows class?
- What will you bring to our program?
- What do you hope to gain from the experience?

2. *Describe any personal, academic or work experience you have that you believe will be relevant to teaching law to DC high school students.*

If needed, you may answer this question in more than 250 words (no more than 500 words).

3. *Describe an achievement that you are proud of and why.*

4. *Referring to the above stated achievement, what did you find challenging about achieving your goal and how did you overcome the challenge(s)?*

5. *How do you define professionalism?*

6. *What is a primary barrier to civic engagement in the United States and how would you resolve this?*

7. *If you had to choose only one Supreme Court case to teach to high school students, what would it be and why?*

8. *Describe your style of work as a member of a team or partnership.*

9. *Describe any experience you have in interacting with a person(s) with a different culture, personality, or background than yours. Why did this experience make an impression on you? How did this experience shape your way of operating in the world?*

If needed, you may answer this question in more than 250 words (no more than 500 words).

10. *What other extra-curricular commitments or leadership positions do you or will you have in 2018-2019?*