Evaluation Criteria for Synovus Sophomore Scholar Application

<u>Synovus Grant:</u> *The Synovus Grant is awarded to superlative students who are rising sophomores. It supports projects related to the student's exploration of academic, research, or growth experiences. It is intended for a one-year project. The goal of the Synovus Grant is to support the academic and personal development of exceptional students early in their Berry career. While the guidelines below will be used to evaluate student applications, the committee is open to innovation and unique proposals.*

Completeness: All required materials submitted on time.
- Application (everything filled out and consistent)
- Project Description (description of project/timeline/description of original contribution to the discipline)
- Budget Justification
- Mentor Letter of Recommendation
- CV/resume

Quality of the Project:
- Student clearly articulates the project, showing their familiarity with the required knowledge base and methods.
- Student describes the significance of the project in non-technical language suitable for a general audience (proposals are read by an interdisciplinary committee). Student describes how the project makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline.
- Student clearly delineates how the research will be conducted (when describing the research methodology, the use of technical language is appropriate), and provides a reasonable timeline for completion of the project.
    - If the student's project includes part of a larger research project that includes faculty or other students, the applicant has clearly identified what part of the project they will complete. The student demonstrates that they will bear responsibility in carrying out the design, execution, and dissemination of the research, with mentor guidance throughout.
- Student has identified project objectives/anticipated outcomes that are achievable at their current level of knowledge/experience, and that serve as the foundation for the further development of the student in this area. (The Synovus Grant is starter money; ideally the student will build upon the experience gained in their project during the remainder of the Berry career.) Examples of previous Synovus Scholar projects are available on the Berry Scholars Program website (http://berry.edu/Templates/general.aspx?id=51539615191).
- Student specifically notes plans for disseminating results of the project.
- Student has defined how the project will enable the student to explore academic, research, and/or growth experiences.
- Student is aware of any approvals necessary (IACUC, IRB, or ELM) and has those approvals/has taken steps to secure them.

Quality of Budget:
- Projected costs are reasonable, are in line with what the award covers, do not exceed the award maximum, and are verified through supporting documentation.

Quality of the Student:
- GPA of 3.0 or higher. Strength of GPA is important, but not absolute.

- Student must have completed at least 12 but no more than 30 credit hours in residence at Berry and must be a full-time student.

Mentor Letter of Recommendation:
- Mentor clearly support the student in this endeavor.
- Mentor knows the student and speaks specifically about the student's development and project.
- Mentor demonstrates the willingness and ability to guide the student throughout the project successfully.
    - Mentor explicitly states how they will guide the student while making sure the student retains ownership over the project.
    - Mentor will be accessible to the student during the duration of the award or has made arrangements with other faculty members to mentor the student if they will be absent from campus during part of the award (for example, on sabbatical).
    - While not necessary, past examples of successful mentorship are viewed favorably as they demonstrate the faculty member's commitment to mentoring and ability to successfully mentor students. If the faculty member has mentored named scholars in the past, they should briefly comment on the outcomes of those projects.