AGS Gettysburg Staff Ride Application
April 6 & 7, 2019

Priority Application deadline – February 8, 2019
Final Application deadline - February 22, 2019
All majors are encouraged to apply regardless of prior involvement with AGS. We are looking for students interested in and willing to participate in an exciting learning exercise focused on the Civil War, in particular the Battle of Gettysburg in the summer of 1863. No specific expertise is required. Through the staff ride, students will research and come to understand the battle of Gettysburg in a unique way by seeing firsthand the battlefield, and examining the psychology of leadership through the eyes of key decision-makers.

**What is a Staff Ride?**

A staff ride differs from a guided battlefield tour in two respects. First, it is an educational technique for studying leadership. In a staff ride, participants ask the questions "What happened?" "Why?" "With what result?" but then press further: "Did this commander make the right decision at this juncture?" "How would I have acted in his place?" "Should he have made a different decision given the information he had?" It is, to use an unpopular term, a judgmental exercise, and often a counterfactual one. Secondly, a staff ride requires active participation. The challenge and the pleasure of this activity lies in its character as a collective effort, and its success rests on the participants themselves. The staff ride director serves as a moderator or a seminar leader, and only in the last resort as a subject matter expert. What makes staff ride particularly stimulating is that they are group exercises, in which we examine many aspects of command and management. To that end each participant takes a turn giving a short talk, in most cases playing the role of one of the main participants in the battle, and is questioned by his or her colleagues about that participant's view of what has transpired on the battlefield.

**Goals:**

The Gettysburg staff ride is a canonical experience of nearly every military officer’s education, and our exercise will hew closely to the same exercise followed at West Point and the Hertog Institute for the Study of War. Participants will gain an understanding not only of the history of the battle of Gettysburg but also of the strategic thought processes of crucial leaders involved in the Civil War. Students will participate in a trip to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania the weekend of April 6-7. The Staff Ride will serve as an excellent introduction into the AGS program, especially those who would like to take advantage of later international staff rides. Students will prepare roles, interact with students from both the undergraduate and graduate programs, and work closely with faculty.
Responsibilities:

Students are responsible for preparing for the Staff Ride and behaving appropriately on the Staff Ride. **Please note:** if accepted, you are required to attend the Staff Ride and complete the necessary preparation (detailed below). AGS will cover all transportation, lodging and meal costs. Students will only be responsible for any recreational expenses outside of the Staff Ride’s program. In emergent circumstances, you may cancel your participation by contacting Melanie (melanie.benson@duke.edu) no later than Wednesday, March 6, 2019. **Should you fail to attend the staff ride without the notice listed, it is your responsibility to reimburse AGS $250 for all lost costs by Thursday, April 18, 2019.**

Preparation for the staff ride requires:

1. Attendance at one prep meeting.

2. General background: You will be given a brief recommended reading (or watch) list upon selection.

3. Role specific reading: In addition to general reading, you will need to research your specific role in order to prepare for your presentation. Research may include books, articles and movies describing your character and his or her role during the battle of Gettysburg.

4. Role presentation: After completing the reading, you will prepare your briefing for the Staff Ride itself. In Staff Ride tradition, each person plays a “role” of a decision maker during the conflict. You will be responsible for presenting your person’s role and strategic decision-making process. We expect presentations of the highest quality and will assist you during the preparation process.

5. Availability from early morning on Saturday, April 6, 2019 to late afternoon/evening Sunday, April 7, 2019.

APPLICATION
*Please return your application to Melanie (melanie.benson@duke.edu) by February 22, 2019. If you apply by February 8, you will considered as part of the priority group*

Full Name: _______________________

Class Year: _______________________

Major(s): _______________________

Gender: _______________________

Date of Birth: _______________________

Dietary preferences _______________________

APPLICATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge that if I am selected, I will attend the Gettysburg Staff Ride. If I fail to do so, I will reimburse AGS $250 for lost costs by Thursday, April 18, 2019.

________________________                      ________________
Signature      Date

_______________________
Printed name

SHORT ANSWER: In 250 words or less, tell us why you would be interesting in participating in the Gettysburg staff ride? Additionally, if selected, name three roles whom you would like to be on the staff ride.