



COLUMBUS STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR  
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

## Study Abroad Scholarship Application Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in applying for a Center for Global Engagement scholarship. The CGE is committed to helping students achieve their goal of studying abroad. Given the number of applications we receive and the limited amount of funding we have, we need your assistance in helping us understand the impact studying abroad will have on your academic, professional, and personal goals. Another goal of your Scholarships application is to help us decide *why* and *how* your application stands out from the many others we receive.

All application materials are due by 12pm on the indicated deadline depending on your program.

A complete application should include all of the following. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed or considered for funding. A complete application will be reviewed by the faculty committee but it does not guarantee the distribution of funds.

1. *A Statement of Purpose and Need (see description below)*. This is a well-composed essay between 500 and 900 words that explains in detail *how* studying abroad will impact you academically professionally, and personally **AND** why you should be awarded financial assistance. Please know that saying that “you need money to study abroad” is not enough; instead, your primary goal is to help the review committee *understand why* you do. Read the guidelines provided so that you know what the reviewers expect to see in this statement. Once finished, you will email the final version to [studyabroad@columbusstate.edu](mailto:studyabroad@columbusstate.edu).

2. *Faculty/Staff Recommendation Form (Online Submission)* Please pick up the *recommendation form instructions* from Schuster 117 and then take it to a faculty member of your choice (information is also linked on the website if you prefer to email the guidelines). This form will contain steps on how your professor can access and complete an online recommendation form on your behalf. Remember the following: a) you are solely responsible for asking early enough for your recommendation form to be submitted on time; b) do not ask for a stand-alone recommendation letter -- it will be disregarded; c) it is up to the faculty/staff's discretion if they will support your application, you might want to consider asking multiple people to complete the form; and d) take your recommendation form to a professor who knows you well enough to comment on *why* you should be awarded funding.

3. *Transcript (completed by the CGE on your behalf)* The CGE will request your transcript from the Registrar after the application deadline has passed. Only students with a GPA of 2.75 or higher are eligible to apply for CGE Scholarships. Applications with a GPA lower than 2.75 will not be reviewed.

## Statement of Purpose and Need Guidelines

An essay called *statement of purpose and need* is required to be considered for CGE scholarships. If you are applying for more than one program, you must submit a separate set of scholarship requirements for each program. Remember that this essay is by far the most important factor in the scholarships review process; therefore, it should be carefully composed.

**Instructions:** In an essay between 500 and 900 words, please do the following. These are NOT sections in the essay; *this is what the reviewer committee wants to know about you*:

1. Explain how the *specific study abroad program* you have chosen matches/enhances your academic, professional, and personal goals. To do this successfully, you have to know enough about the study program and be able to explain how it relates to specific, past or future experiences in your life. Remember that reviewers do not know you or your experiences and that they are not asking for you to tell them that studying abroad is beneficial (reviewers already know this); instead, they want to know why YOU will benefit and more importantly HOW you will do so. Stay away from general statements or cliches. Again, the more specific and tangible your essay and examples are, the better.
2. Explain *why* your application should be funded. Please know that reviewers receive more applications than they can fund, so anything you can do to help them *see* and *understand* your specific circumstances as they relate to the specific trip you hope to undertake will help them make a decision. Because reviewers do not know you, you need to provide specific reasons and tangible examples to help them understand your need for financial assistance. Reviewers understand that all students can benefit from financial support, but they can only primarily fund those who will be unable to travel without financial assistance.

### Formatting requirements

*To be considered for review*, all essays should:

- be between 500-900 words
- be double-spaced and in Times New Roman, 12 point size
- include your name, 909 #, term (J-term, Spring, Maymester, Summer, Fall), Year, and specific program you are applying to in the top left corner
- include a header with your last name and the page number in the top right corner
- provide specific, and tangible examples
- help reviewers know how studying abroad will impact you academically, professionally, and personally
- help reviewers understand why you need financial assistance

## Generating ideas for your essay

Here are some potential questions you can think about, as you start generating ideas for your essay. Remember that these are NOT sections in the essay; instead, these questions are provided for you to brainstorm ideas to consider incorporating into your essay:

### Academic Goals

How will this study abroad program with the course(s) you take support your academic goals at CSU and beyond? What inspired you to study abroad in this particular country? Are there specific or unusual components to the program, such as home-stays, that will increase the impact of this program for you?

### Professional Goals

How does this study abroad program support your future professional goals? Are their unusual features to the program and/or course(s) that are particularly important to your professional goals?

### Personal Goals

How will this study abroad program support your personal goals? What challenges or obstacles, if any, have you faced in pursuing study abroad? How would the scholarship help you overcome those obstacles?

## Tips to consider when writing the CGE Scholarship Essay

Below we provide general characteristics of three types of essays, so that you have a better sense of how essays are scored. Please know that this list is not comprehensive; just illustrative and that reviewers might consider other factors.

### High-ranked statements:

- Demonstrate that the writer can speak clearly about his/her academic, professional, and personal goals and link them directly to the study abroad program.
- Demonstrate that the writer has researched the specific study abroad program.
- Persuade: they are able to show *why* the writer needs financial support and *how* the study abroad program helps the writer achieve academic, professional, and personal goals.
- Show that the writer has put time and effort into composing it. For example, the essay is innovative and well-organized; the essay provides tangible examples that a reader can follow; it does not use cliches.
- Are engaging, interesting, and easy to read narrative for the reviewers.
- Follow basic principles of good writing, including but not limited to having a clear point per paragraph, being well-organized and free of grammatical errors. A strong essay often shows that the writer has used resources like the Academic Center for Tutoring.

### **Mid-ranked statements:**

- Include examples of the what the writer is saying, but they are not always tangible or specific. Conclusions are often provided, but the reader is not given enough evidence to reach the same conclusions.
- Discuss academic, professional, and personal goals, but do so in general terms or perhaps focus on only one area (e.g. professional goals) and not all three.
- Show that the writer knows the location of the program and perhaps general ideas associated with it (e.g Japan is known for anime); in this type of essay the writer often expresses an interest in the new country, but very few details are provided regarding how the specifics of the program enriches the writer's goals.
- Show that the writer has put *some* time and effort into composing it. For instance, there might be a general theme or point per paragraph; the essay will be reasonably clear.
- Generally are either very predictable (e.g one paragraph for professional goals, one for personal goals, one paragraph about financial need) or they do not provide enough examples to support the points made. They might be persuasive, but lack evidence.
- Relatively easy to read but ease of reading is dependent on the reader; or the essay might not be engaging, or interesting.
- Follow basic principles of good writing, including but not limited to having a clear point per paragraph, being well-organized and limited typos and grammatical errors, although at times, there might be variation; for instance, when the beginning of an essay is strong, but the middle or conclusion are not.

### **Low-ranked statements:**

- Rely on generalizations, cliches, and unsupported statements. For example, "I always knew I wanted to travel to \_\_\_\_\_", "I have always dreamed of seeing the world", "studying abroad is a life changing opportunity". All of these statement share the following: they are conclusions without evidence of why, they are not customized since they said nothing about the writer him/herself, they are broad and generic. They do not help the review committee decide why to fund a particular student.
- Show lack of knowledge of the specific program the student is applying to, often making broad references to the country instead.
- Focus on personal benefits of study abroad and/or only make general references to goals; for instance, "my major is XXX." You can be a Theatre major and be joining the Biology in Bahamas program but it is important to explain WHY you made that choice.
- State the obvious; for instance, that the writer needs financial assistance but they do not often explain why or do so in general terms. These statements might also say that study abroad is beneficial but fail to provide evidence of *why* this is the case for them.
- Do not make a case for why funding should be provided. Instead, they repeat that the writer needs financial assistance-- "telling vs. showing."
- Are poorly organized and often have many grammatical or spelling errors.