



Gilman Scholarship Statement of Purpose Tips

The Gilman Statement of Purpose essay is your chance to personalize your application and make the judges want to meet you! This essay is a maximum of 7,000 characters, including spaces, which will be about 1 ½ pages single-spaced. Do not format (i.e. bold, underline, italics) your essays in your word processing program because the formatting will not be retained upon transferring to the online application.

Details for applicants are online, including tutorial videos (under “Social Media”) and tips:
<https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/>

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The readers of your Gilman application will not know anything about you other than your age and indicated gender. The first primary preference criteria for the Gilman Scholarship is personal diversity, so if you meet any of those criteria, you need to come out and say it somewhere in your essay. Don't be subtle about it. What challenges did you face in your decision to study abroad, including but not limited to:

- first-generation college student and/or first in family to study abroad
- diverse ethnic background
- community college student
- non-traditional age student, single parent, disability (physical or learning)
- underrepresented field of study (usually STEM majors – Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)

Within your first paragraph, you should choose an interesting angle you are going to use to tell your story. Begin your personal statement with an anecdote that illustrates what is unusual or meaningful about you. Don't assume that the people reading your essay know anything about you. They also want to know why studying abroad is important to you. Keep it concise so you can then move on to your study abroad trip details.

PROGRAM AND COUNTRY DETAILS

- **Describe your Study Abroad Program:** What factors led you to select this program? How long is your program and how many credits will you be taking? What impact will my choice of country have on my experience abroad? Describe any distinctive components to this program, beyond coursework, that will impact your overall learning experience (e.g. home-stays, extra-curricular activities, etc.).

IMPACT OF YOUR STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

It is important to address the impact your study abroad program and coursework will have on your academic, professional and personal goals. How will receiving the Gilman Scholarship help you achieve these goals? Key points are:

- What do you anticipate will be the impact of this experience? (*don't use cliché terms such as “learn and experience other cultures” or “meet new people” which any student could state*).
- How is your study abroad program going to *help you achieve your academic and professional goals*?
- What challenges, if any, did you face in your decision to study abroad? How did you meet these challenges and what impact do you foresee them having on your experience abroad? These could include, but are not limited to, being a parent, being a non-traditional student, having a learning or physical disability, being in a field of study for which it is difficult to incorporate study abroad, etc.

Make a compelling case for why YOUR study abroad program and THAT country are most appropriate for you.

The Gilman Scholarship is looking for clean writing that is well-paced and has a strong sense of narrative. Make sure your spelling (e.g. abroad not aboard) and punctuation are correct. A critical aspect for a nationally competitive scholarship is to ensure that it is proofread prior to submission. As a resource, you are encouraged to use the MCC Writing Center: www.mesacc.edu/departments/english/writing-center. **Allow plenty of time before the Gilman deadline!!** **Note:** The deadline for submission is 11:59 pm Central Standard Time, NOT Mountain Standard Time!!