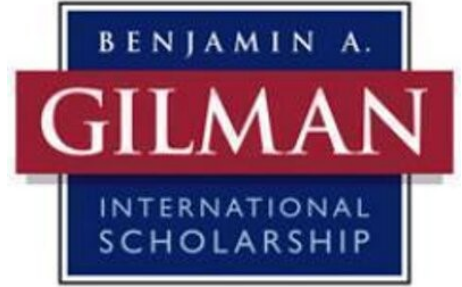


Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program

What is the Gilman International Scholarship Program?

The Gilman Scholarship Program is an undergraduate grant program for U.S. citizens of limited financial means to enable them to study abroad, thereby internationalizing their outlook and better preparing them to thrive in the global economy.

Another benefit for students is that Gilman recipients are granted Noncompetitive Eligibility (NCE) for Federal Employment. NCE allows U.S. federal government agencies to hire eligible Gilman alumni outside of the formal competitive job announcement process.



The Gilman Scholarship...

- is a nationally competitive award with students applying from all across the nation for about 2,300 scholarships awarded annually. Roughly 1 in 3 applicants are awarded a Gilman Scholarship.
- has two application deadlines every year: the first Tuesday in **October** for Winter/Summer Semester study and the first Tuesday in **March** for Summer/Fall/Year study.
- can provide up to **\$5,000** and up to **additional \$3,000** Critical Language Enhancement award if you plan to learn a language deemed to be of critical need to the U.S. for a possible award total of up to **\$8,000**.

Scholarship
←-----
Achievement
-----→
Opportunity

Visit us during Open Advising Walk-in Hours

**Wednesdays 5 – 7 p.m.
Padnos International Center**

If you are unable to stop by during that time, please visit our website at www.gvsu.edu/fellowships to schedule an appointment using our online scheduling system. If none of the times listed work with your schedule, please email us at fellowships@gvsu.edu

Appointment in Allendale, Grand Rapids, or virtual!

Gilman Eligibility Requirements

- Be a **citizen** of the United States
- Be an **undergraduate student** in good standing
- Be eligible to receive a **Federal Pell Grant**
- Be in the process of applying to a study abroad or internship program of **at least 21 days**
- Be proposing to study in a country **not currently under a Travel Warning** issued by the United States Department of State or otherwise determined ineligible for program participation.

Things to Be Mindful of When Preparing a Gilman Scholarship Application

Read the Gilman Scholarship Website www.iie.org/gilman

Make sure you meet the eligibility requirements

Determine when you should apply:

GVSU Winter Term = Gilman Spring Term

GVSU Spring Term = Gilman Summer Term

Watch the Gilman Scholarship informational video from our office!

<https://youtu.be/fhxDGva8f8o>

When does your study abroad program begin?	When to Apply for Gilman
Between December 15 and April 15	October Deadline
Between May 1 and August 1	October Deadline – early application deadline March Deadline – regular application deadline
Between July 15 and October 15	March Deadline
Note: Gilman Scholarship recipients can only receive the scholarship once. If a student previously declined the Gilman Scholarship, they are welcome to re-apply. Students studying abroad between May 1 and August 1 may apply in both October and March, if they do not receive the award in the first attempt. Students who will be abroad for an academic year may also apply for both deadlines if all eligibility criteria still applies.	

Request your transcripts

- You will need to request transcripts from the Registrar's Office at GVSU and all other schools attended. Plan ahead!
- You will need to scan and upload your transcripts. Scanners are available in some GVSU computer labs.

Begin your online application: <http://www.iie.org/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program/Apply>

- If your major is not provided on the Gilman online application, select the next closest major.

Your financial aid advisor is [Samantha Mulder](#)
Your study abroad advisor is [Elizabeth Lambert](#)

- Please be aware that when you submit your Gilman application, Samantha & Elizabeth will receive notification and will certify your application by the certification deadline.

Provide ample time to draft your essays.

- Writing Center consultants can assist you with the technicalities of your writing.
- Successful applicants have spent weeks revising their essays!

Statement of Purpose Essay

The Statement of Purpose Essay is your chance to personalize your application. When composing the Statement of Purpose Essay it is important to address the impact that your study abroad program or internship will have on your academic, professional, and personal goals. You should also address the impact that receiving the Gilman Scholarship would have on your achievement of these goals. Some key points to keep in mind are:

- Why do you wish to study or intern abroad and what factors led you to this decision? What do you hope to gain from and what do you anticipate will be the impact of your experience abroad? What impact will my choice of country have on my experience abroad? What initially inspired me to want to study abroad in this particular country or learn this language? What factors led to my choice of country of study?
- Describe your study or intern abroad program. What factors led you to select this program and length of study?
- Why have you chosen your country of study? What factors led you to select this country?
- How will this study or intern abroad program and the coursework you take abroad impact your academic and future professional goals?
- Are there any distinctive components to this program, beyond coursework, that will impact your overall learning experience abroad? (i.e. home-stays, internships, field research, volunteer activities, extra-curricular activities, etc.)
- What challenges, if any, did you face in your decision to study or intern 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.

Work with the Office of Fellowships to view successful example essays



Follow-on Service Project Proposal

The Follow-on Service Project Proposal is your chance to explain how you will give back by inspiring others to pursue their own experiences abroad. To help expand the impact of the Gilman Scholarship Program, all Gilman Scholars are required to carry out a Follow-on Service Project upon their return from abroad that helps to promote international education and the Gilman International Scholarship. This project can be done on your home campus or in your local community and must be completed within six months of your return to the United States. All applicants must submit a project proposal within the online application and this proposal is closely reviewed during the selection process. Some key points to keep in mind are:

- Briefly outline your proposed project to promote the Gilman Scholarship and international education. How will this project impact your home university or home community? What are your project goals?
- What is your target population and how will your project impact this group?
- How will you integrate the impact of your experiences abroad into your project?
- What, if any, campus departments, student organizations, and/or community organizations will you collaborate with in promoting the Gilman Scholarship and international education? Have you already made contact with these groups?
- Upon completion of your project you will be required to submit a two-page final report summarizing your experience abroad and the impact of your Follow-on project.

Examples of Previous Service Projects

- **Michelle, University of Florida** - While she was abroad in China, Michelle worked on an architecture project for a site with a 2,000 year old pagoda. When she returned, she exhibited her sketches and photographs in a gallery. During the exhibit opening, she shared information about study abroad and Gilman.
- **Donald, Macalester College** - Donald set up an exhibition on the culture of Thailand at Kidfest, a local children's festival in the Twin Cities. At the festival, he taught traditional Thai dance and basic Thai phrases to about 80-100 local and underprivileged youth from the area.
- **Cindy, University of California, Los Angeles** - Since study abroad is often times hard for students in the STEM fields, Cindy gave a presentation to fellow students in the science department about her experience studying in Chile and how to fit study abroad into the required curriculum.
- **Shane, Colorado State University, Fort Collins** - Shane started a coffee cart to introduce his campus to a Jordanian tradition - qahwah. He shared information about studying abroad and Gilman with all the customers and donated 10% of their profits to UNICEF.
- **Casey, Southwestern University** - Casey collected children's books of legends and folktales from different regions of Ecuador and performed a reader's theatre at a local elementary school.
- **Liliana, California College of the Arts** - Liliana held an art exhibition at her home institution displaying her personal work from her Scandinavian design and Swedish art classes and providing information on the Gilman Scholarship.

Studying a critical language abroad?

Applicants who are studying a critical need language while abroad in a country in which the language is predominantly spoken can apply for a supplemental award of up to \$3,000, for a combined total of \$8,000. This award is competitive and offered to a limited number of Gilman scholars each year.

Critical Need Language Award Essay

In no more than 2,000 characters, including spaces, please explain how you intend to improve your language skills while studying abroad, your motivations for doing so, and how this particular language study will further your academic and career goals.

CRITICAL NEED LANGUAGES INCLUDE:

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| → Arabic | → Indonesian | → Russian |
| → Azerbaijani | → Japanese | → Swahili |
| → Bangla | → Korean | → Turkish |
| → Chinese | → Persian | → Urdu |
| → Hindi | → Punjabi | |



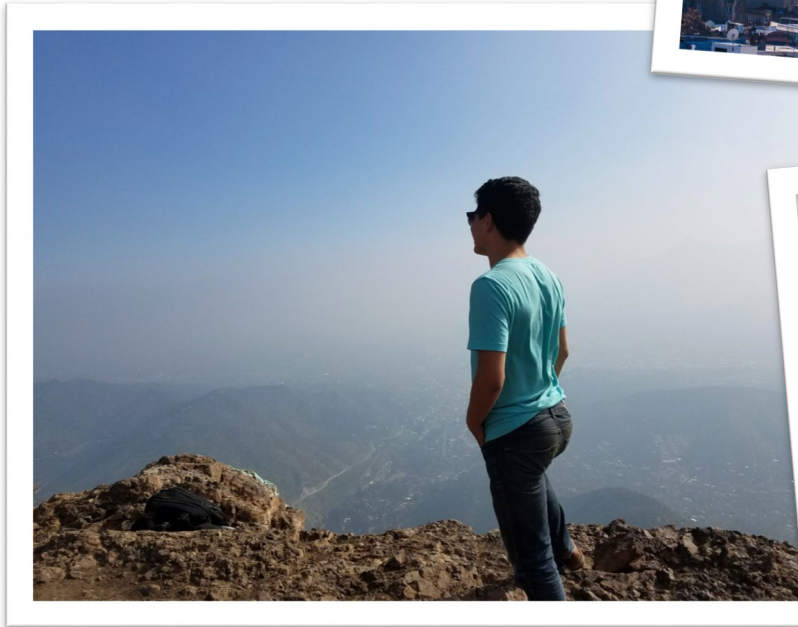
Be sure that you are studying the Critical Need Language in a country where it is predominately spoken.

Highlight Diversity

If you belong to any of the following categories, you should explicitly state this in your application (essays) because it will make you eligible for additional points in the evaluation process:

This includes, but is not limited to:

- students of diverse ethnic, religious or cultural backgrounds
- students interning abroad
- students studying in non-traditional locations
- first-generation college students
- first-generation Americans and/or children of immigrants
- community college students (and transfers)
- non-traditional college students
- student veterans
- students with disabilities
- LGBTQ students
- STEM majors



General Tips for Strengthening Award Applications

1. **Plan ahead.** Don't wait until the night before the application deadline to begin writing your statement of interest or essay questions. Your responses will not be as compelling or competitive as they could be if you start early.
2. **Look carefully at the scholarship criteria.** Most scholarship programs first screen applications by looking at who meets the eligibility requirements. Apply for scholarships you are eligible for unless you can provide a strong case for why the scholarship committee should consider your application even though you do not meet the requirements.
3. **Make sure that you answer the essay questions that are being asked.** Stay on track and focused on the main points of the essay. Also, answer the questions with conviction and passion for what you are pursuing.
4. **Write an outline for the essay portion.** An outline can help provide focus and structure to the essay. Using an outline will allow you to present your arguments and ideas in a manner that supports your conclusions, yielding a more powerful essay.
5. **Concentrate on your opening paragraph.** The lead or opening paragraph is generally the most important. It is here that you grab the reader's attention or lose it. This paragraph becomes the framework for the rest of the statement.
6. **Give concrete examples.** When writing, support your statements with concrete examples. For example, if you say that one of your best qualities is leadership; give an example where you have demonstrated leadership.
7. **Avoid clichés.** Stay away from common language and overly-used statements. For example, an applicant who writes that she wants to learn about a new culture and have a once in a lifetime experience is not adequately setting herself apart from other applicants.
8. **Consider working with your on-campus advisor.** Academic advisors may be willing to offer you feedback on your application. If you are applying for a scholarship in a particular field of study, you may find it helpful to talk with your academic advisor so that you can tap in to their knowledge of the field.
9. **If you have questions about your essay(s), or would just like someone else to read them over, you should visit the Writing Center.** The Fred Meijer Writing Center, located in 120 Lake Ontario Hall, has on-site consultants that will offer you feedback on how to strengthen your application.
10. **Type your application.** You are making a first impression with how your application appears. Typing an application is always more professional than handwriting.
11. **Proofread your application.** Carefully review your entire application. Check for spelling errors, grammar errors, etc. Ask at least two other individuals to provide feedback on your application. Be sure to read your essay aloud.
12. **Apply for other awards.** Once you've done the legwork for your first scholarship application, don't hesitate to repackage it and apply for others. Just make sure revamped essays fit the new target audience.

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