



**Benjamin A. Gilman**  
International Scholarship

# Gilman International Scholarship

Oliver McSurley and James Ehmer: UCF Abroad

Karissa Lawson-Harris: Student Financial Aid Services

# Gilman International Scholarship

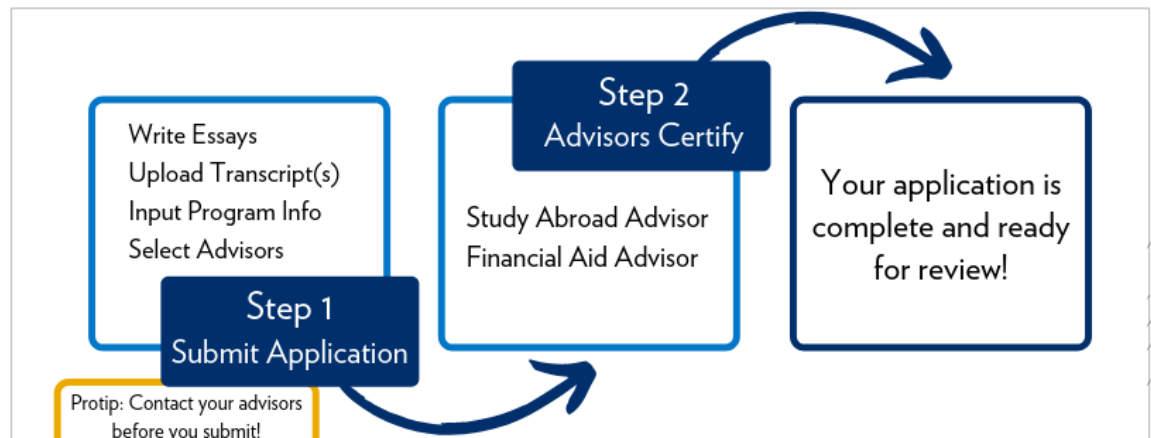
- Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and administered by the Institute of International Education.
- Enables students who have limited financial means the opportunity to participate in study or intern abroad opportunities worldwide.
- Provides awards of up to \$5,000 for U.S. citizen undergraduate students at two- and four-year institutions to pursue country-based undergraduate opportunities abroad of up to one academic year.
- Emphasis on “underrepresented” students going to “underrepresented locations”

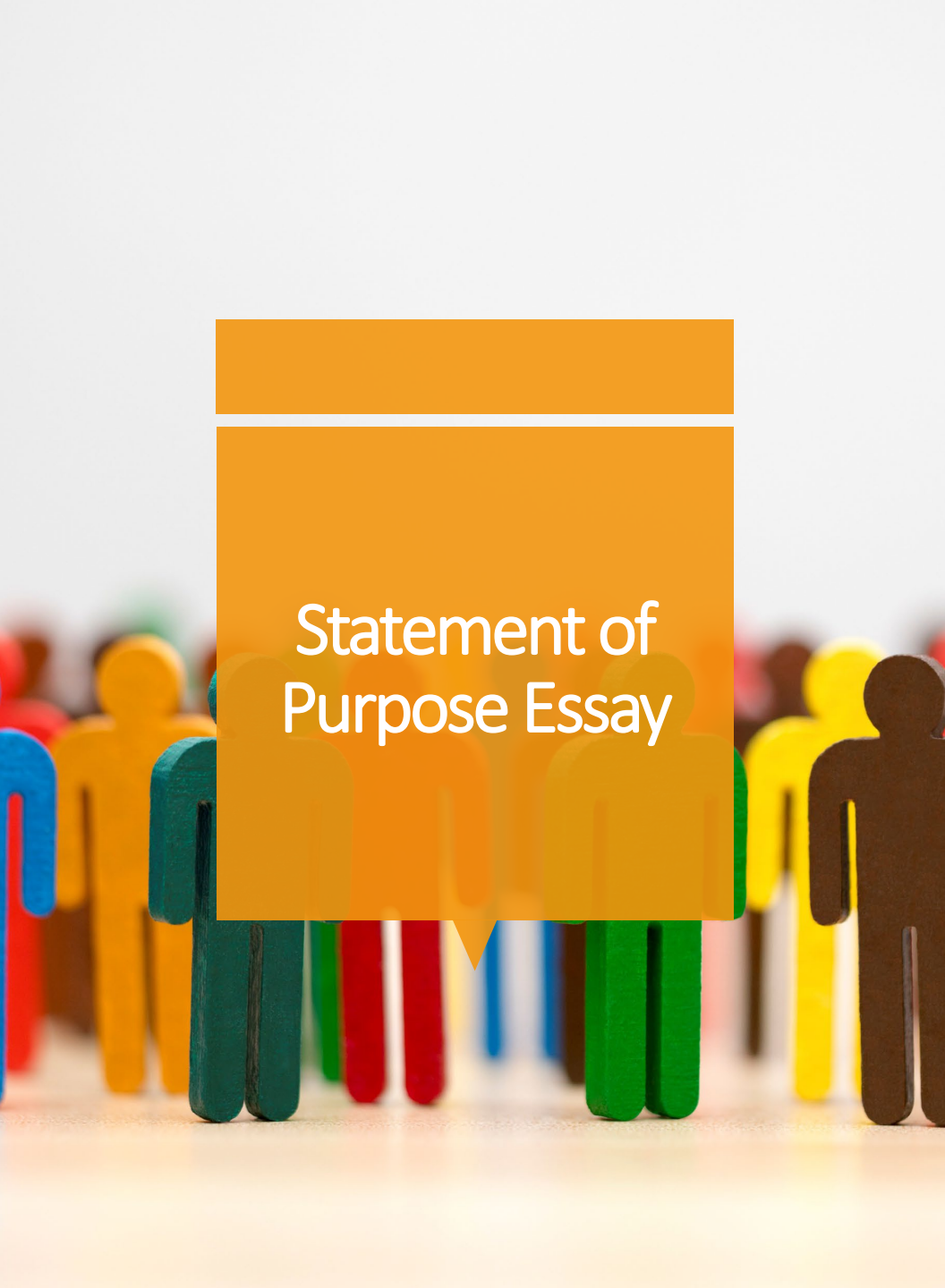
# Eligibility

- Must be enrolled as an undergraduate in a U.S. Institution, 2 or 4 year
- Must be a **United States citizen**
- Receiving Federal Pell Grant during the time of application  
OR  
Provide proof they will be receiving a Pell Grant during term of study abroad program or internship
- Applying or accepted to a study abroad, internship, or virtual international program of **at least three weeks**, eligible for credit from the student's home institution. Excludes travel dates.
- Destinations with Travel Advisory Level 1 or 2 only. Students are not permitted to travel to destinations ranked 3 or higher.\*\*\*COVID-19
- Applications are accepted twice a year in October and March.
- Applications must be submitted online via the Gilman online application system. The online application system opens two months prior to the application deadline.

# Application Process

- Application for Spring 2022: Early October 2021
- Summer 2022 (Early): Early October 2021
- Summer 2022 (Standard): Early March 2022
- Fall 2022: Early March 2022
- Deadlines
- Study abroad advisor (Oliver McSurley) and Financial aid advisor (Karissa Lawson-Harris) will certify application



The background of the slide features a row of colorful wooden figures in blue, orange, green, and brown, standing on a light-colored surface. Overlaid on this is a large orange rectangle with a white border. Inside this rectangle, the text 'Statement of Purpose Essay' is written in white. A small white speech bubble tail points from the bottom of the orange box towards the bottom left of the slide.

## Statement of Purpose Essay

- Biography combined with study abroad purpose
- Explicitly convey “underrepresented” characteristics
- Address the impact that your study abroad program or internship will have on your academic, professional, and personal goals.
- Address the impact that receiving the Gilman Scholarship would have on your achievement of these goals.

# Community Impact Essay 1

## Essay 1 - Building Mutual Understanding

- How will you represent and share what it means to be an American during your program?
- How will you seek opportunities to engage with the people and culture of your host country?
- How will you ensure that these interactions are meaningful and promote an open exchange of ideas, respect, and understanding?

## Essay 2 - Follow-on Service Project

- Your “pay it forward” for receiving the scholarship
- Project should promote study abroad and/or Gilman
- Project can be done at UCF or in local community
- Look for unique populations to engage
- Use current relationships and connections or at least have cooperation in place before you propose
- Be specific and creative
- Check out specific examples of projects on Gilman website

Community  
Impact  
Essay 2



# USA

- ❖ **Unique**
- ❖ **Specific examples**
- ❖ **Able to complete**



# Selection Panel

## Primary Selection Factors

- Diversity of Background/Experience
- Country and regional destination
- Credit-Bearing, Career-Oriented Internship
- Study of a “Critical Need Language”
- Institutional Diversity and Distribution
- US State Representation
- Impact of Program and Destination on your Academic and Career Goals
- Community Impact Abroad and Upon Return Home
- All students will have financial challenges, but any extraordinary challenges can be included

## Secondary Selection Factors

- Essays
- Academic Performance
- Program Length
- Field of Study
- Previous Experience Abroad

# Selection Factors

## Diversity of Participant

- Ethnic background
  - Disability or challenging illness
  - Gender Identity/Sexual Orientation
  - Non-traditional age
  - First generation student
  - Transfer Student/Community college graduate
  - Financial Need
  - Major
- All students will have financial challenges, but any extraordinary challenges can be included

# Selection Panel Decisions

- Panel can only factor in what you disclose
- Present challenges but with a spirit of overcoming them
- Be sure to show them how this specific program will have a positive impact on your future and is integral to your plans
- Avoid generalizations, cliché phrases, focusing on the obstacles, and sharing your “lifelong dream” and “passion to see the world”
- Applicants are evaluated in comparison to others and ranked; there is not a clear rubric
- 1 in 9 students are awarded the scholarship, what sets you apart from their struggles, and how has overcoming your obstacles helped you to reach goals and shape new ones?



## Follow-up

- Send essays to [oliver.mcsurley@ucf.edu](mailto:oliver.mcsurley@ucf.edu) or [james.ehmer@ucf.edu](mailto:james.ehmer@ucf.edu) to review for content. This should not be your first draft.
- Please go to the Writing Center for advice on essay structure and grammar
- About 30% of applicants receive a grant – it is worth the effort!



Questions?