WRITING SCHOLARSHIP ESSAYS

Presented by
the GCC College and Career Compass Program

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This video:

- Talk about GCC Foundation Scholarships
- Briefly touch on other scholarships
- Address potential challenges
- Talk about writing scholarship essays!
- Resources
GCC FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

- What is the foundation? [https://www.gcc.mass.edu/foundation/about/]
- Who is eligible for scholarships?
  - currently-enrolled students
  - some scholarships are for specific groups
    (particular majors, transferring to a 4-year school, non-traditional ages, residents of certain towns, etc.)
- How to apply: link through myGCC
- Process: one application screens you for eligibility for multiple awards

PAY ATTENTION TO DEADLINE: MONDAY MARCH 1st @MIDNIGHT
Ask for any necessary recommendation letters with at least two weeks notice

- check scholarship list to see which awards require them
- tell recommenders what you are applying for, when the deadline is, and where to send the letter (see top of scholarship list)
- follow up with the recommender before the deadline
GCC FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

KEY TIPS

- Compose your essay(s) in a separate document (Word, GoogleDocs, etc.) and copy/paste into the application

- SUBMIT YOUR ESSAY EARLY in case something goes wrong and you need help figuring it out!
OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS

● Search through the GCC Financial Aid Office website
  https://www.gcc.mass.edu/financial-aid/scholarships/

● Use their application tracking tool to stay organized
  ○ you must download this in order to edit it!

● Beware of scams if you are using a search tool not vetted by a trusted source
  ○ ask at GCC Financial Aid if you are unsure whether a scholarship is legitimate
WHAT STOPS STUDENTS FROM APPLYING?

“There’s no chance I’ll win”

You are only competing with other GCC students for foundation scholarships, and many of these awards have very small applicant pools
WHAT STOPS STUDENTS FROM APPLYING?

“Scholarships are for people with high grades or low income”

Some specify these criteria, but many don’t!
WHAT STOPS STUDENTS FROM APPLYING?

“I hate writing”

If you spend 5 hours on this and win $1000, you’ve made $200/hr... I would do a lot of things I hate for that rate of pay.

(And if you don’t win, you have a draft you can revise and submit next year!)
WHAT STOPS STUDENTS FROM APPLYING?

“The application process is too complicated”

Use the tools I’m giving you today to break it down into smaller steps; start the process early; get help!
required:

Personal Statement

250-500 words

The process and tools we discuss today can be adapted for any essay!

● General rules of thumb:
  ○ Read criteria and prompts thoroughly
  ○ Include required info, but make it your own
  ○ Leave your reader with a memorable picture of you
Writing is a process!

- This process applies to ALL writing
- Adapt it to fit different needs and writing situations
Writing is a process!

- GENERATE IDEAS
- PLAN YOUR WRITING
- DRAFT
- REVISE
- PROOFREAD
Writing is a process!

BREAK THIS PROCESS DOWN INTO SMALL STEPS

- Assign yourself different steps on different days
- Each step will generate material for the next step—this can help you get past writer’s block!
Writing is a process!

USE TOOLS

○ Brainstorm Worksheet
○ Outline Template
○ Example Essays
Peer Tutors cannot help because they are students, but Montserrat Archbald (Staff Assistant for the tutoring program) can work with you: email archbald@gcc.mass.edu

Attend my Scholarship Essay Writing drop-in workshop! (see GCC events calendar)

trouble accessing scholarship application:

- webmaster@gcc.mass.edu

trouble with google docs or general website navigation:

- Library Tech Tutors chat box on website during open hours: https://www.gcc.mass.edu/library/