

General Application Short Answer Guide

Scholarship applications with a personal statement or short answer responses are one of the most important parts of the application process. Your statements allow the selection committee to get to know you as an individual and become invested in your future. You can use the following brainstorming questions to assist you with getting started on your General Application in BeachScholarships.

(a) Describe your personal background and any obstacles/challenges that you have overcome.

- Tell the reader about an accomplishment you are proud of.
- Share some examples of determination and 'grit'. Grit is a show of passion and perseverance for long-term and meaningful goals. It can be anything from a physical, emotional, or mental experience.
- When describing any obstacles or challenges that you have overcome, what did you learn from this experience? Does it speak to your strengths and individual qualities?
- Explain through specific examples you experienced on how you can work well under pressure.

**This question does not necessarily mean you had to go through major or traumatic life challenges.*

(b) What are your reasons for choosing your academic field(s) of study including any concentrations?

- What and/or who motivated you to choose your major?
- What are you interested in?
- What are your skills and abilities? Consider what you are good at!
- Explain how your major ties into your prospective career.

(c) Discuss your short and long term academic and/or professional goals.

Short-Term (Within 1 – 2 years):

- If you are currently an undeclared major, do you plan on choosing one within a year or two?
- Do you plan to add a minor to your degree?
- How do you plan to challenge yourself in college? Register for upper division courses, strive for higher grades, balance homework/study time and work, connect with mentors, join extracurricular groups, etc.?
- Do you plan on finding an internship? Networking? Working a part-time job?

Long-Term (Graduation – 5+ years):

- What do you picture as your future employment?
- What do you plan to do when you are out of college?
- Do you plan on continuing your higher education through a graduate program?

(d) Discuss three academic, leadership, volunteer, community, and/or professional achievements.

Share something you are proud of or have excelled at:

- Are you on a sports team?
- Are you involved within your campus and/or community?
- Did you study abroad or have a cross-culture experience?
- Have you completed an internship or are you currently in one now?
- Are you a part of a student government or campus organization?
- Discuss any leadership roles you have taken that relate to your educational or professional goals.

Visit our website for more details: www.csulb.edu/scholarships

Contact Us: BH-201 | (562) 985-2549 | scholarships@csulb.edu



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Visit some of the links below to learn how to get more involved on and off campus:

Student Organizations:

http://web.csulb.edu/divisions/students/sld/student_organizations/

<https://csulb.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>

Volunteer Opportunities:

<https://csulb.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations?categories=11150>

http://web.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/personnel/cce/students/volunteer_opps/

<http://www.longbeach.gov/jobs/volunteer/>

<https://www.onlineschools.org/student-volunteer-guide/>

(e) Describe your financial need. Please explain changes in your financial or personal situation that will affect the upcoming academic year (e.g., parent's or spouse's contribution, job change, marriage, divorce, number of dependents, medical, etc.).

Think about recent changes in your financial need. What has changed in the recent year or will change in the coming year?

- Did you or a parent/guardian experience a loss or reduction of income?
- Did you or a parent/guardian go through a separation or divorce?
- Did you or a parent/guardian experience a loss or reduction of benefits?
- Was there a death in the family?
- Did you or a parent/guardian have any extraordinary medical expenses?
- Did you get married, have children, or acquired dependents?
- Are you or a parent/guardian working multiple jobs to help pay for living and school expenses?
- Did you or a parent/guardian need to take out any loans for higher education?

Writing Tips

- Use the maximum word limit
 - Each question on the General Application allows for responses up to 250 characters, which is about a small paragraph.
 - You should be writing 250 words or close to it!
 - Use the maximum word count to distinguish yourself from a competitive pool of applicants.
- Be selective
 - Choose significant details of what you are trying to answer.
 - Leave out any unnecessary details that may lengthen the 250-word count.
 - The system will not let you submit if you have surpassed the word count limit.
- Use academic language
 - Avoid the use of slang.
 - Avoid using contractions (i.e. hadn't, won't, wouldn't, don't).
 - Watch out for run-on sentences and sentence fragments.
 - Faculty, professionals, and donors will be reading your responses so be sure to make a good impression with your words!

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