

A smiling woman with curly hair, wearing a black and white striped dress, stands in front of a roller coaster. The background is a blue-tinted image of a roller coaster track and cars. The text 'Gilman Scholarship' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

 **Gilman** Scholarship[★]

Advisor Resources in Promoting the Gilman Program and Supporting Applicant Success

2017-2018

The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program is a program of the U.S. Department of State, with funding provided by the U.S. government and supported in its implementation by the Institute of International Education (IIE[®]).

Gilman Advisor Resources

The tips and best practices herein were gathered from three [Gilman Program](#) and [Critical Language Scholarship](#) Advisor Workshops in 2017-2018, from the institutions that hosted the workshops, and from the attendees as we captured their thinking and expertise throughout the day.

- The following topics are included:
 - Overview of the Gilman Application Review and Selection Process
 - The Role of Campus Advisors in Promoting the Scholarships
 - Best Practices in Supporting Students in the Application Process
 - Best Practices in Advising for Competitive Essays
 - Action Plans and Strategies for Promoting Gilman on Campus
- Many other resources are available, including videos for advisors at [GilmanScholarship.org](https://gilman.org).
- If you are a Gilman Advisor and would be interested in writing an article or being featured in a video highlighting some of your best practices, please contact the Gilman Program, at GilmanAdvisors@iie.org.

Special thanks to the 2017-2018 Advisor Workshop hosts for their assistance in developing workshop materials and content.



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The Gilman Application Review and Selection Process

One key way to broaden the student population that studies abroad on your campus is to understand the selection process. If you have never served as a selection panelist, it is the best way to learn how it works. If you are interested in serving as a panelist in the future, please email us at GilmanAdvisors@iie.org to let us know.



Application Review and Selection Process



What are Gilman reviewers looking for?

- Academic preparedness and impact on students' academic and career trajectory.
- How this study or intern abroad program and coursework affect their academic and future professional goals.
- No minimum GPA requirement: The application is assessed holistically.
- Explain academic and career-related outcomes from study abroad experience.



Value of Serving on a Panel

- Gain a more involved understanding of the selection process.
- See a wide variety of applications — not just from the students with whom you work.
- When working with future applicants, letting them know you had previously served on a selection panel increases their confidence and leads to a greater likelihood of applying.
- Develop a more nuanced understanding of the programs, which enhances advising.
- Panels are performed virtually, so you avoid travel and remain accessible on campus.

The Role of Campus Advisors in Promoting Scholarships

How can advisors help promote study abroad opportunities on campus and spark collaboration and innovation?



Role of Advisors

Logistical:

- Secure responsible application [certifiers](#) on your campus.
- Coordinate campus responsibilities, and develop partnerships with other offices to serve students and remove bureaucratic road blocks.
- Manage [timelines](#) and administrative details (from the certification process to accepting the award).

On and off-campus advocate:

- Promote the Gilman Program and its [benefits](#).
- Conduct outreach internally, and secure support from others on campus:
 - Visit the Gilman website for more [outreach tools](#).

Marketer:

- Disseminate scholarship information, and partner with other offices on campus to do the same (student affairs; academic departments beyond language; science, technology, engineering, and math [STEM] centers; diversity and inclusion; career services; TRIO programs; and more).
- Promotional campaigns.
- Support media outreach on campus, and build on what Gilman does on [social media](#) by reposting and sharing with campus outlets and platforms:
 - Gilman is on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

Role of Advisors

Campus resource:

- Stay up to date on opportunities:
 - Sign up for [Gilman Advisor Newsletters](#).
- Educate the campus community:
 - Share [program statistics](#), [deadlines](#) and [selection criteria](#).

Financial aid advisor:

- Educate on [aid](#) and scholarship opportunities.
- Clarify costs and additional opportunities.
- Provide information about “match programs”:
 - Institutional programs that match the financial aid amount of certain outside scholarships.



Best Practices in Supporting Students in the Application Process

Tips for successfully guiding your students through the application process and building a strong rapport with prospective applicants



Supporting Students in the Application Process

- Be clear about [whom the program is looking for](#) and whether the student is a good fit:
 - Gilman is looking for a broad range of students receiving Pell grants.
- When advising, walk through the application with students.
- Provide context for how applications are reviewed.
- Encourage development of plans B, C, or D if they don't receive a scholarship.



Supporting Students in the Application Process

While reviewing your student's application, consider:

- How does this rank among other applications you have reviewed?
- What, if anything, will stand out to the selection panel? Why?
- How clear are the essays in displaying potential impact?
- What outcomes will this experience have after the student returns home? Are these outcomes clear?



Best Practices in Advising for Competitive Essays

The essay requirements of the Gilman application provide students with the opportunity to distinguish themselves as strong candidates. Use these tips to help guide their writing process so that they compose a robust application.

Advising for Competitive Essays

- Be mindful of the [Gilman mission](#):
 - Candidates should be explicit about what they bring to the program.
- Remind students to address the essay prompts directly:
 - A full list of essay prompts is available on the [Gilman Essays page](#).
- Know the [selection criteria](#).
- Do not assume that the reviewers know the campus context.
- Put the “person” in “personal”:
 - Essays should put personal journeys and contexts on display.
- Tell students that you will review a draft of their statements or perhaps two drafts if time allows.
- Communicate the value of essay writing experience for future scholarship or graduate school applications.



Advising for Competitive Essays

- Could someone else have written this essay?
- Clearly articulate a trajectory/plan:
 - How will the student benefit from this experience in the long term?
 - If unclear, discuss this with the student.
- Remember: The essays are not contracts, they are aspirational plans.
- Get feedback. Revise. Repeat.
- Use the [resources](#) on the Gilman webpage, including [videos](#).



Advising for Competitive Essays

A video on this topic is available at [GilmanScholarship.org](https://gilman.dhs.gov)

- Tell your story: List different aspects of your personal history by category, such as “Situational,” “Choices,” “Relationships” or “Interests.”
- In each column, list as many items as you can.
- Combine one element from each column to tell a story.

Situational	Choices	Relationships	Interests

Advising for Competitive Essays

Combine one element from each column to tell a story.

Situational	Choices	Relationships	Interests
Adopted siblings from Eastern Europe	Volunteered working with refugees	Intentionally joined international student club in HS	The former Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe
Grew up in small-town in Midwest	Thesis on Balkan Wars	Pen pal program with Eastern European girl	Cultural knowledge
First in family to go to college	Major in History	Seek out mentors in international development	Application of history
			International development

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Advising for Competitive Essays

Statement of purpose essay:

- Tell students to think of this essay as their way to introduce themselves to the Gilman reviewers since they cannot meet in person. “Tell your story.”
- Recommend that students start with a short story or anecdote about how they became interested in studying or interning abroad.
- Keep in mind that reviewers are reading approximately 60 essays, so it is important for students to tell their stories in a genuine way that helps their application stand out.
- The statement of purpose essay may be a little more informal than a personal statement, but it is important that the student tie everything together and answer the questions provided.



Advising for Competitive Essays

Tips from fellow advisors:

- Have student think about their past/present/future as a prompt in writing their statement of purpose.
- Have students write an introductory paragraph about themselves and pull that in to the essay.
- They should include examples of personal challenges they have overcome to study abroad.
- Students should ask professors or friends how they see them (it can be hard for students to write about themselves).



A circular inset image on the left side of the slide shows a person sitting on the edge of a cliff, looking out over a vast, hazy landscape with mountains and a valley. The person is wearing a dark shirt and shorts, and has their hand to their forehead. The background is a soft, overcast sky.

Advising for Competitive Essays

Follow-on Service Project proposal:

- The goal is to promote study abroad or Gilman scholarship/funding for study abroad.
- Ask students to think about communities they are already involved with, such as community groups, local schools, student organizations on campus or working with the study abroad office.
- It is important to have students make initial contacts to be sure the project is feasible.
- Students should use their talents and creativity.

Advising for Competitive Essays

- Follow-on Service Project proposal:
 - Students should propose topics that they are passionate about. That passion will come through and be interesting to implement on their return.
- Examples of Follow-on Service Projects:
 - Collaborating with a student or community group on a project that focuses on the benefits of international travel.
 - Producing relevant work completed during a study abroad experience for a wider audience.
 - Video blogs of student experience (housing, classroom, local culture, how they funded their experience).
 - Hosting a panel or participating in a local study abroad fair.



Advising for Competitive Essays

- Critical Need Language Award essays
- A brief [supplemental essay](#) is required and can be submitted in the same Gilman application:
 - How do you intend to improve your language skills while studying abroad? How will you increase your proficiency in the language inside and outside the classroom setting?
 - What are your motivations for improving your language proficiency academically, professionally and personally? Why is learning this language important to you?
 - How do you intend to use the language after you study abroad, and how will the Critical Need Language Award prepare you for this?



Action Plans and Strategies for Promoting Gilman on Campus

These ideas and action plans have been used on college campuses around the United States to increase the number of Gilman Scholarship recipients, collaborate with local offices, and promote and market the program. We recommend using these strategies on your campus.

Promoting Gilman on Campus

Targeted outreach:

- Work with your financial aid office to communicate with eligible students.
- Email correspondence to prospective applicants and colleagues using Gilman's [email templates](#):
 - Provide letter templates to departments with access to Pell Grant recipient contact information.
- Post to campus social media:
 - Refer to our [Social Media Guide](#) for tips and best practices:
- Organize information sessions (we suggest 4-5 each semester; include any branch campuses and alternate times).
- “Relatable” promotional materials:
 - Tailor materials to your community of students.
- Take advantage of Study Abroad Fair, International Education Week.
- Website, program development:
 - Clearly identify which faculty-led programs are eligible for Gilman on your website.





Promoting Gilman on Campus



Collaborate with other offices on campus:

- Offer scholarship sessions in collaboration with the campus financial aid office.
- Inform language departments that work with [critical need languages](#) of opportunities for their students to earn scholarships to study abroad:
 - Note: Portuguese is a new addition to the list of critical need languages.
- Offer essay writing sessions with your campus writing center.

Promoting Gilman on Campus

Collaborate with other offices on campus:

- Connect with career services to help students articulate how studying abroad helps with career development.
- Inform diversity offices of opportunities like Gilman to promote.
- Meet with the counseling center to understand and support students revealing personal information in applications.
- Connect with student organizations on campus.



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Promoting Gilman on Campus

- Work with program alumni on campus:
 - Establish a study abroad alumni association.
 - Use alumni to promote study abroad to fellow students:
 - Track alumni on [LinkedIn](#) to see what they're doing in their careers:
 - Use this data to provide incentives for students who want to study abroad.
- Sign up to be a selection panelist.





Promoting Gilman on Campus

- At institutions with lower international student populations and study abroad rates:
 - Establish an international education club starting with freshman, and motivate them to study abroad by junior year.
- Work with small businesses and civil organizations in the community to create an annual study abroad fund.
- Share research on the field with other institutions and advisors, such as [IIE and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Open Doors](#).
- Provide resources for parents (webinars, materials specifically for parents) so that they can be supportive and understand the value of studying abroad.

Promoting Gilman on Campus

- Connect with online-only students to provide them with information on study abroad opportunities and assist them with the application process.
- Explain the opportunity cost of applying for scholarships:
 - For example, spending 5 hours on an application and receiving \$5,000 means you received \$1000 per hour. It is worth 5 hours or even more.
- Consider who is on your campus who doesn't know about the Gilman Scholarship Program but should:
 - A full list of potential partnerships can be found on the next slide.



Potential Partners for Collaboration

- Returning participants
- Fellowships office
- Financial aid office
- Center for Language Study/language departments/faculty
- Academic advisors
- Veteran resources/affairs
- Student organizations
- International student office
- Career services
- Faculty
- Leadership
- Parents
- TRIO Advisors
- Student Affairs
- University leadership: showcase your Gilman Scholars and gain more institutional support for study abroad on your campus





Action Plans and Strategies for Marketing and Promotion

- Targeted emails
- Presentations/info sessions
- Direct communication with Pell Grant students
- Scholarship table at Study Abroad Fair
- Using students who have been on programs to promote
- Social media (Snapchat, drilling down to special populations)
- Text message
- Digital displays around campus and flyers
- Websites and social media
- Class visits (especially to foreign language courses)
- Info session/tables with alumni
- Info session with a follow-up workshop (including writing center staff to help with essays)
- Parent session at new student orientations
- Peer experience testimony
- Appropriate student-peer messaging
- Using high-traffic/heavily populated areas



Fellow Advisors Recommended These Resources for Engaging Students



- **Quick Sprout:**
 - [The Ultimate Guide to Generation Z Marketing](#)
- **Forbes:**
 - [5 Differences Between Marketing to Millennials Vs. Gen Z](#)
- **SocialToaster:**
 - [Add Advocacy to Your Education Marketing Strategy to Increase Student Enrollment](#)
- **Inc.:**
 - [How These 5 Companies Keep College Students Talking](#)



Action Plan for Increasing Gilman Recipients

- What initiatives could you implement over the course of the next 2 to 3 years to increase the number of Gilman recipients on your campus?
- With whom can you collaborate on your campus to realize your goals?
- Let us know how we can help by sending us an email at GilmanAdvisors@iie.org or by calling (800) 852-2141.





Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship

We hope these resources help you promote the Gilman Scholarship to students on your campus.

If you are a Gilman Advisor and would be interested in writing an article or being featured in a video highlighting some of your best practices, please contact the Gilman Program, at GilmanAdvisors@iie.org.

For further information, please contact us at:

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(800) 852-2141



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You are encouraged to visit the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, USA Study Abroad Branch at the link below.

There are many other ways to engage your students and campus in study abroad and other international initiatives with the U.S. Department of State.

studyabroad.state.gov

