

OSA Sample Scholarship Essays

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Essay #1

Score: 4.0

For as long as I can remember I've known what I wanted to do with my life. Science has always been a passion of mine, and medicine in particular has interested me for some time. Dedicating my life to improving the lives of others is very appealing to me. After Michigan State, I plan on advancing to medical school to become a physician. I believe this program will offer me valuable skills that cannot be taught in the classroom.

Throughout high school and college thus far I have taken a rigorous curriculum and maintained a 4.0 grade point average. During high school I was involved in a physician shadowing program called medical mentorship. In addition, I volunteered at Sparrow Hospital this fall in patient transport. I am very familiar with and comfortable in clinical settings. I am responsible, focused, hard working and easy to get along with. I participated in a Freshman Study Abroad program this summer and thoroughly enjoyed it. Studying in a foreign country was an experience unlike any I've had. The classes were challenging and thought provoking. The city was breathtaking and I met many friends who I still keep in touch with.

Although I plan on practicing medicine in the United States, I believe that studying the differences between the British health care system and that of the United States would benefit me a great deal in the future. It would be a valuable opportunity for me to shadow a British physician, and compare that experience to the clinical exposure I've had in the United States. By participating in this program I hope to eventually combine the best of both worlds into my medical education and eventual practice. I plan to learn valuable skills that will one day make me a better doctor.

Essay #2

Score: 4.0

My academic and professional goals are one as I apply to American Religious Studies Ph.D. programs. I want to study in Rome, home of the religious heart of Catholicism, to reexamine a tradition that shaped the imagination of my youth and continues to influence my approach to religious studies. I value the skills that studying in Rome would provide for looking to international religions for new ways of understanding religion in America.

In graduate school I hope to study under Dr. [name withheld], who researches Catholic mysticism at [name withheld]. My experiences near the Vatican will persist beyond next summer to influence my research on American Catholicism under [name withheld]'s mentorship.

I am seeking an undergraduate capstone experience. Before freshman year at MSU I spent thirteen months as a Congress-Bundestag ambassador in the German cities of

OSA Sample Scholarship Essays

Flensburg and Heidelberg, which included extensive travel to France, Switzerland, Austria, and Denmark. From this rich period of personal growth I acquired fluency in German, an identity as a global citizen, and the skills to independently navigate life in a foreign culture. It seems appropriate to support my next leap in life with an abroad experience that will reveal the directions in which I have grown since my exchange year, as well as provide a unique context for exploring the limits of my education before beginning graduate studies.

Strengths that I will bring to my abroad experience include exemplary leadership and social skills, refined through my service to Circle K International. Numerous leadership positions at its club, district, and international levels have trained me to unearth creative solutions to challenges, organize my experiences in the community for the purposes of both engagement and reflection, and socially navigate among diverse personalities and power differences. These traits will allow me to succeed in diverse situations while studying abroad.

Essay #3

Score: 3.875

A Summer in Spain

College is a time for new and exciting experiences as well as a time to explore diverse and innovative ideas. What could be better than traveling to a foreign country to learn about their ideas, history, and culture? I believe study abroad is something that every college student should do to help avoid ethnocentrism, to expand their horizons, and to appreciate everything the world has to offer.

I am particularly interested in the summer program offered in Santander, Spain. My grandmother came to the United States from Barcelona, Spain as a young adult to work and go to school. I have visited family in Barcelona several times and have had the opportunity to see some of the country on one family trip when we traveled from Barcelona down the eastern coast to the Rock of Gibraltar. Santander, however, is in a part of Spain that I have yet to explore. It is one thing to see a country while on vacation, but it is an entirely different experience to live there for an extended period of time. I do not think it is possible to become fluent in any language without living in that country. Even though I have some significant experience with the Spanish language, I believe that studying in Santander would deepen my understanding of not only the language, but of the culture, the people, and their history.

My immigrant grandmother worked as a realtor, helping Spanish-speaking people navigate the complex process of finding and financing their first home in the United States. She inspired me to consider making the Spanish language and culture an important part of my career. I am majoring in finance with a specialization in international business/Spanish. Since the business college does not offer a program in Spain, and understanding the language and cultural aspects are crucial when doing business in any foreign country, I believe that this program would greatly benefit me in

OSA Sample Scholarship Essays

my career path. I feel very strongly that I will be able to relate my experiences in Santander to my academic and professional goals.

Academically, it is very important to me that I continue studying Spanish. Going to Spain gives me the chance to learn in a native environment, and I do not think there is any better way to internalize a language and develop fluency. I have a very strong love for the Spanish language, people, and culture. A summer in Spain will allow me to bring together all of my past experiences and combine them with this new and exciting opportunity.

here is an undeniable advantage to living and studying in Spain; to be submersed in the Spanish way of life is the only way to fully understand and learn about how the country impacts and is impacted by the rest of the world. Not only will I learn about Spain, but I will also come to appreciate other countries in the world from a different point of view. I will be able to apply my new-found knowledge to my entire life and the way I look at the world around me. What could be more exciting than that?