



Guide for Writing an Scholarship/Transfer Essay

Overview

Securing scholarships or transferring to a four-year institution are an essential element for successful experience in the Japan Studies Program at LaGuardia Community College. This document helps you craft a compelling scholarship/transfer essay by helping you articulate your passion, experiences, and goals effectively in your essays.

1 Understanding the Purpose of the Essay

Before you begin writing, it's essential to understand what scholarship committees or transfer admissions officers are looking for. They want to learn about you beyond your grades and test scores.

Prompt Questions:

- (1) What motivates you to study Japan Studies?
- (2) How have your experiences at LaGuardia Community College shaped your academic interests?
- (3) What unique perspectives or experiences do you bring to the program?

2 Planning Your Essay

A well-structured essay begins with thoughtful planning.

Prompt Questions:

- (4) What are the key messages you want to convey?
- (5) Which experiences best illustrate your commitment and qualifications?
- (6) What are your academic and career goals? How can you link your personal story to your academic and career goals?

3 Crafting Your Narrative

Tell a story that is authentic and engaging. Use specific examples to illustrate your points.

Prompt Questions:

- (7) Can you recall a memorable moment or experience that sparked your interest in Japan?
- (8) How have you engaged with Japanese culture, language, society, religion, and/or history?
- (9) What was the biggest challenge in your endeavor in the Japan Studies so far? What challenges have you overcome in pursuing your studies?

4 Showcasing Your Interest in Japan Studies

Demonstrate your passion for Japan Studies and how it aligns with your future plans.

Prompt Questions:

- (10) Which aspects of Japan Studies are you most passionate about (e.g., language, history, literature, politics, religion, pop-culture, sociology etc)?
- (11) How have you pursued this interest outside of the classroom (e.g., clubs, events, study abroad, trip to Japan, volunteer work etc.)?
- (12) What projects or extra-curricular activities at LaGuardia have been particularly meaningful to you?

5 Addressing Your Goals and Aspirations

Clearly articulate your academic and career objectives.

Prompt Questions:

- (13) How will receiving this scholarship or transferring to a four-year institution help you achieve your goals?
- (14) What are your plans after completing your Japan Studies program?
- (15) How do you envision contributing to the field of Japan Studies or the broader community?



6 Highlighting Your Strengths and Achievements

Emphasize your accomplishments and what sets you apart.

Prompt Questions:

- (16) What academic achievements are you most proud of?
- (17) Have you received any awards or recognition related to your studies?
- (18) What skills have you developed that are relevant to Japan Studies?

7 Concluding Your Essay

End with a strong conclusion that reinforces your enthusiasm and readiness.

Prompt Questions:






- (19) What makes you an excellent candidate for this opportunity?

8 Editing and Revising

Reviewing your essay is crucial for clarity and impact. Fix any mechanical errors (such as spelling and grammar). AI tools such as ChatGPT are particularly helpful in this editing process. Before you submit your essay, make sure to share your draft with your Japanese instructors and ask for their feedback. All faculty members are willing to read your draft essay and give some suggestions for improvement.

- Tips:
 - **Edit:** Use AI tools such as Grammarly and ChatGPT to correct spelling and grammar errors. Ensure to maintain your own voice – don't let the AI tool take over your writing.
 - **Read Aloud:** This helps catch awkward phrasing and focus on the overall rhythm and tone of your essay.
 - **Seek Feedback:** Have mentors, professors, or peers review your essay.
 - **Check Requirements:** Ensure you have addressed all prompts and adhered to word or page limits. Use the word count tool (on MS Word etc) to count the number of your words.

Links

- Japanese Option webpage: <https://t-nagano.com/projects/JapaneseProgram/> 
- Japanese Option Blog: <https://chrysanthemum.commons.gc.cuny.edu> 
- Japanese Option Discord: Contact tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu for the invitation link 
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