



2020-2021 VON STEUBEN SCHOLARS PROGRAM APPLICATION ESSAY PROMPT

Essay Option #1: Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

Essay Option #2: The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

Essay Prompt #3: Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma--anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.

Inadequate to Review (0)	Below Standard (1)	Meets Standard (2)	Exceeds Standard (3)
Essay is missing from application	Essay may not address prompt, or does not give much sense of the writer as an individual.	Essay fully answers the prompt, and clearly gives insight into the writer as a person.	Essay is engaging, thought provoking, interesting.
Essay does not address prompt or merely repeats the prompt.	Underdeveloped. The writer's central point may be vague, unclear, or confusing.	Adequately developed. Provides enough information to clearly convey the central point.	Well developed. Explores complex situations with nuance and subtlety.
Response is not in essay form.	Lacks detail. Relies on generalizations or clichés.	May come to simple or obvious conclusions.	Full of detail. Descriptions are precise, visual, and effectively chosen.
Essay is in a language other than English	Unorganized or unfocused. The essay is "all over the place."	Details are adequate. Provides enough detail to clarify, but details do not necessarily enhance the essay.	Organized and sequences in a meaningful and compelling way.
"Would be better served by a different program"	Many mistakes noticeable. Essay demonstrates a lack of revisions, proofreading, and editing.	Organization is logical.	Demonstrates the unique personality of the writer.
	Lacks control over writing. Sentence structure and vocabulary is simple, lacks maturity.	Demonstrates adequate control over writing. May not be refined or richly varies, but suggests a solid foundation to build on.	Polished, mature. Sentence structure is varied; vocabulary is rich.
	"Not quite ready for an honors program."	"There's room to grow, but ready to meet the challenge of an honors program."	"This talented, interesting person exhibits the skills and characteristics we are looking for in our students."