



## Frequently Asked Questions About the Scholarship/Award Application Process

### Who Can Apply?

**Q. I've transferred to a university that does not have an active ΣΤΔ chapter. Am I eligible to apply for a scholarship, internship or award?**

A. For most of the scholarships and awards, you must be a student member of an active chapter to apply. These application forms have a line for your present chapter sponsor to sign. So you could NOT apply for these scholarships/awards until you have established a chapter at that institution and become a student member again. However, you may be eligible for the Alumni Epsilon Scholarship if you are a member of that chapter.

The **Regnery Publishing Internship** accepts applications from all ΣΤΔ members, active or inactive. Also, you may apply for the **Scholarly Paper Award** if you were a student member at the time you read the paper.

**Q. I want to apply for a scholarship/award/internship, but I will be transferring to a different university next year. May I still apply?**

A. Yes, you should still apply. For most of the scholarship/award/internships, we will need proof that you are enrolled as a full-time student in an English degree program or as a full-time student with coursework in one or more fields that foster the discipline of English the fall semester following the announcement that you've won. Then we'll send you the money. It does not matter if you're attending a different institution, and it does not matter if they have or do not have an active chapter (though we'd love to have you get one organized if they don't!).

The exception would be the Scholarly Paper Award and the Regnery Internships, which do not mandate your being enrolled in school the next fall.

**Q. I am a senior who will not graduate this spring, but will be a fifth-year senior next year. May I still apply for a Senior Scholarship?**

Yes, you should apply for a Senior Scholarship during your senior year. You must be enrolled as a

full-time student in a field that fosters the discipline of English the fall semester following the announcement that you've won. It doesn't matter if you're in graduate school then, or finishing your senior coursework.

**Q. I might qualify for both a Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship and another scholarship. Must I apply for only one?**

A. No. You should apply for all scholarships for which you might qualify. Where possible, use the same information for both. For example, the application for a Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship and a Senior Scholarship are virtually the same, with the exception of the sample paper requirement for the Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship.

### Application Essays

**Q. What do I write about in my short application essay?**

A. Usually the application essay topic is the theme of the following spring's annual convention (go to [www.english.org](http://www.english.org)). We try to give essay writers a broad theme to personalize in their essays.

**Q. What do the judges expect?**

A. Currently, there are no set criteria for judging these convention-topic essays. However, in terms of grammar, usage and punctuation, judges have high standards. And judges have been pleased, in the past, with concrete, personal example essays that support the more general convention topic in some way. Sample good essays from previous years will be posted in the scholarship portion of our website

**Q. In the Somerville Award application, I'm required to write a brief professional statement. What are the judges looking for?**

A. Again, judges have high standards for rating your writing. Proofread carefully. Judges have commented in the past that only the best students in English should be representing us in the field of education. Judges may also appreciate the grounding of abstract theory in specific methods, especially those that may be particular to the demands of teaching English. For example, you

may theorize that all students can learn to write complete sentences, but judges probably would also be interested in why you believe this is important and how you might apply your theory in a classroom.

**Q. Is there a monetary award attached to the Application Essay?**

A. Yes, non-scholarship recipients are eligible for monetary awards for outstanding essays. Also, outstanding essays are posted at the conference in the exhibit area and on the website.

**Q. In the Study Abroad Scholarship application, a 200-400 word "statement" of explanation of the nature and relevance of the study program is required. Is this really another "essay" in addition to the "application essay?"**

A. You could say that. Judges need to discriminate between study abroad programs and how well the programs meet your goals and the purposes of ΣΤΔ. If they used the word "essay" to identify this item, it could be confused with the "application essay" (on the annual convention theme).

## Sample Papers

**Q. What kind of sample paper should I submit?**

A. Your sample paper, required for the Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship and some of the internships, should be a paper you think is exceptional, usually one written for an English-related course. Your course instructor will need to write a brief note verifying that you submitted the paper for that course.

**Q. Must the paper have been written during the semester when I'm applying?**

A. It need not be. You may re-work any appropriate (or English-related) paper written for any course, as long as you have the note from the instructor for whom the paper was first written.

**Q. What if I'm writing a paper for a course during the semester in which I intend to apply for the Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship? May I use that paper, even though the due date for the course paper comes after the date when I will need to submit my application?**

A. The intent of the directions under the sub-heading "Sample Paper" on the Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship application is to ensure that this paper is your own work, as verified by your instructor. The actual grade you may receive on this paper and/or what the instructor thought

about the merits of the paper is not material.

Thus you could, indeed, submit a paper that had not yet been graded by the instructor, but had been turned in (early, perhaps).

## Re-using Materials

**Q. When I apply for a scholarship two years in a row, may I re-use portions of the previous year's application?**

A. There is nothing currently in the committee's policies that stipulates you must use new materials in every application. Many students apply for both the Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship and a Graduate/Senior/Junior Scholarship and use (as appropriate) the same materials for both. There is also no current rule that prohibits using the same application materials for two consecutive years. Be aware, however, that some judges may sit on the committee for two consecutive years.

**Q. I am applying for two scholarships. May I use the same recommendations for both?**

A. There is no rule that stipulates you may not use the same recommendations for both applications. However, all applications require that you supply two original copies, on letterhead with inked, not copied, signatures, that you will then make copies of for your Applicant Information packets. So if you use the same recommendations for both applications, request each faculty member to have two copies of his/her recommendation made on letterhead, and be certain he/she signs them both.

## Disqualification

**Q. What might cause my application to be disqualified?**

A. You might be disqualified for not following directions:

- Using an incorrect format
- Leaving out parts of the application
- Omitting signatures on the cover page
- Omitting the original copies of each recommendation
- Omitting the correct number of copies of other parts of the application
- Misrepresenting coursework
- Misrepresenting the GPA(s) for that coursework

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## Disqualification (continued)

- Submitting an essay that exceeds the maximum length requirement
- Submitting recommendations that exceed the maximum length requirement
- Submitting the wrong application for your status (juniors should apply for the Junior Scholarship in their junior year, seniors apply for the Senior Scholarship in their senior year, and graduate students apply for the Graduate Scholarship while in graduate school)
- Submitting a paper (for the Scholarly Paper Award) that was NOT presented at a professional (English-related) non-ΣΤΔ conference
- Submitting a plagiarized essay or paper

## The Judging Process

### Q. Who judges the applications?

A. A committee of ΣΤΔ faculty sponsors representing various regions judge applications.

### Q. Do Board members judge applications?

A. A Board member chairs the Scholarship Committee, but does not routinely take part in the actual judging of applications. Another Board member and a Student Representative typically sit on the committee. Other judges are typically chapter sponsors.

### Q. Do judges serve for more than one year?

A. Yes, some judges serve for several years, but every year the committee has a number of judges new to the process, too.

### Q. How do judges weight the different components of my application?

A. Although the judging process varies somewhat for different scholarships, judges typically award scores in two areas: a) academics/ service (as demonstrated in “Applicant Information” section; and b) application essay(s). Scores by judges are totaled, and then academics/service scores are weighted to the essay component in a 3:1 ratio (academics/ service being the larger number). When an additional essay is requested, as in the case of the Somerville and Study Abroad awards, the weighting is 3:1:1. The Sigma Tau Delta Scholarship also considers service to Sigma Tau Delta as a separate component, so the weighting for that scholarship is 3:1:1:1. Judges decide individually how much emphasis to put on academics as opposed to service; however, service (to ΣΤΔ, to the chapter, to the home

institution and to the community) is always an important component. When so many applicants are of such high caliber academically, service may be *the* distinguishing feature of an application.

## Runners-up

### Q. What happens if I receive a Runner-up Award?

A. Runners-up are next in line for the scholarship or award for which they applied. Should a winner be unable to accept a scholarship/internship/award, the first runner-up in that competition would be offered the award (some categories do not have runners-up awards). Runners-up who move into the winner category relinquish their runner-up awards.

## Regent Scholarships

### Q. What is a Regent Scholarship?

A. Depending upon funding and application numbers, after all other scholarships are awarded the highest scoring remaining application from each region is awarded a Regent Scholarship.

## Notification

### Q. When will I know if I’ve won or not?

A. The Board itself must vote on the judges’ recommendations, and that usually happens at the official Board meeting immediately prior to the annual Convention in March. Winners are typically announced at the closing banquet of the Convention, and all applicants receive written notification of their status shortly thereafter. There are some exceptions (for example, there is a second round competition for Study Abroad Scholarships, with winners announced some time during May in the second round).

### Q. Can I win in more than one category?

A. It’s possible. You may not hold two concurrent scholarships; however, you could also win, for example, the Scholarly Paper Award or a website award, etc.