



Office of Financial Aid

Sample Essays and Cover Letters

* **Tip:** If the application asks for an essay, write in essay form. If the application asks for a cover letter, write in letter form.

Sample Essay/Cover Letter 1

I am applying for the Ralph M. and Emmalyn E. Freeman Honors Scholar Program Scholarship. Presently, I am a junior in the nursing program. I believe my chosen profession will enable me to fulfill all of my desires to help others, to continuously expand my knowledge base and skills and to travel the world. Throughout my life I have participated in extracurricular activities including valuable volunteer experiences. I have striven for academic excellence, always wishing to make the most of my education. In addition, I have managed to work to provide for some of the basic expenses that students have. Next year this will especially important, as I will no longer be receiving the Chancellor Scholarship.

Education has always been an important aspect of my life. While in high school I managed to take challenging courses such as advanced placement English and calculus, physics, and chemistry. I enjoyed the arts and was involved in art, band, and choir. Despite the time consuming practices for concerts, parades, musicals and exhibits, I was able to maintain a 3.97 grade point average, allowing me to graduate as salutatorian. I decided to stay near home and come to the University of Michigan-Flint because of the smaller class size, scholarship monies and the University's Honor Program.

I have received many scholarships since I began my college career. In 1998 I received the Chancellor's Scholarship providing me with \$1,700 per year for four years. I also received three scholarships from my graduating high school. The first was the Goodrich Alumni Scholarship totaling \$200. The second was the Goodrich Teachers Scholarship totaling \$500. The last was from the National Honor Society and totaled \$260. All of these awards were given based on scholarship and community service. Because of my acceptance in the University's Honor Program I also receive the Honor's Scholarship. Despite the challenges of both the nursing and honors curriculum I have managed to maintain a 3.7 grade point average. My efforts did not go unnoticed and in 2001 I received two additional scholarships including the Ralph M. and Emmalyn E. Freeman Honors Scholar Program Scholarship and the Ralph M. And Emmalyn E. Freeman Long Distance Learning Scholarship. These accomplishments lead me to believe that in the future I will continue to perform at a high level in the academics.

Although education plays a significant role in my life, I am involved with many other activities. During high school I was an active member of the National Honor Society for two and a half years. My last year as a member gave me the opportunity to play a more active role as I participated as NHS treasurer. I frequently tutored individuals by offering my time before and after school for middle and high school students. I enjoy helping others with schoolwork and have continued to aid fellow students at the college level. I also enjoy the arts and participated in many performances, plays, musicals and exhibitions, often requiring traveling to other areas and interacting with new individuals. Currently I am involved with fellow nursing students on a class and university level. I belong to the National Student Nurses Association as well. I have volunteered my time to inform individuals of various ages of what nursing involves and share the need for nurses. IN addition, I have entered the community to perform blood pressure screening and offer information to those at risk for hypertension and diabetes. I have increased my knowledge base as well as my public presentation skills by presenting one of my papers, Beatrice and Katharine: Shakespeare's Unconventional Women at the Purdue University-Calumet Undergraduate Research Conference in 1999. Through all of these experiences I have learned to act as a leader, work in groups, and organize my time appropriately.

In addition to school related activities I am also involved with my local church. I teach a class of 3-6 year old kids. When other teachers are unable to teach Sunday school I do not hesitate to come to their aid. I have participated in church cleanup, nursery duty and choir as well. I feel that by aiding in church related activities I am setting a positive example for the children within the church to follow.

Work is also a part of my life. Until recently, I would work 16-20 hours/week to provide for educational expenses. Presently I work 8 hours/week in the neonatal intensive care unit as an extern at Hurley Medical Center. I enjoy working because I am able to see newborns progress to a state where they can finally be discharged to their families. I enjoy teaching parents about their infants such as what to expect, what is normal for their infant to do



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and when to call the doctor. During the summer of 2001 I worked in a group of three other individuals to perform a quality improvement project on gavage fed infants and then presented the results to our peers. Through my work experiences I have learned a little more about what to expect upon completion of the nursing program and now know the reality of what to expect as a registered nurse. Seeing problems such as mandatory overtime and poor benefits despite a nursing shortage has motivated me to remain active in associations such as the Student Nursing Association because I realize that as a group we will be able to voice our concerns about the issues that nurses face today.

My goal is to become a registered nurse so that I can perform task that clients cannot do for themselves as well as be an active listener, patient advocate and educator. At some point I would enjoy going back to school to become a practitioner. I have had an extraordinary number of nursing instructors who were absolutely wonderful and would one day like to give back what they have given to me by becoming an instructor. I know that one day I will provide something meaningful to the individuals that I encounter.

Sample Essay/Cover Letter 2

I wish to apply for the _____ scholarship. I believe that my excellent academic record, and service work make me a good candidate for a scholarship. Throughout high school I maintained a high level of academic achievements while volunteering for community service and working 20 hours a week. I graduated from Owosso high school as the Salutatorian of my class in 1999. I had a 3.99 GPA. In addition to my academic classes, such as AP English and Physics, I was a member of the A capella Choir. This demanded extra time and effort especially before the concerts in December, March and May during which our director held extra practices at night and on the weekends.

Not only was I involved with academic and extra curricular activities; I also worked in a pizza restaurant approximately 20 hours a week. After two years, I was promoted to a key holding position where I am still working today. I supervise the other employees, handle customer complaints and close the building at night. This employment has taught me much about myself and others. I have learned what it means to work hard and how to motivate other to do the same thing.

At the University of Michigan-Flint, I applied and was one of twenty students from a total of seventy applicants to enter the honors program. In addition, I was awarded the Distinguished Chancellor Scholarship, Michigan Competitive Scholarship and Honors Program Scholarship. These resources have made my college experiences possible. I am working towards a degree in elementary education with concentration in mathematics and language arts.

I have continued to maintain an excellent academic record of academic achievement with a GPA of 3.93, while working thirty five to forty five hours a week to finance my education. Presently, I work at Fred Meyer Jewelers, Mancino's Pizza and Grinders, and as a Supplemental Instructor (SI) for Business Calculus. From this wide range of experiences I have gained a broad background of life. I enjoy working with and for people. I have learned from being an SI leader how to explain things in several different ways and not to give up until the student truly understands the material.

In addition to my employment I also continue to volunteer for community service. I assist in a kindergarten class every Wednesday. I have tied shoes; put on name tags, sang songs and helped the children make apple muffins. I help the teacher with lessons, art projects, supervising during "play time," testing and many other aspects of the career I hope to have one day. It is the most rewarding experience at this point in my life. I love children. Watching them grow and learn is one of my greatest joys.

I also give some of my time to the children at my church. I am the leader of the puppet team there. I organize outings, performances and competitions for about fifteen children between the ages of eleven and sixteen. I conduct practice for two hours every Saturday in which the puppeteers learn more about puppetry and practice songs and skits for upcoming performances. I chose the material and make decisions about who gets which part. Dedication and commitment are two of the traits that have been developed in me through this experience.

After graduation I hope to become an elementary school teacher. I am committed to this goal as is evident by my record of academic accomplishments and community service. I am convinced that all these factors make me a good candidate for this scholarship.



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Sample Essay/Cover Letter 3

My name is _____, and I am applying for the Ralph M. and Emmalyn E. Freeman Philosophy Scholarship. Presently, I am a senior working towards a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy and English with a specialization in writing. Despite being a full time student, balancing two majors, maintaining a 3.8 GPA, and working over 30 hours a week, I also take the initiative to enhance my education outside the classroom. I constantly strive for excellence and am committed to making my time as an undergraduate as productive and beneficial as possible.

A well-rounded student, my interests span across curriculum and culture. I've thirsted for knowledge since childhood, and when I finally reached high school, my craving was further whetted. I finished fifth grade in the United States before moving to Bethlehem, Palestine. There, in my parent's homeland, I completed the next 4 years of my education. Consequently, I attended my first year of high school in an Arabic school. Although I did exceedingly well there, ranking seventh amongst my classmates, my family relocated to Grand Blanc, MI before I began tenth grade. Regardless of the radical shift in culture and educational systems, I excelled in my new setting. I graduated from Grand Blanc High School in January 2000, a semester early, with a 3.81 GPA and ranking 38th out of a class of 468.

Attending college liberated me and allowed me to not only explore a wider array of subjects, including women, gender and feminist studies, but also explore myself. I grew into a strong woman, questioning the status quo and doing all I can to change injustices I find. My development was aided by the Michigan Competitive Scholarship (since Fall 2002) and consistently acknowledged by the University of Michigan-Flint Scholar Award (for every semester at U of M – Flint except Fall 2000).

My personal achievements exceed beyond school, however. I work roughly 30 hours a week, spread liberally over two jobs. The first is as a cashier for Bernie's Market. I've learned to work with others through this experience and it has shaped me into a responsible adult. As Bernie's is a family business, I often open and close the market, work with suppliers, track purchase and sales, in addition to hands-on jobs like stocking shelves.

The second is as head tutor in the Marian E. Wright Writing Center. I am responsible not only for tutoring developmental writers enrolled in ENG 109 and students wanting one-on-one appointments for any subject, in any stage of writing but also supervise the day-to-day operations of the center. I monitor scheduling and budget, organize and lead meetings, plan and execute workshops, and overall keep the writing center running smoothly for the benefit of fellow tutors and students. Currently, I'm also voluntarily involved in planning the 11th Annual Michigan Writing Centers Ideas Exchange with my co-workers, manager and director. I've also helped revise the syllabus for the center's tutor training course. After its revisions, I worked with the center's director and fellow staff to carry out the revisions in the actual classroom. My work in the center is extremely gratifying both on the personal and professional level. I take pleasure in watching my students discover and rediscover writing. Furthermore, their success inspires me to delve into my own work regularly.

In that avenue, I spend what little spare time I have writing and revising poetry for submission to contests and various publications. I'm also in the process of assembling a work tentatively titled "Fabulous Feminism" which I intend to be an introductory guide to feminism in all its faces. To do this, I'm drawing on my experience from Spring and Summer 2002 in which I created the "Road Guide to Working in the Writing Center," an instructional manual for all incoming tutors. Over the upcoming spring, summer and fall, I'm working with the help of Dr. Jami Anderson to begin and complete my senior thesis concerning feminist ethics. In the past, I attended two Writing Center conferences including the 9th Annual Michigan Writing Centers Ideas Exchange and the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing/Midwest Writing Centers Association Conference 2002, for which I was a presenter.

Behind my achievements is a strong desire to learn. I hope to complete my Bachelor's degree over the next year and attend graduate school so I can one day return the favor many professors bestowed on me and teach at a college level. Philosophy has taught me to evaluate life and my experience. It's through that that I hope to become an instrumental member of society, using all of my energies to bring about constructive change and create a path to the "good life," not only for myself but also for others.

I would like to thank you in advance for considering my application.