

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AWARDS—SPRING 2020

DEADLINES AND ELIGIBILITY

Unless otherwise noted below, all application materials must be emailed as a Word doc or PDF by the applicant to Wendy Ventura (wendy.ventura@csun.edu) **by 4:00 pm April 30, 2020**. Only a digital submission is required.

Application forms for individual awards (where required) are available on the Department of English website, <https://www.csun.edu/humanities/english/english-department-awards-spring-2020>.

Qualifying Essays

For most awards, essays and scholarly work submitted for consideration must have been completed between May 10, 2019 and April 30, 2020. Thus papers completed at the very end of the spring 2019 (e.g., final term papers) semester will be eligible for many of these awards.

Professors in the courses must nominate essays for submission to the Harry Finestone Award and the essays must come from 698D Fall 2019 or Spring 2020.

Students applying for the Professor Mitchell Marcus award may submit their papers from any one of their courses in the CSUN English graduate program.

** If you are currently receiving financial aid, please be aware that the bestowal of award money may affect your financial aid status. We encourage you to consult the financial aid office to discover how receiving award money might impact your personal financial aid status.

For awards requiring letters of recommendation from English Department faculty, students should request these letters as soon as possible. At the *bare minimum*, students should ask if a professor will be willing to recommend them a week before the application deadline. Many professors will need more time than one week. Students should also inform their recommenders of pertinent academic information about themselves in a brief résumé (i.e. overall GPA; GPA in English major; membership in university organizations such as clubs, athletic teams, or student government; full or part-time employment status; other awards or achievements associated with CSUN).

For awards involving an essay or writing sample, the maximum page length (if stated) does not include footnotes or a works cited list.

If you have any questions about these awards, please contact Dr. Steve Wexler, 2019-20 Chair of the Awards Committee (swexler@csun.edu), or Dr. Beth Wightman, Chair of the Department of English (beth.wightman@csun.edu).

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

The Linda Nichols Joseph English Merit Scholarship

In memory of Linda Nichols Joseph, an English major who graduated from CSUN *cum laude* in 1981, up to four prizes of \$2,000 each will be awarded every year to undergraduate English majors who have demonstrated excellence in their studies. Particular consideration will be given to applicants who demonstrate financial need, who have taken a non-traditional path to college, or who demonstrate engagement in the discipline and/or commitment to further study in English. However, all applicants who meet the minimum GPA criterion are encouraged to apply.

Application Requirement: minimum 3.5 overall GPA

Application Materials: completed application form; letter discussing the applicant's qualifications for the award, including issues such as financial aid, and/or engagement in the discipline, and/or commitment to further study in English (1-2 pages); résumé or curriculum vitae; two letters of recommendation; Financial Aid release form (attached to application form).

The Lesley Johnstone Memorial Award

A prize of \$500 will be given to an undergraduate student who is the author of the best written work on some aspect of the natural world or environment. Eligible work, whether scholarly or creative, must have been written in an English class or for a class-related conference or publication.

Application Requirements: Students will email an application form and a copy of your essay to Wendy Ventura (wendy.ventura@csun.edu).

The Robert apRoberts English Honors Essay Prize

To commemorate Robert apRoberts, Professor Emeritus and founder of the Honors Program, an annual prize of \$250 will be awarded to the English Honors student whose paper completed in the Honors Revision Seminar (497A) is judged to be the best submitted during that academic year.

Application Requirements: Applicants must be enrolled in the English Honors Program. And the student will email an application form and a copy of the essay to Wendy Ventura (wendy.ventura@csun.edu).

The William L. Wilson Award

A scholarship of \$1,600 will be given to an English major who plans to teach at the secondary level. This scholarship honors the memory of William L. Wilson, a career Army officer who taught high school for many years upon his retirement from the U.S. Army. The scholarship recognizes and encourages students who work diligently to get their degrees and achieve their career potential in spite of additional obligations such as work or family.

Application requirements: Applicants must currently be either a junior or senior English major going on for a secondary single-subject teaching credential in English; possess people skills associated with the successful classroom teacher, such as maturity, purpose, and compassion; and be a strong student (CSUN GPA of 3.0 or higher). Applicants must email the application form and a personal essay of no more than 350 words introducing herself or himself – including why she or he has chosen this field of study, and her or his personal circumstances and eventual career objective to Wendy Ventura (wendy.ventura@csun.edu). A CSUN faculty member must complete the William L. Wilson Faculty evaluation form and submit it directly to the Chair of the Awards Committee.

The Deborah Averill Award in Creative Writing

An award of \$250 will be awarded to a female student who has had more than a one-year absence from school and returned after overcoming obstacles. The applicant, in either the undergraduate or graduate creative writing program, will submit a creative writing sample not to exceed ten pages (in any genre), as well as a 1-2 page personal statement.

GRADUATE AWARDS

The Professor Mitchell Marcus Prize in English

In memory of Mitchell Marcus, a former Professor in the Department (1958-1983), a prize of \$4,000 will be awarded each spring semester to the graduate student whose achievements in the study of English are considered by the faculty as the most distinguished.

Application Requirements: the candidate must have classified status as a graduate student, hold a minimum 3.75 GPA, submit the completed application form, two current letters of recommendation from English Department faculty, a personal statement (max. 2 single-spaced pages), and a writing sample (max. 20 double-spaced pages), résumé (max. 2 pages).

The Mahlon Gaumer Award

In honor of Mahlon Gaumer, a professor of English at CSUN from 1969-1997, who specialized in linguistics and Medieval literature, an award of \$500 will be given to a graduate student who is the author of the best critical essay on English literature—with emphasis on the use of language.

Application Requirements: application form, essay (max. 20 double-spaced pages), the essay will not have been considered in previous English department competitions, the applicant must be enrolled as a graduate student, papers must analyze English or American literature with an emphasis on the use of language.

The Harry Finestone Award in English

In honor of Harry Finestone, a gifted teacher and innovative administrator at CSUN from 1962-1983, an award of \$750 will be presented each year to the graduate student with the most distinguished essay in the study of literature completed in the department's capstone graduate seminar, ENGL 698D. The essay must be nominated by the instructor of the course in which the student was enrolled. The Awards Committee will evaluate the nominated essays on the following criteria: originality of concept; potential scholarly impact; logical, effective organization; and clarity, coherence, and elegance of prose style.

Application Requirements: application form, minimum 3.5 GPA (verified by unofficial transcript), hard copy of the essay, letter from course instructor (submitted directly to the Awards Committee Chair) nominating the essay for this award.

The Irene Clark Scholarship for Rhetoric and Composition

The Irene Clark Scholarship for Rhetoric and Composition awards \$500 for a paper written by a Department of English graduate student on a topic in rhetoric and composition during the 2018-2020 academic year.

Application Requirements: application form, essay (max. 20 double-spaced pages), the applicant must be enrolled as a graduate student, essays must focus on a topic in rhetoric and composition.

The Angeline Olliff Memorial Scholarship

In memory of Angeline Olliff, a former graduate student and teaching associate in the Department of English, a \$250 scholarship will be awarded in spring 2020 to a Rhetoric and Composition graduate student or a Teaching Associate in any specialization (creative writing, literature, rhetoric and composition).

Application Requirements: application form, a writing sample or detailed lesson plan, and a cover letter of no more than 500 words that explains how their own research or teaching practices showcase how the power of language can affirm agency and subsequently elevate one's voice, as asserted in Angie Olliff's words: "Somehow I had learned early on that there is power in having a voice, and my writing shows my often inelegant struggle to find this power, to assert (and often defend) my place. I am encouraged, though, because my increasing awareness of both my evolving literary voice and my sensitivity to my environment will enable me to write more consciously. As I write more consciously, I

will wield the words most meaningful to me, and I will use my voice with agency.” The writing sample should show the student's proficiency in research that exemplifies the power of language. Essays can be assignments previously written for a class. Lesson plans and/or essay prompts must detail the expected student outcomes and be clear on how the lesson reinforces the power of language and finding one's own voice.

The Deborah Averill Award in Creative Writing

An award of \$250 will be awarded to a female student who has had more than a one-year absence from school and returned after overcoming obstacles. The applicant, in either the undergraduate or graduate creative writing program, will submit a creative writing sample not to exceed ten pages (in any genre), as well as a 1-2 page personal statement.