

# 2017 COS Scholarship Review Process

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Student's applications are reviewed by the college scholarship committee. There are three main sections that are considered – resume, essay, and a letter of recommendation.

*The resume: This provides the reader with a snapshot of your background.*

- Do you work? If so, when and where?
- Are you doing research in a lab? If so, for who and how long?
- Are you a member of any on or off campus organizations?
- Do you hold any leadership roles? What about in the past?
- Do you participate in volunteer work or programs? When and where?
- What are some of the achievements and awards you have received?

The resume also tells us a lot about your attention to detail.

- Are there typos, spelling, capitalization, or grammar errors?
- Does the resume list experience with organization name, title, date, and location?
- Is the proper verb tense used?
- Is the resume format appealing to the audience?
- Is the resume consistent in font style and layout?

Please have someone proofread your resume before submitting it. The Career Service Center has a variety of services available to assist students in resume writing. It is essential that you plan ahead. For an appointment, please visit <http://career.vt.edu/advising.html>. For resume guides, please visit [http://career.vt.edu/job-search/presenting\\_yourself/resumes.html](http://career.vt.edu/job-search/presenting_yourself/resumes.html).

*The letter of recommendation (optional): This is your chance to have someone talk about your strengths.*

Your grades typically represent your intellectual capabilities, but the letter of recommendation provide an independent assessment of your skills and qualities. This is why letters should come from someone that knows you and can confirm your work ethic, communication skills, etc. Simply sitting in a class and doing well does not give the professor much to write about that can't be seen on the transcript. It is important to get to know your professors or individuals that will be writing these letters.

NOTE: **Get permission before you list someone as a reference.** When asking for a letter of recommendation, it is good practice to provide the individual with 1) a copy of your resume and personal statement, 2) how the agency needs to receive the letter (mail, upload via link, etc.), and 3) to whom should they address the letter (Dear Mrs. Haymore, Dear Scholarship Committee, etc.).

*Personal Statement: This is your chance to sell yourself.*

It should be a story about your past, present, and future. It **is not** a regurgitation of your resume.

The personal statement or essay should demonstrate your ability organize and progress your thoughts seamlessly. It is a document that validates your ability to write effectively.

- Does the story flow in such a way that the ending wraps around to the beginning?
- Is it free of typos, spelling, capitalization, or grammar errors?
- Is it realistic?
- After reading your statement once, does the audience comprehend your main points and will they remember you?

Please have someone proofread your essay before submitting it. The Writing Center has a variety of resources available. For more information, please visit <http://www.composition.english.vt.edu/writing-center/>.