

# 2025 Application Instructions

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# Detailed Instructions for the CLS Program Application

## Section 0: Pre-Application Form

The pre-application form consists of the American Councils for International Education (American Councils) Privacy Notice and Consent and the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program's Campus Advisors' Acknowledgement and Consent Form, which includes fields where you indicate your program choice for the CLS Program and your academic institution. You must agree to these before you begin work on the full application.

## Section 1: Program Overview and Requirements

The program overview describes the basic information about and the eligibility requirements for the CLS Program.

## Section 2: Application Instructions

The application instructions cover technical aspects of using the application system.

## Section 3: Eligibility

Please complete the questions regarding your eligibility for the 2025 CLS Program.

Please read the prompts carefully. An answer of "No" to questions asked on this page does not necessarily indicate that you are ineligible for the CLS Program.

Complete eligibility information is available

at <https://clscholarship.org/applicants/eligibility>. A list of frequently asked questions is provided on the CLS website at <https://clscholarship.org/applicants/frequently-asked-questions>.

**1) Citizenship:** Only U.S. citizens and nationals are eligible for the CLS Program. Naturalized citizens must have U.S. citizenship by the CLS application deadline of November 19, 2024. Permanent residents and green card holders are not eligible to apply.

**2) Age:** You must be 18 years of age by May 15, 2025 in order to be eligible for the 2025 CLS Program.

**3-4) Enrollment:** Please answer questions about your enrollment status. If you are unsure, please refer to your college or university's office of the registrar. If you are not currently enrolled, please describe your educational status in the space provided in 3a. If you are not taking at least one class for credit, please complete 4a, 4b, and 4c.

Please note that students on a leave of absence are not considered eligible for the CLS Program, with limited exceptions made for students who have withdrawn from their academic program in order to pursue an organized semester- or year-long study abroad, a national fellowship or scholarship program, or substantive internship program, who intend to re-enroll following its completion.

If you are not taking classes at or through your home institution in the fall term, you must submit a CLS Enrollment Confirmation form completed by your home registrar in the U.S. You must also submit a signed letter from the program provider explaining the opportunity and confirming your participation. American Councils will provide the CLS Enrollment Confirmation form and further instructions to you if you are selected as a semi-finalist. If selected as a finalist, American Councils may ask you to submit updated documentation from the program provider confirming their successful completion of the program.

**5) Accreditation:** Applicants must be students at Higher Education Institutions based in the United States that are accredited by a Department of Education recognized accreditation agency. Students at colleges and universities based in a country other than the United States and its territories are not eligible to apply. Students at colleges and universities located outside the United States and its territories, that are nevertheless incorporated and based in the United States are eligible to apply, as long as they meet all other eligibility requirements.

Please answer questions about the accreditation status of your university. Students at institutions with suspended accreditation are not eligible to apply. If you are unsure, please refer to your college or university's office of the registrar.

**6) Institution:** For students enrolled in dual-degree programs in which they take some courses at a U.S. institution and some courses at an international institution, students who can produce a transcript from the U.S. institution will be considered eligible. Students earning degrees at foreign institutions that are not based in the U.S. or its territories are not eligible, even if those institutions are accredited by a recognized U.S. accrediting agency.

**7) College-Level Study:** Applicants at the undergraduate level must complete at least one full year of college-level study before participating on the CLS Program. You should indicate whether you will fulfill that requirement by the start of the program in June 2025. Note that part-time students still qualify.

**8) Only One Application:** Applicants may only submit one application for the CLS Program each year. If it is determined that an applicant has submitted multiple applications in the same application year, they will be determined to be ineligible to participate in the CLS Program. If you submitted an application in error and need help deleting it, please contact our staff at [cls@americancouncils.org](mailto:cls@americancouncils.org).

**9) Verification of Eligibility and Program Requirements:** Applicants are required to certify that they have reviewed the eligibility and program requirements.

**10) Veteran Status:** All other factors being equal, the CLS Program gives preference to veterans of the U.S. armed forces. Note that active-duty members of the military do not qualify for a veteran's preference in this case. If you are a veteran, you must provide a copy of your DD214 or NGB-22 form to prove your status, or you may decline to receive this preference. You should redact your social security number on the form before submitting it.

Prior to completing the CLS application, all applicants with affiliation to the U.S. armed forces should carefully review the CLS Program's instructions on this topic at <https://clscholarship.org/applicants/frequently-asked-questions> and seek advice from the appropriate commanding officer.

**11) Medical Review:** Applicants selected for the CLS Program award will be required to submit a medical information form and a physician's statement. Results of the medical review will determine if an applicant meets the requirements necessary for program placement and participation in the CLS Program. For information about participation requirements, please visit the CLS website (<https://clscholarship.org/applicants/participation-requirements>).

**12) Visa:** Applicants selected for the CLS Program will need to obtain a visa that is appropriate and valid for their CLS Program. For information about participation requirements, please visit the CLS website (<https://clscholarship.org/applicants/participation-requirements>).

#### Section 4: Biographical Information

**1-3) Name:** Enter your name as it appears on your government-issued ID documents, such as your passport or driver's license. If there is a discrepancy in the personal information listed on your various government ID documents, please use the information as listed on the passport that you anticipate using for CLS Program travel, regardless of whether you have this passport already or will be applying for it later.

Your name as entered will be used on all official CLS Program communications, so please use appropriate capitalization.

**4) Gender:** Although applicants are not required to disclose their gender identity on the application, responses to this question are used when reporting on the equity of the CLS Program's recruitment and selection process. If selected, applicants will be required to disclose their legal gender as indicated on their government-issued ID, which is required in order to ticket passengers for flights.

**5-6) Date and Place of Birth:** Enter your date of birth and the country, city, and state/province/region.

**7) Permanent Residential Address:** Please enter your permanent residential address, at which you are eligible to be registered to vote. The CLS Program reports to members of Congress when constituents from their states or districts receive a CLS award. Your address should fall within the congressional district you indicate.

**8) Congressional Voting District:** Enter the state code and district number of your congressional voting district. This should be the district where you are registered to vote or plan to vote in the next election. This information can be found on your voter registration card or by searching for your address at <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>.

Select At Large for states with only one Congressional representative. Those states are: Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming. Enter At Large also for the District of Columbia and U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands).

**9-13) Current Contact Information:** Please provide the primary telephone number at which you can be reached through October 2025. If you are providing an overseas, non-U.S. number, please indicate the country code, preceded by a 'plus' sign ('+'). Also indicate an alternate phone number. The CLS Program will use this

number to reach you only in cases where we cannot reach you using your primary email address or phone number and there is time-sensitive information that we need to communicate, such as a program deadline. Consider entering the contact information for a close friend or family member.

Enter the email address at which you would like CLS Program staff to contact you. All official CLS Program communications will be directed to the indicated e-mail address so you should indicate an address that will remain valid through October 2025. You must also enter an alternate email address. We strongly recommend you not to use university email addresses as your primary form of communication, as you may not have access to this email address after the current academic year.

If you are selected to participate in the program, we will contact you using the information that you enter here, so please provide contact information that you will be available at through October 2025. If you are selected, you will have an opportunity to update your contact information at that time.

**14-15) Passport Information:** If you hold dual citizenship with another country, mark 'yes' and indicate which country in question 14a. If you hold citizenship in more than two countries, please select only one to indicate here.

Prior to completing the CLS application, all applicants holding dual citizenship should carefully [review the CLS Program's instructions on this topic](#).

If you currently have a valid U.S. passport, please provide passport information exactly as it appears on the photo page of your passport. If you do not currently have a passport or access to your passport, you may select No. A valid U.S. passport is not required in order to apply for the CLS Program, however all finalists are required to have a valid passport by March 2025 in order to participate in the program. If you do not take measures to secure a passport by March 2025, you will be responsible for any fees associated with expediting your passport application.

Visit the U.S. Department of State website at <https://travel.state.gov/> for more information on how to obtain a U.S. passport.

Note that the United States is experiencing long wait times for new passport applications and passport renewals. Routine passport service can take up to 18 weeks from the day an application is submitted to the day a new passport is received. For this reason, you are encouraged to apply for a passport or passport renewal as soon as possible.

## Section 5: Current Academic Information

**1-5) Current College or University:** Choose the name of your current college or university and provide information on your current enrollment, including your start date, expected graduation date, and the type of degree you are pursuing.

Please note that the data in the CLS application reflects information derived from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which is updated on an annual basis. If your college or university is an accredited U.S.-based institution but not listed as an option, please contact us at [cls@americancouncils.org](mailto:cls@americancouncils.org) and we will happily add it as an option.

You may optionally indicate the specific campus or division of your school that you attend. Note that this field should not be used in the place of your college or university name, which is required to submit your application.

If you are attending two institutions of higher education concurrently, or you are enrolled in a dual-degree program with two institutions, then please choose one to indicate here, which we will identify you as a student of during and after the program and indicate the other as a previous institution in the Previous Academic Information section. If one institution is not an eligible institution (for instance, if it is based outside the United States), then indicate the eligible institution in this section and the second institution in the Previous Academic Information section.

**6-7) Current or Anticipated Academic Major(s):** First, indicate the name of your degree program at your university-this is the name of the degree that you are working towards and anticipate graduating with. Then, select your major(s)/field(s) of study from the provided list. You may not be able to find the exact name of your major or minor in the drop-down menu on the application. Please select one or more options that are as close to your degree as possible. The field of study list is derived from the [Classification of Instruction Programs](#), developed and maintained by the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.

**8-9) Terms Completed:** If you are not a first-semester student, you will be asked to provide additional information about your school's term structure and your previous academic performance. Please indicate the number of terms you have completed (whether semesters, quarters or other), not including the current term.

**9b) GPA:** Enter your GPA at your current institution, if applicable. Please round your GPA to the nearest tenth (e.g. 3.4). If you do not have a GPA, enter N/A in this field. Do not enter your high school GPA or your GPA at a previous institution.

**10-12) Spring 2025 Enrollment:** Please answer the questions about your enrollment status in Spring 2025 (Spring semester or Spring quarter).

**13) Anticipated Spring 2025 Courses:** Please list all courses that you intend to enroll in for the Spring 2025 semester or the Winter and Spring 2025 quarters.

**14) Fall 2025 Enrollment:** If you're planning on being enrolled in the Fall 2025 term, please indicate 'Yes' here, along with the approximate start date for the term.

## Section 6: Transcript and Grades

**1-2)** Provide a copy of your unofficial transcript for your current college/university. Please ensure that your unofficial transcript includes the courses that you are currently enrolled in for the Fall 2024 semester, as well as all previously completed courses. There are two methods to choose from to provide your unofficial transcript record with your online application:

- **Option 1:** Scan and upload a copy of your transcript or grade list to the online application. The maximum allowable file size is 5MB. If your transcript file is larger than this, the file size must be reduced before uploading it. Do not upload a digitally signed or password protected e-transcript PDF. Most e-transcripts produced by universities are digitally signed and cannot be submitted with this tool. As a workaround, you may print your e-transcript and then upload a scanned copy of the printed transcript.  
**Note:** Some transcripts include the Social Security Number students. If your transcript contains your social security number, please remove this information before uploading it.
- **Option 2:** Enter your courses and grades manually by completing a form. Using your online grade report or transcript, please enter information on all courses you have taken. Please provide details on any courses listed on your transcript, including those you may have withdrawn from or for which you received an incomplete. This form should match your institution's record, exactly. If you have not received a grade yet, please enter N/A.



**Note:** Failure to provide unofficial transcripts may result in the disqualification of your application. Please note that the CLS Program will verify official transcripts after selection. Falsified unofficial transcripts will be grounds for disqualification.

## Section 7: Previous Academic Information

If you have attended another college or university in the past five years, please provide this information in your online application. You may add as many additional entries as needed. Upload a copy of your unofficial transcript for each institution attended.

## Section 8: Previous Programs, Honors, and Fellowships

Indicate any fellowships or academic honors that you have received, including previous CLS Program or other U.S. Government funded awards.

- 1) Previous CLS Participation:** If you have been offered or received a CLS award in the past, you will be asked to supply additional information about your goals for participating on the program a second time, or about why you were unable to complete the program previously.
- 2) U.S. Government Awards:** Indicate other U.S. Government-funded programs in which you have previously participated.
- 3) Honors and Fellowships:** Indicate up to three other fellowships or other academic honors that you have received.
- 4) Activities and Employment:** Provide information on up to five jobs, internships, or activities. that are directly relevant to your language study, academic program, or your eventual professional career.

## Section 9: Language Choice

- 1) CLS Target Language:** Select the language you are applying to study and the level at which you plan to study. Please review which [levels are offered for the CLS language you want to study](#).

The language that you select may be referred to as the target language throughout the online application.

Choose your level based on how many years of target language study you will have completed **by June 2025**:

- No target language study, or less than one academic year of study: Beginning
- At least one academic year of target language study: Advanced Beginning
- At least two academic years of target language study: Intermediate
- At least three academic years of target language study: Advanced

For example, if you are currently in your first semester of Arabic study, and plan to continue next semester, you will have completed one year of target language study by June 2025, and should apply for the advanced beginning level.

Applicants must choose one language only. Multiple applications by one applicant will result in disqualification from the CLS selection process.

### Section 10: Language Study and Travel

#### **a) (Post-Secondary) Language Experience with your CLS Target**

**Language:** Indicate if you have taken classes in your CLS target language; studied or have other experienced in your CLS target language, have not taken formal classes; or have never taken classes in your CLS target language nor do you have any other experience in your CLS target language.

Depending on your selection, you may be asked additional questions related to:

- Post-Secondary Language Course Experience with your CLS Target Language
- Other Language Experience with your CLS Target Language
- Target Language Travel
- Other Language Experience
- Other International Travel Related to Work or Study

### Sections 11: Essays

There are four essay questions on the application form. The essays are to encourage reflection and self-discovery and allow the reviewer to connect with your story and understand your motivations. Using AI to generate content for your essays can interfere with this process and make it harder for a reviewer to evaluate your fit for the program. Instead, we recommend you review the information on the

CLS website related to your language and watch [the relevant video](#) providing guidance on writing effective application essays before you start your essays.

Your response to each essay question should follow the guidelines for each question regarding the number of maximum words:

1. Citizen Diplomacy and Mutual Understanding (300 words maximum)
2. Preparation for the CLS Program (300 words maximum)
3. Commitment to Language Study (300 words maximum)
4. Personal Statement (500 words maximum)

Essay responses may be written using a word processing program, then copied and pasted into the online application. Essays exceeding the word limit will not be considered for the scholarship. Please note that the word-count software used by the online application may differ from the software used by your word processing program. Be sure to leave yourself time to edit and reduce your word count, if necessary.

Before you begin your essays, it is strongly recommended that you read the information on the CLS website pertaining to your language and watch the video providing guidance for writing effective application essays for the CLS Program at <https://clscholarship.org/apply>. Applicants are encouraged to have an academic advisor, peer reviewer, or writing tutor review their essay responses before submitting an application to the CLS Program.

If you have previously participated in the CLS Program, you may not reuse the same essay responses from your previous application(s). If you applied previously but were not selected, you may reuse material from your previous application(s) if you wish.

Save your work frequently to avoid accidental data loss!

### Section 12: Statistical Information

All questions in this section are optional. If you choose to complete the questions in this section, the information will **not** be shared with application reviewers and will not affect your eligibility for the award, or have an impact on the evaluation or selection process.

Information in this section is used when reporting on the equity of the CLS Program's recruitment and selection process and may be used in aggregate for the production of external reports or public presentations.

The U.S. Department of State and American Councils welcome all eligible applications and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

### Section 13: Review and Submit

If any mandatory fields are missing, you must complete them before the application can be submitted. Not all questions are required.

Before you submit your application, please be sure to review all sections. Make sure you have answered all the questions and required fields, uploaded all the required documents, and that you are satisfied with your responses.

Once you submit your application, you will no longer be able to make changes to any section of the application. You will be able, however, to continue to view your application online via this system with your existing login.

If you are not ready to submit your application, please press Save and log out of the system. You will be able to log-in at any time, thereafter, until the application deadline, and continue to complete or edit your application.

Before submitting your application, you will be asked to type your name as an electronic signature certifying that the material you entered into the online application is true and that you understand and agree to the terms of the application.

**Please note:** The CLS Program Application is not submitted until you press the Submit Your Application button and you receive an email confirmation. If you have not filled out necessary or required information in the application and attempt to submit your application, you will remain in the Review and Submit section and will be able to see which sections are incomplete in the section navigation box on the left-hand side of the application; incomplete sections requiring additional information will be noted, in red text, with an asterisk. You must return to these sections, fix any errors or omissions, and submit your

application again before it may be considered complete. You will receive an automated email confirming the submission of your application.

For assistance with the online application, or questions about the CLS Program, please contact us at [cls@americancouncils.org](mailto:cls@americancouncils.org), or by phone at 1-877-257-9922.

**Do not wait until the due date to submit your application.** Submitting your application before the due date allows time to resolve any technical difficulties or last-minute questions.

The CLS Program strongly encourages you to submit your application well in advance of the application deadline. **The CLS Program and American Councils for International Education bear no responsibility for data transmission problems in submitting the application.**

# Detailed Instructions for the CLS Spark Application

## Section 0: Pre-Application Form

The pre-application form consists of the American Councils for International Education (American Councils) Privacy Notice and Consent and the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program's Campus Advisors' Acknowledgement and Consent Form, which includes fields where you indicate your program choice for the CLS Program and your academic institution. You must agree to these before you begin work on the full application.

## Section 1: Program Overview and Requirements

The program overview describes the basic information about and the eligibility requirements for CLS Spark.

## Section 2: Application Instructions

The application instructions cover technical aspects of using the application system.

## Section 3: Eligibility

Please complete the questions regarding your eligibility for the 2025 CLS Spark virtual initiative.

Please read the prompts carefully. An answer of "No" to questions asked on this page does not necessarily indicate that you are ineligible for CLS Spark. Complete eligibility information is available at <https://clscholarship.org/applicants/eligibility>. A list of frequently asked questions is provided on the CLS website at <https://clscholarship.org/applicants/frequently-asked-questions>.

**1) Citizenship:** Only U.S. citizens and nationals are eligible for CLS Spark. Naturalized citizens must have U.S. citizenship by the CLS application deadline of November 19, 2024. Permanent residents and green card holders are not eligible to apply.

**2) Age:** You must be 18 years of age by May 15, 2025 in order to be eligible for the 2025 CLS Spark virtual initiative.

**3-4) Enrollment:** Please answer questions about your enrollment status. If you are unsure, please refer to your college or university's office of the registrar. If you are not currently enrolled, please describe your educational status in the space provided in 3a. If you are not taking at least one class for credit, please complete 4a, 4b, and 4c.

Please note that students on a leave of absence are not considered eligible for the CLS Program, with limited exceptions made for students who have withdrawn from their academic program in order to pursue an organized semester- or year-long study abroad, a national fellowship or scholarship program, or substantive internship program, who intend to re-enroll following its completion.

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**5) Accreditation:** Applicants must be students at Higher Education Institutions based in the United States that are accredited by a Department of Education recognized accreditation agency. Students at colleges and universities based in a country other than the United States and its territories are not eligible to apply. Students at colleges and universities located outside the United States and its territories, that are nevertheless incorporated and based in the United States are eligible to apply, as long as they meet all other eligibility requirements.

Please answer questions about the accreditation status of your university. Students at institutions with suspended accreditation are not eligible to apply. If you are unsure, please refer to your college or university's office of the registrar.

**6) Institution:** For students enrolled in dual-degree programs in which they take some courses at a U.S. institution and some courses at an international institution, students who can produce a transcript from the U.S. institution will be considered eligible. Students earning degrees at foreign institutions that are not based in the U.S. or its territories are not eligible, even if those institutions are accredited by a recognized U.S. accrediting agency.

**7) College-Level Study:** Applicants at the undergraduate level must complete at least one full year of college-level study before participating in CLS Spark. You should indicate whether you will fulfill that requirement by the start of the program in June 2025. Note that part-time students still qualify.

**8) Only One Application:** Applicants may only submit one application for the CLS Program each year. If it is determined that an applicant has submitted multiple applications in the same application year, they will be determined to be ineligible to participate in the CLS Program. If you submitted an application in error and need help deleting it, please contact our staff at [cls@americancouncils.org](mailto:cls@americancouncils.org).

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**10) Veteran Status:** All other factors being equal, the CLS Program gives preference to veterans of the U.S. armed forces. Note that active-duty members of the military do not qualify for a veteran's preference in this case. If you are a veteran, you must provide a copy of your DD214 or NGB-22 form to prove your status, or you may decline to receive this preference. You should redact your social security number on the form before submitting it.

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#### Section 4: Biographical Information

**1-3) Name:** Enter your name as it appears on your government-issued ID documents, such as your passport or driver's license.

Your name as entered will be used on all official CLS Program communications, so please use appropriate capitalization.

**4) Gender:** Although applicants are not required to disclose their gender identity on the application, responses to this question are used when reporting on the equity of the CLS Program's recruitment and selection process.

**5-6) Date and Place of Birth:** Enter your date of birth and the country, city, and state/province/region.



**7) Permanent Residential Address:** Please enter your permanent residential address, at which you are eligible to registered to vote. The CLS Program reports to members of Congress when constituents from their states or districts receive a CLS award. Your address should fall within the congressional district you indicate.

**8) Congressional Voting District:** Enter the state code and district number of your congressional voting district. This should be the district where you are registered to vote or plan to vote in the next election. This information can be found on your voter registration card or by searching for your address at <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>.

Select At Large for states with only one Congressional representative. Those states are: Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming. Enter At Large also for the District of Columbia and U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands).

**9-13) Current Contact Information:** Please provide the primary telephone number at which you can be reached through October 2025. If you are providing an overseas, non-U.S. number, please indicate the country code, preceded by a 'plus' sign ('+'). Also indicate an alternate phone number. The CLS Program will use this number to reach you only in cases where we cannot reach you using your primary email address or phone number and there is time-sensitive information that we need to communicate, such as a program deadline. Consider entering the contact information for a close friend or family member.

Enter the email address at which you would like CLS Spark staff to contact you. All official CLS Program communications will be directed to the indicated e-mail address so you should indicate an address that will remain valid through October 2025. You must also enter an alternate email address. We strongly recommend you not to use university email addresses as your primary form of communication, as you may not have access to this email address after the current academic year.

If you are selected to participate in the program, we will contact you using the information that you enter here, so please provide contact information that you will be available at through October 2025. If you are selected, you will have an opportunity to update your contact information at that time.

## Section 5: Current Academic Information

**1-5) Current College or University:** Choose the name of your current college or university and provide information on your current enrollment, including your start date, expected graduation date, and the type of degree you are pursuing.

Please note that the data in the CLS application reflects information derived from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which is updated on an annual basis. If your college or university is an accredited U.S.-based institution but not listed as an option, please contact us at [cls@americancouncils.org](mailto:cls@americancouncils.org) and we will happily add it as an option.

You may optionally indicate the specific campus or division of your school that you attend. Note that this field should not be used in the place of your college or university name, which is required to submit your application.

If you are attending two institutions of higher education concurrently, or you are enrolled in a dual-degree program with two institutions, then please choose one to indicate here, which we will identify you as a student of during and after the program and indicate the other as a previous institution in the Previous Academic Information section. If one institution is not an eligible institution (for instance, if it is based outside the United States), then indicate the eligible institution in this section and the second institution in the Previous Academic Information section.

**6-7) Current or Anticipated Academic Major(s):** First, indicate the name of your degree program at your university-this is the name of the degree that you are working towards and anticipate graduating with. Then, select your major(s)/field(s) of study from the provided list. You may not be able to find the exact name of your major or minor in the drop-down menu on the application. Please select one or more options that are as close to your degree as possible. The field of study list is derived from the [Classification of Instruction Programs](#), developed and maintained by the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.

**8-9) Terms Completed:** If you are not a first-semester student, you will be asked to provide additional information about your school's term structure and your previous academic performance. Please indicate the number of terms you have completed (whether semesters, quarters or other), not including the current term.

**9b) GPA:** Enter your GPA at your current institution, if applicable. Please round your GPA to the nearest tenth (e.g. 3.4). If you do not have a GPA, enter N/A in this field. Do not enter your high school GPA or your GPA at a previous institution.

**10-12) Spring 2025 Enrollment:** Please answer the questions about your enrollment status in Spring 2025 (Spring semester or Spring quarter).

**13) Anticipated Spring 2025 Courses:** Please list all courses that you intend to enroll in for the Spring 2025 semester or the Winter and Spring 2025 quarters.

**14) Fall 2025 Enrollment:** If you're planning on being enrolled in the Fall 2025 term, please indicate 'Yes' here, along with the approximate start date for the term.

## Section 6: Transcript and Grades

**1-2)** Provide a copy of your unofficial transcript for your current college/university. Please ensure that your unofficial transcript includes the courses that you are currently enrolled in for the Fall 2024 semester, as well as all previously completed courses. There are two methods to choose from to provide your unofficial transcript record with your online application:

- **Option 1:** Scan and upload a copy of your transcript or grade list to the online application. The maximum allowable file size is 5MB. If your transcript file is larger than this, the file size must be reduced before uploading it. Do not upload a digitally signed or password protected e-transcript PDF. Most e-transcripts produced by universities are digitally signed and cannot be submitted with this tool. As a workaround, you may print your e-transcript and then upload a scanned copy of the printed transcript.

**Note:** Some transcripts include the Social Security Number students. If your transcript contains your social security number, please remove this information before uploading it.

- **Option 2:** Alternatively, you may enter your courses and grades manually by completing a form. Using your online grade report or transcript, please enter information on all courses you have taken. Please provide details on any courses listed on your transcript, including those you may have withdrawn from or for which you received an incomplete. This form should match your institution's record, exactly. If you have not received a grade yet, please enter N/A.

**Note:** Failure to provide unofficial transcripts may result in the disqualification of your application. Please note that CLS Spark will verify official transcripts after selection. Falsified unofficial transcripts will be grounds for disqualification.

## Section 7: Previous Academic Information

If you have attended another college or university in the past five years, please provide this information in your online application. You may add as many additional entries as needed. Upload a copy of your unofficial transcript for each institution attended.

## Section 8: Previous Programs, Honors, and Fellowships

Indicate any fellowships or academic honors that you have received, including previous CLS Program or other U.S. Government funded awards.

- 1) Previous CLS Participation:** If you have been offered or received a CLS award in the past, you will be asked why you were unable to complete the program previously.
- 2) U.S. Government Awards:** Indicate other U.S. Government-funded programs in which you have previously participated.
- 3) Other Honors and Fellowships:** Indicate up to three other fellowships or other academic honors that you have received.
- 4) Activities and Employment:** Provide information on up to five jobs, internships, or activities. that are directly relevant to your language study, academic program, or your eventual professional career.

## Section 9: Language Choice

**1) CLS Target Language:** Select the language you are applying to study and the level at which you plan to study. Please review which [levels are offered for the CLS language you want to study](#).

The language that you select may be referred to as the **target language** throughout the online application.

Choose your level based on how many years of target language study you will have completed **by June 2025**:

- No target language study, or less than one academic year of study: Beginning
- At least one academic year of target language study: Advanced Beginning

## Section 10: Language Study and Travel

### **a) (Post-Secondary) Language Experience with your CLS Target**

**Language:** Depending on your CLS Target language, you may be asked if you have taken classes in your CLS target language; studied or have other experienced in your CLS target language, have not taken formal classes; or have never taken classes in your CLS target language nor do you have any other experience in your CLS target language.

Depending on your selection, you may be subsequently asked additional questions related to:

- Post-Secondary Language Course Experience with your CLS Target Language
- Other Language Experience with your CLS Target Language
- Target Language Travel
- Other Language Experience
- Other International Travel Related to Work or Study

### **Sections 11: Essays**

There are three essay questions on the application form. The essays are to encourage reflection and self-discovery and allow the reviewer to connect with your story and understand your motivations. Using AI to generate content for your essays can interfere with this process and make it harder for a reviewer to evaluate your fit for the program. Instead, we recommend you review the information on the CLS website related to your language and watch [the relevant video](#) providing guidance on writing effective application essays before you start your essays.

Your response to each essay question should follow the guidelines for each question regarding the number of maximum words:

1. Motivation and Commitment (350 words maximum)
2. Access to Language Learning Opportunities (300 words maximum)
3. Statement of Experience (300 words maximum)

Essay responses may be written using a word processing program, then copied and pasted into the online application. Essays exceeding the word limit will not be considered for the scholarship. Please note that the word-count software used by the online application may differ from the software used by your word processing program. Be sure to leave yourself time to edit and reduce your word count, if necessary.

Before you begin your essays, it is strongly recommended that you read the information on the CLS website pertaining to your language and watch the video providing guidance for writing effective application essays for CLS Spark at <https://clscholarship.org/apply>. Applicants are encouraged to have an academic advisor, peer reviewer, or writing tutor review their essay responses before submitting an application to CLS Spark.

If you applied previously to CLS Spark but were not selected, you may reuse material from your previous application(s) if you wish.

Save your work frequently to avoid accidental data loss!

### Section 12: Statistical Information

All questions in this section are optional. If you choose to complete the questions in this section, the information will **not** be shared with application reviewers and will not affect your eligibility for the award, or have an impact on the evaluation or selection process.

Information in this section is used when reporting on the equity of CLS Spark's recruitment and selection process and may be used in aggregate for the production of external reports or public presentations.

The U.S. Department of State and American Councils welcome all eligible applications and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

### Section 13: Review and Submit

If any mandatory fields are missing, you must complete them before the application can be submitted. Not all questions are required.

Before you submit your application, please be sure to review all sections. Make sure you have answered all the questions and required fields, uploaded all the required documents, and that you are satisfied with your responses.

Once you submit your application, you will no longer be able to make changes to any section of the application. You will be able, however, to continue to view your application online via this system with your existing login.

If you are not ready to submit your application, please press Save and log out of the system. You will be able to log-in at any time, thereafter, until the application deadline, and continue to complete or edit your application.

Before submitting your application, you will be asked to type your name as an electronic signature certifying that the material you entered into the online application is true and that you understand and agree to the terms of the application.

**Please note:** The CLS Spark Application is not submitted until you press the Submit Your Application button and you receive an email confirmation. If you have not filled out necessary or required information in the application and attempt to submit your application, you will remain in the 'Review and Submit' section and will be able to see which sections are incomplete in the section navigation box on the left-hand side of the application; incomplete sections requiring additional information will be noted, in red text, with an asterisk. You must return to these sections, fix any errors or omissions, and submit your application again before it may be considered complete. You will receive an automated email confirming the submission of your application.

For assistance with the online application, or questions about CLS Spark, please contact us at [cls@americancouncils.org](mailto:cls@americancouncils.org), or by phone at 1-877-257-9922.

**Do not wait until the due date to submit your application.** Submitting your application before the due date allows time to resolve any technical difficulties or last-minute questions.

The CLS Program strongly encourages you to submit your application well in advance of the application deadline. **The CLS Program and American Councils for International Education bear no responsibility for data transmission problems in submitting the application.**