

Intensive Swahili in Zanzibar, Global Education Oregon

Undergraduate Language Grant (ULG) | Submitted by a Junior in Medill

*This cover page is meant to focus your reading of the sample proposal, summarizing important aspects of proposal writing that the author did well or could have improved. **Review the following sections before reading the sample.** The proposal is also annotated throughout to highlight key elements of the proposal’s structure and content.*

 Proposal Strengths	Areas for Improvement 
Student shows a clear path of what they have accomplished and what they still need to do in order to be successful in their long term goal. This path requires Swahili proficiency.	Student didn’t give insight into goal of working for The Foundation for Tomorrow in the opening paragraph; as written, paragraph only introduces student goal of working as a foreign correspondent.
Student highlights how their limited Swahili proficiency has already limited their progress; in previous work they had to conduct interviews with help of translator.	Student could have flushed out information on what Medill courses they have taken (or planned to take) which will prepare them to be a foreign correspondent.
Student demonstrates time limitations to show that without a ULG, they will not be able to complete their Weinberg concentration and graduate on time.	
Student makes clear argument for why this language program is the best fit. Rationale includes length/intensity, recommendation from professor, and instructors are native speakers.	

 Other Key Features to Take Note Of
Student area of interest was on a less commonly studied language which did not have advanced coursework options at Northwestern. Student made a compelling argument out of necessity.

First paragraph functions like abstract.
Overview of 3 main arguments

Defines program, language, and one of their career goals

I plan to use the Undergraduate Language Grant to fund my studies at the University of Oregon’s study abroad program, Intensive Swahili in Zanzibar, this coming summer. The grant will allow me to immerse myself in Swahili life in Stone Town, where the Swahili language originates, and where the purist form of Swahili is still spoken today. I am currently a junior in Medill with Swahili as my WCAS concentration, and I am in the process of becoming an African Studies minor. The intensive program at the State University of Zanzibar is one that aligns with both my academic progress at Northwestern, as well as my future career goals. Studying Swahili abroad this summer is essential for me to completed my undergraduate credits and reach my goal of becoming a news correspondent in East Africa.

Prior work towards goal

Compelling argument in lack of available ways to gain this language proficiency at Northwestern

Over the past 10 years, I have spent a significant amount of time in Tanzania, where I work with The Foundation For Tomorrow (TFFT), an NGO that provides scholarships to orphaned and vulnerable children. My work with TFFT introduced me to the Swahili language and has allowed me to work closely with Swahili speaking students and adults. I have developed a strong conversational base through this work and an increased passion and necessity for learning the language. Last summer, I spent three weeks at an intensive Swahili school in Tanzania, where I completed an intermediate level course. I am now at the advanced Swahili level, which is not offered at Northwestern. Having completed just four quarters of Swahili, I am no longer enrolled in classes because I have exceeded the intermediate level, and an independent study was not possible. Therefore, the best way for me to build on my Swahili and complete my undergraduate credits is to study abroad this summer.

Defines goal (and why)

Discusses one future goal (building on prior work) while pointing out how language proficiency was limiting work towards goals

Looking past graduation and the credits necessary to get there, I am confident that my career will take me to East Africa. My goal is to work for The Foundation For Tomorrow when I leave Northwestern TFFT supports its students until they graduate secondary school. Upon graduation, scholars lose the funding and support from TFFT. I have watched our scholars excel in secondary school and struggle when they cannot find the funds necessary to attend college or the resources necessary to find meaningful and well-paid work. My dream is to bridge this gap for these students. I want to create and lead a program for TFFT graduates that will provide guidance and scholarships to help them continue their education, find jobs, and reach their fullest potential. These students speak limited English, so I need to speak Swahili in order to better connect with them and understand their needs. I will collaborate with local businesses, trade colleges, and universities to create partners and graduate schemes. This work would require a great deal of communication with native speakers. As a foreigner in East Africa, speaking the language is always appreciated and met with great respect. This Swahili course would allow me to confidently and effectively communicate with Tanzanians to make my vision come to life. Although I have learned to speak Swahili in some capacity, my writing and reading abilities are limited. If I want to work as a professional in Tanzania, I must master these skills, which require further formal education. In order to fulfil my dream it is necessary to speak the language of the people with whom I hope to work.

Discusses secondary goal, also requires language proficiency

Apart from working for TFFT, I intend to be a news correspondent in East Africa. When I move to Tanzania to work with TFFT, I also hope to report on the area and draw from my education in Journalism and African studies. This past summer, I conducted interviews with each of the TFFT scholars about how education has shaped their lives. I had to bring a translator with me to each of the interviews, which truly hindered my ability to gain trust with the students. It affected the quality of my interviews and my understanding of what each student wanted to say. This experience revealed to me the importance of speaking the language of the region in which I

Argument #1:
Why is language of study essential for your future goals?

Could have detailed Medill coursework that prepped for this job

Argument of necessity – coursework not otherwise offered at Northwestern

report as a journalist. Attaining a higher level of proficiency in Swahili would make me an ideal candidate for news agencies and would improve the quality of my journalistic work. It would break the barrier that reporters face abroad by allowing me to speak directly to local communities about the issues I cover. This course would elevate me to a level of Swahili more fit for a career that is based on interviewing and writing. Proficiency in Swahili is the missing link in my equation of becoming a journalist in East Africa.

Current work towards goal

This coming summer is the most ideal time for me to complete this study abroad program because it is the summer before my senior year. It is not only my final opportunity to apply for a grant from Northwestern, but it is also my final chance to attend a study abroad program. It will give me the opportunity to complete the Swahili credits I started, which is not possible at Northwestern. For Medill, I chose Swahili to be my Weinberg concentration. I have fulfilled four of the six credits required. Through this intensive Swahili course, I will complete my remaining Swahili credits and stay on track to graduate in Spring 2018. This course will give me a full year of credit for Swahili, which will not only complete my Swahili requirement, but will fulfill one of my elective credits, too. I transferred into Medill as a junior, so the extra credit will give me flexibility with my heavy course load. The course also will provide me one credit from the cultural classes I will take, which will help me complete my African studies minor. This is also the best time to do this course because I will be applying for jobs next year in East Africa and having completed this highly esteemed Swahili course will truly boost my resume. TFFT will be more interested in hiring me to run a new program, and CNN will be more likely to hire me to cover a local election.

Argument #2: Why THIS summer, and why not during academic year?

Makes for clear argument for program selection while demonstrating how program satisfies minimum ULG requirements

This specific language program comes recommended to me by past students and Professor Wairungu, my Swahili professor. The professor who will lead the course from the University of Oregon is a colleague of Professor Wairungu, who has spoken very highly of him. It is a two month long course with 160 hours of class time. It is the longest and most intensive language course I could find available to me. I will study in a classroom for four hours a day, five days a week for two months. Apart from classroom time, we will take immersion excursions to use our Swahili in different contexts. All instructors are native speakers, which was extremely important to me when searching for a Swahili program. Small class sizes will help me hone my speaking abilities by providing ample conversation time. The curriculum stresses writing and reading skills for advanced speakers, which is ideal for my endeavors to become a journalist and work with Swahili speaking students. Because Oregon offers advanced levels of Swahili, I will have the opportunity to study with fourth year Swahili students. Grammar classes will help me improve my writing skills, which is extremely important for a future journalist who will write in the language. I will get the exposure I would not be able to receive studying in the US because of the option of a home stay, the fact that Swahili originated in the region, and the immersive qualities of the school that are unmatched by the very few other Swahili courses available. It is well known as the best Swahili course in East Africa, and it would be a privilege to get to study in the heart of Swahili life. I am dedicated to learning this language and reaching my career and academic goals through the study of this language. The ULG grant would allow me to take on this challenge. My commitment to Swahili is unwavering, and I am eager to continue my study of the language.

Argument #3: Why this program (and city/country, if relevant)?

<u>Budget Considerations</u>	
Airfare:	(average the price of typical flights, and account for the fact that you will not be able to buy tickets for a few months until your grant is accepted)
Tuition:	(you may need to convert tuition costs into USD)
Local Travel:	(travel from international airport to language program site; commuting to language program, etc)
Housing:	(may be included within program costs, or you may be expected to figure this out yourself)
Meals:	(estimate reasonable amount per day, multiplied by length of program – may need to subtract out meals provided by program)
Health Insurance & Vaccines:	(Northwestern’s Office of Global Safety & Security requires you have travel insurance – check out their website and look into the travel health section. It includes information on recommended immunizations and insurance)
Visas	(Visas may or may not be required, pending the length of trip and host country)
Total Expenses	Add up the above expenses
Potential Other Funding Sources	Examples include: Critical Language Scholarship, Boren Award for International Study, Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS), Gilman Scholarship, Buffett Supplemental Grant
ULG Requested Amount	(Max request \$5,000 or up to 75% of the combined expenses above)