

## **CLAS Student Commencement Speaker Competition**

Purpose: To promote Eastern's commitment to strengthening the academic and personal experience for our students and to showcase examples of exemplary writing and speaking, Eastern Illinois University has initiated the Student Commencement Speaker Series. This program replaces the former student and faculty speaker traditions at Eastern.

Representing the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, a student speaker will be featured during the Spring 2021 ceremony on Saturday, May 8, 2021.

### **Commencement Speaker eligibility requirements:**

- Graduation Criteria: Students eligible for consideration must provide evidence from the degree audit that they will meet the requirements for graduation in the commencement ceremony they seek to represent. Student commencement speakers are expected to speak at their commencement ceremony.
- Scholarship Criteria: Students eligible for consideration must have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher for courses completed at Eastern Illinois University at the time that they submit materials for consideration.
- A selection committee comprised of faculty will select potential essays for oral presentation to be given in front of the committee. A final decision will be made based on the quality of the written essay, as well as the quality of the oral presentation. Rubrics are available on the CLAS website. [https://www.eiu.edu/clas/student\\_awards.php](https://www.eiu.edu/clas/student_awards.php)

### **Submission Materials:**

- Student Role: To compete for the position, students must electronically submit a written essay by 4:30 pm on Monday, February 15, 2021. Please include the name and email address of your faculty mentor. Contact Kim Turner ([kturner@eiu.edu](mailto:kturner@eiu.edu) or 217-581-3328) in the CLAS Dean's Office if you have any questions. **Please note:** If you are a graduate student, please visit the Graduate School website for graduate student commencement speaker competition guidelines and deadline.
- Faculty Role: Students seeking to submit essays will identify a faculty mentor to assist with the project. Mentors may include course instructors, advisors, or any member of the faculty who will provide guidance and support appropriate to writing an effective essay. Faculty who serve in mentor roles will introduce the Student Commencement Speaker at the commencement ceremony. Mentors should submit an endorsement letter by February 15, 2021 as well. They will receive an email with submission directions once the student submits their essay.

### **Essay Guidelines:**

2021 Essay Theme: **Reflect on your experiences at EIU in a way that will inspire or enlighten the graduating class of 2021.**

- Essay Length: Essays are limited to 3 pages.
- Essay Format: Essays are submitted electronically. The first page should include the essay title, author name, and degree program. The essay author should use a standard 12 point font, standard one-inch margins, and double spacing.

### **Speaker Recognition:**

- Publication: The Speaker and Alternate Speaker essays will be published electronically on the Student Commencement Speaker web site.
- Commencement Recognition: The faculty mentor will have the honor of introducing the Speaker and Alternate Speaker. Both the Speaker and Alternate Speaker will be recognized at the conclusion of the speech by the Provost and will receive a plaque in recognition of the honor.