Essay Prompt
MNU’s motto is a “Pioneering Spirit, Passion to Serve, and a Purposeful Life.” These attributes are at the heart of the university and drive our general education, student life activities, and program offerings. MNU invests in its students by building skill and understanding in these areas for the purpose of changing the world. For this Pioneer Scholarship Challenge, share with the review team how you represent a pioneering spirit, passion to serve, and purposeful life. To aid you in this process, address the following themes in your essay:

1. how your life and work thus far demonstrate your pioneering spirit;
2. how your passion to serve manifests itself in your life; and
3. how your spirit and passion shape your life as one with great purpose.

Essay Guidelines
Essays should include a title page with your contact information and be no more than two pages in length. APA guidelines should be followed. Submissions should be uploaded at http://www.mnu.edu/scholarship-challenge by January 11, 2016 at 11:59 pm.
Assessing Submissions
The MNU admissions team will remove the title page from essays and code the narrative to match the title page, thus keeping essays anonymous. A review team comprised of three MNU professors/deans will review all submissions. The rubric below will be used to assess each essay. Feedback will be given to students at the conclusion of the Scholarship Challenge weekend.

Rubric
CBASE Essay Rubric

Score of 6: Essays assigned a “6” will be excellent in nearly all respects, although the circumstances under which the essays were written allow for some imperfections. The “6” essay should employ a sound organizational strategy with clearly developed paragraphs proceeding from a sharply focused and clearly identifiable main idea or thesis. Assertions should be sufficiently developed and directed to engage the specified audience and should be supported through appropriate examples, details, and/or other fully integrated rhetorical techniques (e.g., analogy, narration). Again, considering the writing situation, there should be few, if any, distracting grammatical and mechanical errors.

Score of 5: Essays assigned a “5” will be good, but not excellent, in almost all respects. Specifically, look for a thesis or main idea that is clearly discernible and for sophisticated reasoning and/or support, going well beyond the information provided by the prompt. The writer will engage the opposition, beyond a passing reference, and may even redefine the problem while not evading it. A “5” may be marred by some stylistic and/or organizational problems, or it may be well-organized and fairly sophisticated at the sentence level but fail to use or fully integrate a variety of rhetorical devices. There should be few distracting grammatical and mechanical errors.

Score of 4: Essays assigned a “4” will present a competent thesis and adequate organization and will acknowledge the opposition, even if that acknowledgment takes the form of an indictment. A “4” may rely heavily on the prompt for ideas but supply sophisticated examples, or it may present ideas beyond the prompt but offer scant or predictable support. An essay, which shows some insights but fails to unite them may also receive a “4.” Generally, a “4” may contain a few
distracting grammatical and mechanical errors, although essays appreciably damaged by major errors should not receive a “4.”

Score of 3: Essays assigned a “3” will contain some virtues, although they may contain an unengaging or poorly focused main idea or thesis or be marred by inadequate development. A “3” might, for example, express some ideas that reflect a thoughtful consideration of the problem, but at the same time be obscured by unclear or “incorrect” writing. On the other hand, it might represent clear and competent writing but convey superficial ideas, or ideas which fail to account for information provided in the prompt. A “3” may be primarily a list of responses to the prompt, but with some development of the listed ideas, or it may show an organizational strategy which goes beyond listing, but offers support only in list form. As an argumentative essay, it may exhibit specious or circular reasoning or lack the coherence necessary to foster a complete understanding of the writer’s meaning. A number of major and distracting grammatical and mechanical errors may place an otherwise thoughtful and well-written essay in this category.

Score of 2: Essays assigned a “2” are weak because they are poorly written throughout (with consistent errors in grammar or mechanics), or because they fail to support major points, or because they are exceedingly superficial. A “2” may be flawed by a lack of unity or discernible organizational pattern, or it may rely upon a clearly organized list with little or no development or simple development which presents personal examples as proof.

Score of 1: Essays assigned a “1” will be clearly unacceptable as college-level writing or will demonstrate an only momentary engagement with the topic, concentrating instead upon some tangential concern(s). A “1” will be riddled with major grammatical and mechanical errors and/or will consist of a collection of random thoughts or undeveloped ideas. In short, essays that appear to have been written in careless haste or without effort should receive a “1.”

Score of 0: Essays that for any reason cannot be read should be assigned this score.