

The Douglas B. Rogers  
Conditions of a Free Society Essay Competition

The Center for Political and Economic Thought at Saint Vincent College is proud to announce the Fifth Annual Douglas B. Rogers Essay Competition.

Honoring the memory of Doug Rogers, a young scholar of great promise who died tragically in 2011, the competition is meant to encourage undergraduate students to join the Center in discussing themes of Western Civilization such as individual freedom, limited constitutional government, free market economics, and the philosophical and moral foundations of America and the West.

This year students are asked to write an essay on a theme or themes that emerge from President Thomas Jefferson's August 13, 1800 letter to Gideon Granger of Connecticut, which is excerpted below. While knowledge of the historical context may be useful in responding to this essay, we are particularly interested in an analytical reflection on the principles at stake in this letter. Some creativity in responding is encouraged. Does the letter, for example, reveal any tensions in Jefferson's political thought that might be reflected in the American polity as a whole?

The competition is open to all full-time undergraduate students currently registered in any field of study at a college or university in the United States or Canada. The Center will appoint a committee of judges to select the winning essays. Prizes will not be awarded if, in the exclusive opinion of the judges, submitted essays are of insufficient quality. Essays that are, in the exclusive opinion of the judges, of publishable quality will, with the consent of the author, be eligible for publication in the Center's journal, *Citizens and Statesmen: An Annual Review of Political Theory and Public Life*. The first place winner will receive \$2,000 and an invitation to attend an awards dinner and lecture to be held at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania on March 15, 2017. Second and third place winners will receive invitations to said awards dinner and \$1,000 and \$500 respectively. Winners choosing to attend the awards dinner will be responsible for their own travel. Prior to the awarding of cash prizes, winners will be required to verify their eligibility and to attest to the fact that the winning essay is wholly their own. Any amount of plagiarism will result in disqualification.

Essays should be a minimum of 2,500 words. There is no maximum length. Submissions should be sent in Microsoft Word format to [marybeth.mcconahey@email.stvincent.edu](mailto:marybeth.mcconahey@email.stvincent.edu) by January 12, 2017. Winners will be notified in February.