

Personal Statement & Essay Writing Workshop Notes

Admission reps are looking for reasons to admit you, not deny you

Your essay is your voice; it is how the admin reps get to know who you are

Use an essay hook so the reps want to read more (Smaller schools read 20-30 essays a day; larger schools 50-70 a day)

Be authentic - the essay is the first thing the school knows about you

Looking to stand out in your essay? Write something that is exciting. If you are bored writing your essay, then the rep will be bored reading it. This is not the time to take on a new writing voice- i.e. If you have never written something funny before, now is not the time to start.

Things to think about:

Who are you? What do you value? What is exciting to you?

Know your audience. Rep might disagree with you- so if you can't discuss the topic in -person, don't write about it. If you do write about something controversial, make sure you provide perspective from the other side.

General three-part rule when writing an essay:

1. Tell a story/tell about the experience
2. How did that experience change you?
3. How will it influence you going forward?

Common Pitfalls of essays:

Not time to start trying to be funny. Unless you are the funny one

Don't take for granted that some admin reps are older - don't use lol, nm, etc.

Make sure you have someone edit your essay. Ask someone to read for the tone of your essay- make sure it comes across how you want it to.

Personal Statement

Usually about 500 words. Tell admissions who you are - this takes self-reflection

8-10 things you want colleges to know about you

Looking for more of the "I" response

Are you still stuck? Think about these things:

If we went to lunch, what would we talk about?

What is important to you?

Where are you going?

What are your dreams?