

Essay Writing Tips

- 1) Purpose of Essay
 - a. Allows colleges to see your writing ability
 - b. Allows colleges to learn more about you in a way not conveyed in other parts of the application
 - c. Allows you to tell a unique part of your personal story; humanizes the application process
 - d. Note: not all colleges require essays
- 2) Choosing which essay to write...
 - a. Check each institution's website for essay suggestions/requirements
 - i. Admissions, Honors, and Scholarship pages
 - b. If you have options, decide which prompt will give you the best opportunity to get across what the application reader should know about you
 - c. Write essay that may serve multiple functions (use in outside scholarships, etc)
- 3) Before you begin...
 - a. Read each prompt/short essay carefully
 - b. Write down at least 5 things you want an application reader to know about you from your application
 - c. Brainstorm a topic that might help you illustrate some of these in your essay
 - d. Don't write for perfection in first attempt
- 4) General Essay Tips...
 - a. 650 – 750 words max
 - b. Essay should be about YOU!
 - c. Focus on one subject
 - d. Be careful when putting specific institution names in essay
 - e. You are able to send the same essay to multiple institutions
- 5) Essay requirements...
 - a. University of Texas at Austin
 - i. Essay A
 - ii. 3 Short Answers
 - b. Texas A&M University
 - i. Essay A
 - ii. Engineering Majors – Short Answer
 - c. Other Universities may require an essay for scholarships, specific programs, or an honors program.
- 6) While writing your essay...
 - a. Stay concise and focused on one topic
 - b. Make sure to answer the prompt fully
 - c. An essay should provide new information we cannot find elsewhere in your application.
- 7) After you complete your essay...
 - a. Proofread
 - i. Only have a select few people read your essay
 - ii. Remember you DO NOT have to take everyone's advice
 - iii. Make sure that the essay remains your essay.