

Strategies for Writing Your UC College Essay

What is the Personal Statement/Essay?

- Three prompts: Academic Preparation, Potential to Contribute, and Open-Ended.
- Word Limits: Two 200 word responses; One 600 word response.

What are the Colleges looking for?

- This is your time to make the best case possible for admission as the essay adds clarity and meaning to other information in your application.
- The essay should be **REFLECTIVE** and **THOUGHTFUL** and create an accurate picture of who **YOU** are.
- The *Academic Preparation* prompt seeks to understand your **MOTIVATION** and **DEDICATION** to learning. Show how involvement in a program or class has changed you. Do not simply discuss what you have done.
- The *Potential to Contribute* prompt will ask you to share a talent, experience, contribution **OR** a personal quality that you will bring to the college. Remember to write about **ONE** area only.
- The *Open-Ended* prompt will allow you to share an important aspect of your schooling or your life. Use this area to address **ONE** thing you may not have been able to discuss elsewhere in the application.

Tips!

- Gather information, read critically, develop a topic/thesis, create a draft, get feedback, and revise!
- Think like an admissions reader. Always remember your audience!
- Avoid irrelevant background information.
- Ensure that the response addresses what the prompt asks for.
- Make sure each sentence advances the argument.
- Avoid a collection of facts or examples.
- Use concrete details and make them clear, rich, and meaningful.