



# CASH FOR C//LLEGE

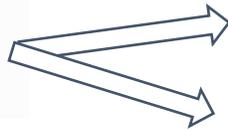
## What is the Personal Statement?

The personal statement is your chance to explain to college admission readers why you are a good fit for their school. The essay is where you become an individual and where you can share your personality, your goals, and experiences. In addition, you can explain any opportunities or obstacles that have affected your academic record.

## What kind of personal statement prompts can you expect to see?



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



You will be required to answer **2** questions, in a maximum of 1,000 words. The shorter of your answers should not be less than 250 words.

Get started at [admissions.universityofcalifornia.edu](http://admissions.universityofcalifornia.edu).

For tips, go to: <http://blog.prepscholar.com/uc-personal-statement-application-essay>

**UC #1:** Describe the world you come from—for example, your family, community, or school—and *tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations.*

**UC #2:** Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution, or experience that is important to you. *What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are?*



EOP

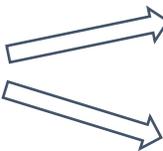


Essays are not required for the regular CSU application. But, the CSU–Educational Opportunity Program (for low-income or first-generation college students) requires **5** short responses (3-4 sentences each). Here are two examples.

Get started at [www.csumentor.edu/AdmissionApp/](http://www.csumentor.edu/AdmissionApp/)

**EOP #2:** Why would you like to attend college? Discuss your career and personal goals. *Are there any particular circumstances, school experiences, or persons that influenced your preparation or motivation to attend college (e.g., cultural/financial background, family, teachers, schools you attended)? Please explain.*

**EOP #4:** Briefly describe your family’s economic background. Include information about your financial challenges.



Most private schools use the Common Application. You will be required to answer **1** out of 5 prompts (250 – 650 words). Here are two examples of the prompts.

You will also need to respond to each university’s supplemental questions.

Start your app and find the supplemental questions at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).

**Common App #1:** Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

**Common App #3:** Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?

# Tips for a Top-Notch Personal Statement

## Do

Think about these questions to develop your thesis:

- What makes you the person you are and motivates you for college?
- What's important to you (values, activities)?
- What qualities/characteristics define you?
- Did any special circumstance influence you and your education? (This could be anything-- personal crisis, challenge, alternative learning environment.)

★ *Connect your responses to your skills and strengths that will make you successful in college.*

Your thesis should tell how and why your personal "story" makes you prepared for college and an asset to their school.



THESIS STATEMENT

Be descriptive, get personal (show your feelings), include details of events/triumphs/struggles, connect the past to your future.

Follow a writing process (and allow enough time):

- 1. Brainstorm
- 2. Organize around a Thesis
- 3. Draft
- 4. Proofread
- 5. Get Feedback on your draft from 2-3 people
- 6. Revise
- 7. Repeat steps as needed

A Strong Personal Statement should demonstrate:

- personal qualities that relate to college success
- reflection on experiences, activities
- meaningful engagement

## Don't

- Don't wait until the last minute
- Don't forget to have a THESIS
- Don't fail to answer the specific question/s
- Don't skim over the surface without delving deeply inside your soul. (Be real, be open.)
- Don't just list events or activities
- Don't write about situations that occurred before high school (unless you are telling how the experience affects you as a high schooler)
- Don't write in flowery or awkward language
- Don't exceed the word limits
- Don't waste space with quotes from other people instead of using your own words
- Don't waste space by including information that is elsewhere in your application (e.g., name, GPA, test scores)
- Don't select draft readers who can't or won't give feedback that helps you improve your personal statement
- Don't forget to connect your responses with how your strengths translate to college success
- Don't forget to read your draft as if you were the admissions officer. (Why should they admit you?)
- Don't take your personal statement lightly



A Personal Statement is not:

- Solely a sample of writing skills
- A laundry list of activities, honors, awards, or experiences
- A combination of responses from other questions or other applications