



College Application Essay Workshop

Goal: Give students an overview of the importance of the essay as part of their college application. Share do's and don'ts with them; help them identify how to best tell their story; review essay rubric. Allow students free writing time to work on essays or complete college application they have already started. Utilize higher education volunteers to provide feedback on any student essays.

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introductions:
 - a. College Application Month (CAM) Volunteer introduces themselves, where they work and where they went to college.
 - b. CAM Volunteer describes what College Application Month is: opportunity **during the school day** to work on college applications and required supporting materials with the assistance of admissions representatives from higher education institutions, school faculty and staff and College Now advisors.
 - c. Ask other volunteers to introduce themselves, where they work and where they went to college.
- II. Importance of the college essay
 - a. Explain to students that this is their opportunity to stand out, to highlight an experience that speaks to the kind of person they are, how they demonstrate perseverance, show initiative and will be an additive to a particular college campus and its student body.
 - b. Share example of perfect essay: what stands out to them about it? What did they learn from the essay about the person or a quality the person possesses that makes a college admissions officer confident they will be successful on their campus?
 - c. Share essay rubric : discuss key topics on which essays will be evaluated by volunteers.
 - d. Share Essay Do's and Don'ts from University of Michigan
- III. Student free write time
 - a. Students may use utilizing your story exercise to brainstorm topics
- IV. One-on-One student volunteer feedback sessions
 - a. Students meeting with higher education or community volunteers to go over their draft essays. (this can be the focus of an Essay Workshop #2 as well)
 - b. Volunteers provide feedback to students or have discussion about ways to improve essay, questions to consider to strengthen their voice or story they are trying to convey
- V. Conclusion and Thank You's

- a. CAM volunteer thanks everyone for attending session and gives email address opportunity for additional essay feedback

Notes:

- Suggested to print out documents for everyone if possible.

Helpful Documents:

- Sample Perfect Essay
- Personal Narrative Rubric
- Essay Tips Handout
- Discovering Your Story Exercise