

# Your College Essay: Make it Great!

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# The essay tells the college:

- How you write and communicate
- Who you are as a person – your values and goals
- What you will bring to the campus community
- How you “stand out”

# Take the time

- Think and reflect before you start writing
- Brainstorm ideas once you choose your topic
- Do not expect to write in one sitting; plan for several drafts
- Start early!

# Choosing your topic

- Read all of the prompts carefully
- Be sure you answer the prompt
- Doesn't have to be dramatic—can write well about something small
- Don't stand out for the wrong reasons!

# Be careful about:

- Winning or losing the big game
- Relationship problems
- Telling your troubles as if to a journal
- Appropriateness (would you tell this story around the family dinner table?)
- Other people (don't bash anyone; if it's good—make sure it's not only about them)

# University of Cincinnati Personal Statement

Obtaining a college degree requires persistence and the ability to stay focused on the end result. Share with us a long-term goal that you had, the steps/process you took to obtain that goal, and how you overcame any obstacles that you encountered. This goal could be academic, personal, or extracurricular in nature. *(Respond in about 250 words.)*

# Your essay should tell...

- **WHAT**
  - Your story
- **SO WHAT**
  - How did this impact you?
- **NOW WHAT**
  - How will this change you moving forward?

More essay tips...

Choose your prompt first and  
answer it  
and not the other way around.

Do not write like u txt.  
(or, sometimes - like you talk.)

Proof-read! Let someone else proof  
it, too.

P.S. “i” is not a word. (But “I” is!)

Tell us something we would not know from the rest of your application.

Avoid sophisticated words when simpler ones will do—don't try too hard to impress us!

Don't try to be too shocking or too  
political.

(A "real" person will be reading this!)

Avoid cliché essay topics.  
Actually, avoid clichés altogether.

Add details, but don't write just to fill space. Make your points directly without padding them.

In summary:

- Be genuine
- Know the college
- Be reflective
- Take it seriously! Take the time!

Questions?