



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

How To Present Yourself to Colleges

RYAN DEPUY

DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

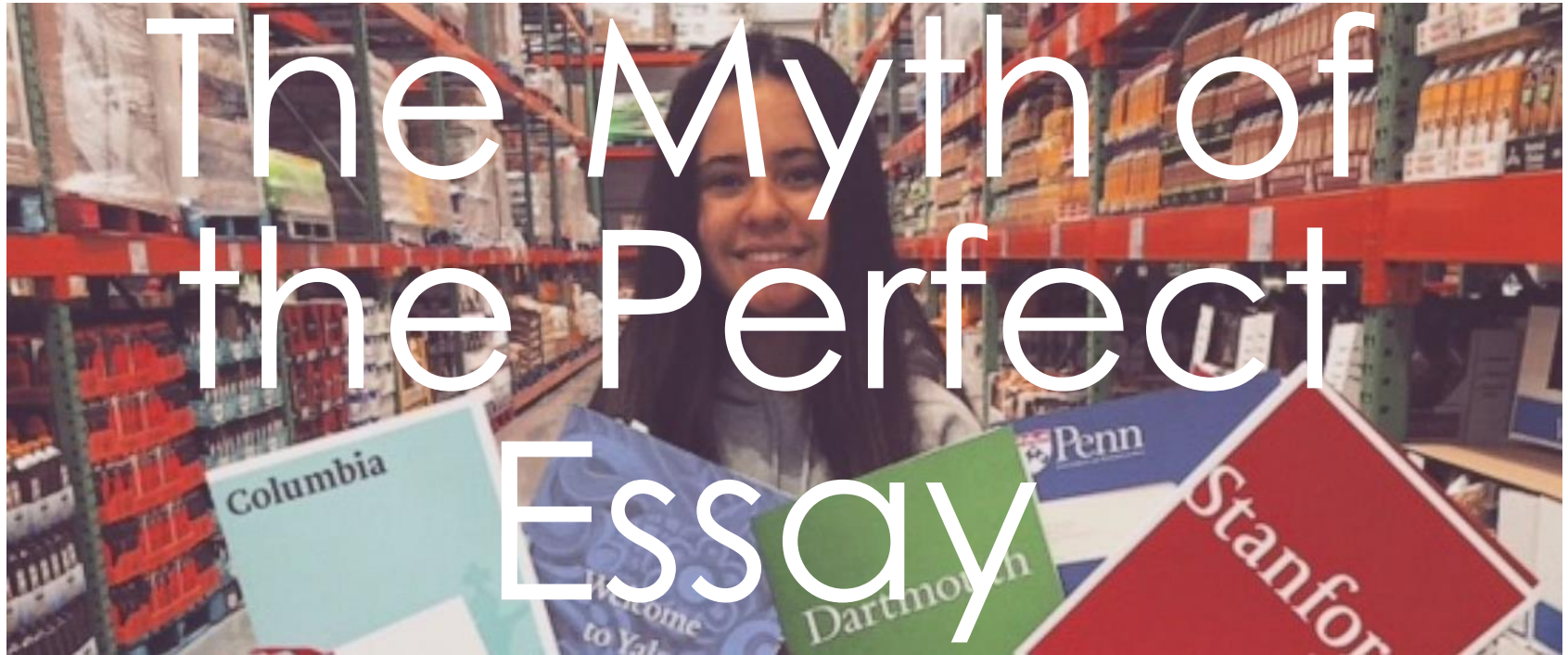
DEPUYR@SACREDHEART.EDU

Learning About **You**

- Application
- Supplemental Material/Resume
- Interview
- Essay



Shelter the homeless



The Myth of the Perfect Essay

Ransom the captive

Bury the dead

Rationale for Essay

To get a sense of the student's intellect and depth of thought

To learn about the student from his or her own point of view

To assess the student's written communication skills

To gauge the student's interest in the university and his/her understanding of what the university offers

To allow students to share a side of themselves not revealed elsewhere in the application



Essay Topics

- Be Honest and Genuine
- Write about something important
- Bring Dimension to yourself as an applicant
- Answer the question



2019-2020 Common Application Essay Prompts

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.
2. The lessons we take from *obstacles we encounter* can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a *challenge, setback, or failure*. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you *questioned* or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your *thinking*? What was *the outcome*?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or *realization* that *sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others*.
6. Describe a *topic, idea, or concept* you find so *engaging* that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.



Who Will Read Your Essay?

- Admissions Officers - Full time, part time - Young (recent college grads) and “Old” (parents, grandparents) - Former English teachers, lawyers, coaches, arts coordinators, guidance counselors, hospital administrators ...
- Faculty and Administrators - Tenured and part-time faculty - Academic advisors - Student affairs personnel
- Current Students
- Scholarship Committees

What Makes a Great Essay?

- Reflective and personal
- Insightful and vivid
- Well organized, logical, and easy to read
- Authentic
- Embraces the Four C's: **Correctness, Content, Clarity, and Creativity**

4 C's

Correctness

- Grammar
- Spelling
- Usage
- Punctuation
- Correct school name!
- Programs that exist at that school

Content

- Is the essay about you?
- Does it help the reader understand who you are now?
- Does it reflect some depth of thought or thoughtful reflection?
- Is it written in an authentic voice?
- Is the topic well developed?
- Do you stay focused on your topic?
- Does your writing stay strong through the end?

4 C's

Clarity

- Essay is concise
- Uses an effective illustrating point and is specific
- Uses appropriate diction, vocabulary, and syntax
- Uses varied and sophisticated sentence structure when **appropriate**

Creativity

- Uses an engaging approach to keep reader's attention
- Avoid shock value and gimmicks



Things to Avoid for Your Essay

- Have too many people read essay
- Write what you think we want to read
- Write the “Grandfather” essay
- Lie about yourself
- Use the same words and phrases repeatedly
- Plagiarize
- Exceed the word count limit
- Controversial Topics



Resume and Activities

- Change of philosophy in past decade.
- More doesn't always = better, quality over quantity.
- Contribution to college?



The Interview

- Are interviews accepted?
- Who will you interview with?
- Prepare for conversation





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