Brainstorming for your Personal Statement

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The admissions essay, or personal statement, is the portion of your transfer application that can truly show admissions committees what kind of person you are and what you can bring to their campus. There are so many different ways to approach this essay and it can be a daunting task to get started. Instead, look at this assignment as an opportunity to express yourself in terms of your personality and accomplishments, and take it step by step!

STEP 1. What are they asking?

At first glance, essay questions might all look different. For transfer students they usually want you to address your academic plan and goals after college, as well as a personal challenge you have overcome. In essence, all essays are trying to extract your influences, successes, failures, and triumphs in a manner that is concise, genuine, and clearly indicative of your desire to succeed in the college setting and beyond.

STEP 2. Brainstorm!

Don’t know where to start or what to write about? Ask yourself some of these questions, and answer them honestly. If you have trouble, try asking a friend or family member what they think your strengths are to get you started!

- What are your strengths? How do you apply them?
- Who has been an influence on you?
- What characteristics do you admire in yourself? In others?
- What have you participated in outside of class?
- Which jobs, clubs, and/or volunteering had an impact on you?
- Have you encountered any obstacles? How did you overcome them?
- Where do you see yourself in 5, or 10, or even 20 years?
- What appeals to you about this specific college?
- How do you plan on utilizing the resources available at the college?

Check out next week’s newsletter for continued personal statement tips!