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Write your personal statement in advance

Your personal statement—consisting of responses to two prompts—is your chance to tell us who you are and what’s important to you. Think of it as your opportunity to introduce yourself to the people reading your application. Be open, be honest, be real. What you tell us in your personal statement gives readers the context to better understand the rest of the information you’ve provided in your application.

A couple of tips: Read each prompt carefully and be sure to respond to all parts. Use specific, concrete examples to support the points you want to make. Take time to write, rewrite and edit. Show it to a teacher, counselor or friend for comments, but make sure the words you use are your own.

Finally, relax. This is one of many pieces of information we consider in reviewing your application; an admission decision will not be based on your personal statement alone.

Instructions:

- Respond to both prompts, using a maximum of 1,000 words total.
- You may allocate the word count as you wish. If you choose to respond to one prompt at greater length, we suggest your shorter answer be no less than 250 words.
- Stay within the word limit as closely as you can. A little over — 1,012 words, for example — is fine.

PROMPT #1

Freshman applicants: 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.

Transfer applicants: What is your intended major? Discuss how your interest in the subject developed and describe any experience you have had in the field — such as volunteer work, internships and employment, participation in student organizations and activities — and what you have gained from your involvement.

PROMPT #2

All applicants: 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?

Following the personal statement, there’s a section called Additional Comments. Use this space—up to 500 words—to tell us anything you want us to know about you or your academic record that you have not had the opportunity to describe elsewhere in the application.

WHEN YOU APPLY

Follow directions On every page and pop-up, scroll to the bottom to avoid missing any information.

Save your work If you take a break from your application, use the save/logout button to store your work, then log back in.

Review your summary Look for any instance where the summary page says “no information added.” If you didn’t intend to leave that question blank, click “modify” to go back and fill it in.

Don’t forget to click “submit” Your application won’t be sent to UC until you do.

APPLICATION FEES

Paying your application fees

UC’s application fee is \$60 per campus. You may pay online by credit card or be billed. Application fees are non-refundable.

Applying for a fee waiver UC will waive application fees for up to four campuses for qualified students who otherwise would be unable to apply. You can apply for a fee waiver within the online application and find out immediately whether or not you qualify.

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Pursue all potential scholarships

UC campuses and alumni associations award a variety of scholarships based on a student’s merit, financial need or both. Use the link below to research deadlines and additional requirements. You may qualify for more help than you’d expect.

There are also “restricted” scholarships available to students with specific backgrounds, academic interests or career goals. You can apply for these scholarships in Step 2 of the application by matching your own background characteristics and interests to the lists provided. The lists are long, but it’s worth the time to go through them. Most students are notified of scholarship awards between March and August.

For more on scholarships and deadlines, go to www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/scholarships.