

Application Essay Advice

Tips for Drafting

- Highlight a few experiences in detail rather than list all your experiences.
- Be sure to show your experiences instead of tell about (or summarize) your experiences.
- Focus on getting your ideas on the page; you can revise later.
- “Write like a flood. Take things out later.” – Maxine Hong Kingston

Tips for Revising and Proofreading

- Pay special attention to describing your experiences and achievements in as few words as possible. Be aware of word count limitations.
- Make sure the verbs and nouns you use are impactful and distinctly describe your unique experiences.
- Take time away from your writing to get perspective.
- Seek input and feedback from respected peers, instructors, and others in the field.
- Visit the University Writing Center, www.emich.edu/uwc.

When reviewing your personal statement ask yourself the following questions

- Have I tailored my statement for this particular application?
- Are my sentences unique to me?
- Did I show my distinctive experiences through vivid word choice?
- Are my sentences grammatical/punctuated properly?
- Have I inspired the reader to invest in me through demonstrating passion, capability and vision?

Watch out for . . .

- Clichés (“It takes a village to raise a child.”)
- Stating what every other applicant states or feels (“I’ve always wanted to be a ...”)
- Extra words that don’t add value or contribute new information to distinguish you as a candidate
- Repetition of phrases
- Broad, generic statements (“I value diversity.”)
- Punctuation and grammar errors

Application Essay Prewriting

EMU Honors College Essay Prompt

Please attach an essay describing your academic and personal accomplishments and career goals. Explain how your experiences have prepared you for success at EMU and in Honors coursework. In a concluding statement, express the nature and extent of your proposed commitment to The Honors College. Your essay should be a minimum of 500 words, 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

If you have a prompt, use it to do some of your own prewriting or write from the sample prompt provided.

- List or circle the key words that help you identify the expectations your audience will have for your essay.
- Make a list of significant experiences you have had. (What have you done to prepare yourself for x? What are the distinctively unique experiences that you have had?)
- List what these experiences might help you do. (What will you do once you are there? How will x program/scholarship/experience contribute to your long-term career/life goals?)
- State your distinct outlook on the field of study. (Why do you want to do x? How will you approach x?)

Put your experiences into priority order. For example, your . . .

1. most significant achievement
2. excellence in the field
3. dedication to the field
4. personal characteristics (such as, loyalty, perseverance, etc.)
5. ability to show initiative, overcome adversity, etc.