

RACL College Application Essay Writing

Instructor: Shannon Pitone **Email:** spitone@ncsu.edu

Class Schedule: Online, Saturdays from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Course Description

Regardless of where you come from or how you have lived your life, each of us has a story that is worth telling, worth reading, and uniquely yours! The Personal Essay, a requirement of most college applications, provides the perfect opportunity to tell that story. But it is important that the essay is written in a clear, well-structured, and engaging way. You want to present your best YOU to the person reading your application and you want that person to know you have the ability to put together a well-written essay—a skill that is crucial to college success.

In this 15-week class, students will go through the writing process in depth - from brainstorming, to outlining, to drafting, and finally to revising - and create a final, polished, personal essay that can be used for college, scholarship, or job applications. During the course you will also work on shorter essays common to many college applications. Strong pieces of writing that introduce you in a way that makes you stand out from the crowd are essentials for any student's college application toolbox. And learning to write an essay the right way is a valuable skill you will take with you for the rest of your life!

Instructor Introduction

Hello, my name is Shannon! I am an English 101 instructor at NC State University teaching first-year writing to college freshmen. I graduated summa cum laude from NC State University with my Bachelors & I am currently in my final semester of my Masters program of English Literature at NC State University. I have a wealth of experience working with students to improve and refine their writing for academic success and I have designed multiple writing courses to tailor to different students' needs. A core part of my teaching philosophy is to establish a safe writing environment where students' can build their confidence and effectively express themselves through their writing!

I am very excited to work with RACL to help students craft a meaningful and unique college essay that reflects their personal and academic identity!

Course Objectives & Expectations

- Identify, assess, and choose the personal essay topics that will allow you to best express your story and values, and effectively represent yourself in your college applications.

- Develop awareness of rhetorical styles common to academic writing, with a particular focus on the art and elements of engaging storytelling
- Analyze Common Application prompts & various strategies for organizing and structuring your essay according to each prompt
- Practice and apply all steps of the writing process from brainstorming to final draft.
- Participate in interactive writing workshops & receive extensive individualized feedback on your writing
- By the end of the course, you will complete 3 full drafts of a college application personal essay (Common Application)



Course Schedule

Week	Date	Activity Class	Lesson Topic
	1/8/2022	RACL Starts	No Activity Classes
1	1/15/2022	Activity Class #1: Introduction	Common Application Essay Overview - What do colleges look for in a personal essay?
2	1/22/2022	Activity Class #2: Brainstorming & Freewriting strategies	Introductory free writing exercises to generate ideas & practice personal writing
3	1/29/2022	Activity Class #3: College Writing Conventions	Overview of various options for college essay structure & discussion of story-telling techniques
	2/5/2022	Chinese New Year Break	No Classes
4	2/12/2022	Activity Class #4: Essay Prompts	Analyzing & brainstorming specific topic ideas for Common App essay prompts
5	2/19/2022	Activity Class #5: Analyzing Examples & Outlining the Personal Essay	Discussion of previous essay examples & choosing a topic &

			outlining essay structure
6	2/26/2022	Activity Class #6: Finding Your Writer's Voice	Discussion on language, tone & style of the personal essay, practicing writing techniques & addressing common mistakes
7	3/5/2022	Activity Class #7: Rough Draft #1 Writing Workshop	Work on rough drafts of personal essay- individualized essay assistance provided during class
8	3/12/2022	Activity Class #8: Peer Review Giving & Receiving Feedback	Collaborative writing workshop for peer feedback, think, pair, share exercise
9	3/19/2022	Activity Class #9: Principles of Revision	How to effectively revise drafts- identify & workshop common errors
10	3/26/2022	Activity Class #10: Analyzing Essay Examples & Discussing Effective Writing Techniques	Writing techniques review - College Review Board Activity - practice grading essay examples
11	4/2/2022	Activity Class #11: Rough Draft #2 Writing Workshop	Discuss revision process, workshop common questions, concerns - collaborative editing
	4/9/2022	Spring Break	No Classes
	4/16/2022	Spring Break	No Classes
12	4/23/2022	Activity Class #12: Review of College Admissions Process	Evaluate college essay reviews, discuss what qualities & skills most top-tier colleges look for in their applicants
13	4/30/2022	Activity Class #13: Final Draft Writing Workshop	Polishing final draft - editing & revising grammar, word choice, subject-verb agreement, tone / voice
14	5/7/2022	Activity Class #14: Final Writing Conferences	Discuss draft progress & feedback, reflect on course & writing practices
	5/21/2022	Make-up Day if Necessary	