



GRADUATE APPLICATIONS

Writing Support Desk



University
of Windsor

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FOUR PARTS

1.
Personal
Narrative

2.
Academic
Qualifications

3.
Professional
Experience

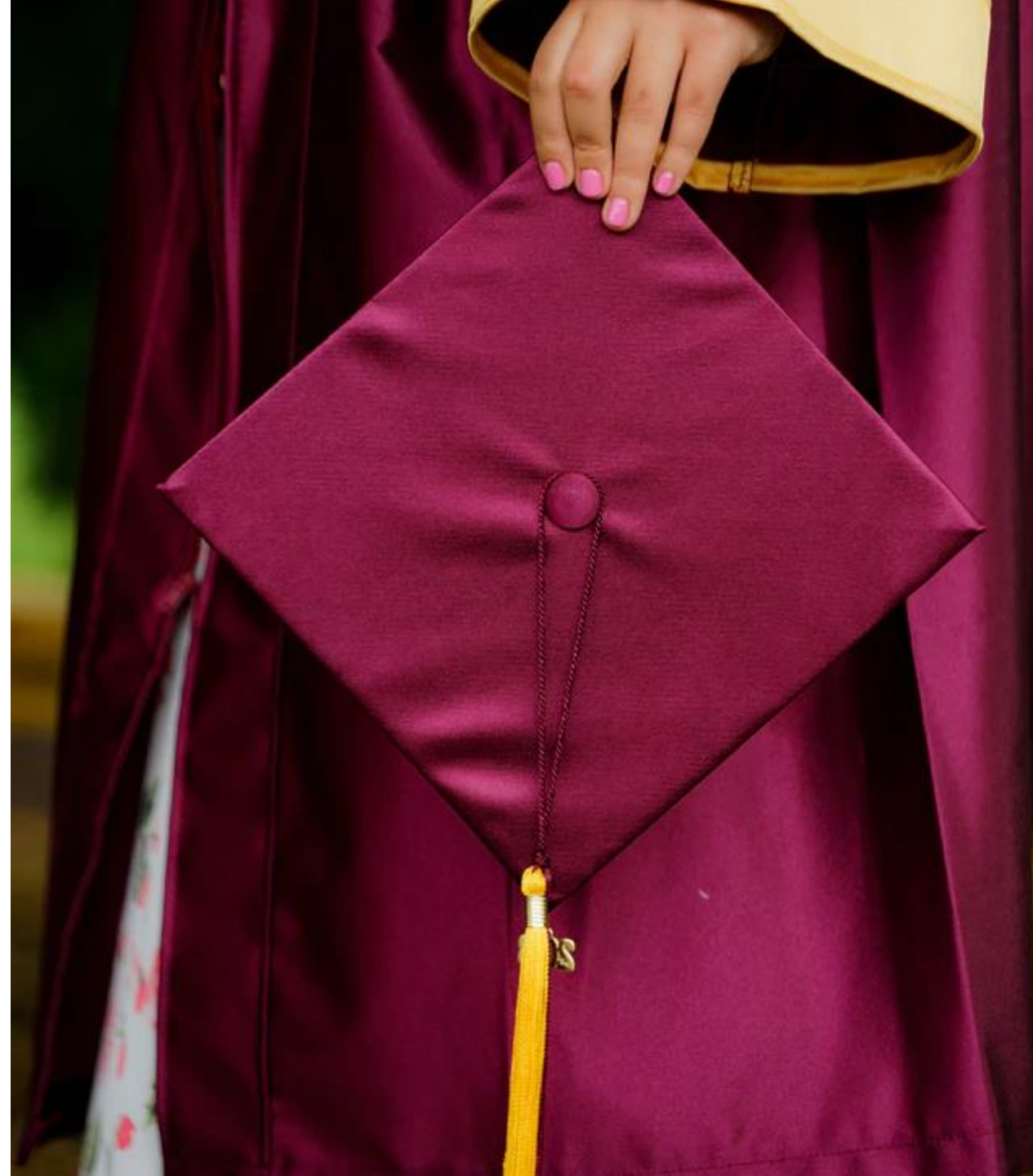
4.
Scholastic
Suitability

PART ONE:

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

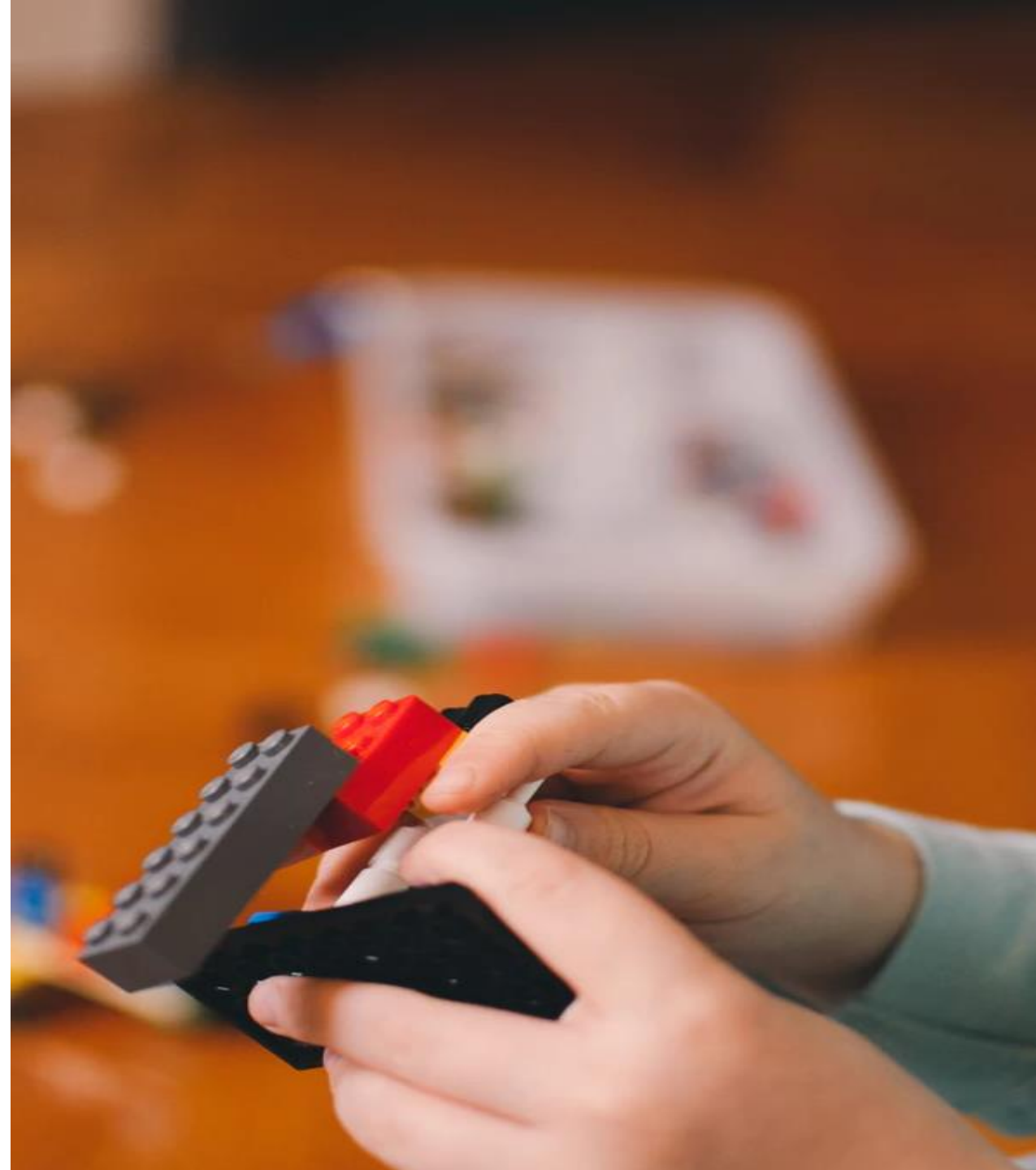
PRO TIP:

Don't start by
stating your school
and degree...
everyone's will
be similar!



YOUR ORIGIN STORY

- **Helps you stand out**
- **Frames you as a person**
- **Illuminates your background and motivations**
- **Hooks the reader into your narrative**



NARROW YOUR FOCUS

- **Propose a thesis topic/idea**
- **What led you to this idea?**
- **Set out groundwork for your scholarly interests**



INFLUENCES

- **Note relevant theories, works, & experts**
- **Shows familiarity with the field**
- **May appear in 'Academic Qualifications' instead**



CONTRIBUTIONS

**How will your work
contribute to**

- the school?
- your field?
- the world?



EXAMPLE

...As an English student captivated by [Charlotte Perkins] Gilman's dissenting voice in "The Yellow Wallpaper," I considered the paradox of writing oneself into the canon and into psychiatric care at once. (origin story)

I am interested in exploring the ways in which North American female writers from the realist and modern periods represent "mad" female voices. How do women writers negotiate mental illness and authorship? (narrow focus)

French feminist thinkers such as Hélène Cixous propose an *écriture féminine*, a uniquely female style and voice of writing. Is there a uniquely female voice of literary madness and what characteristics define this voice? (theorist)

There is a wealth of theoretical work on both topics of female literary madness and voice; however, I am interested in exploring how these elements come together to either subvert or perpetuate gender norms that contribute to coding women as mad. (contribution)



PART TWO: ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

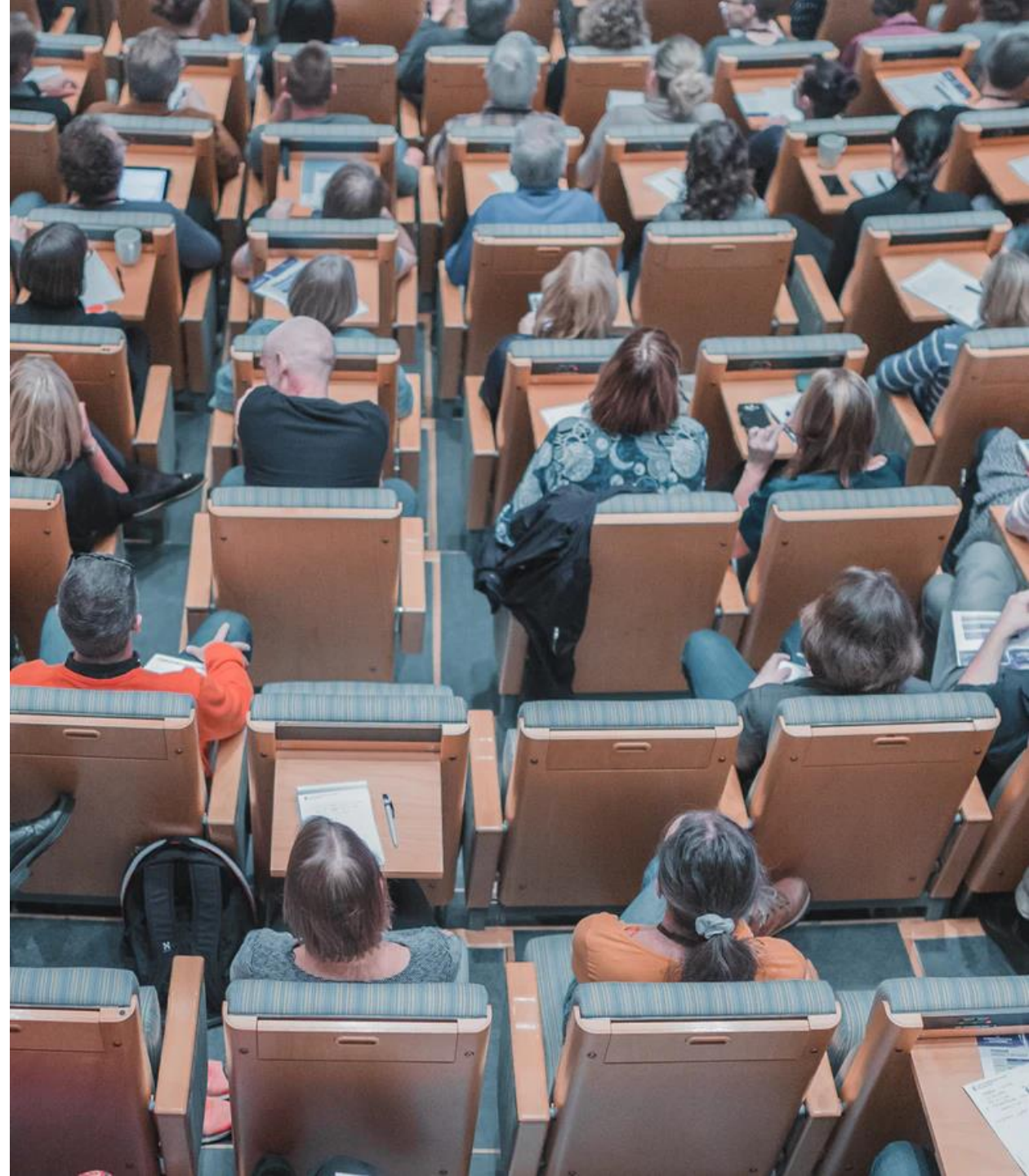
PRO TIP:

Don't boast about high grades.

Many students have high GPAs; this won't help you stand out.



PRO TIP:
Don't just list classes
you have taken.
Most degrees have
standard classes,
so you won't stand out.



DO INCLUDE

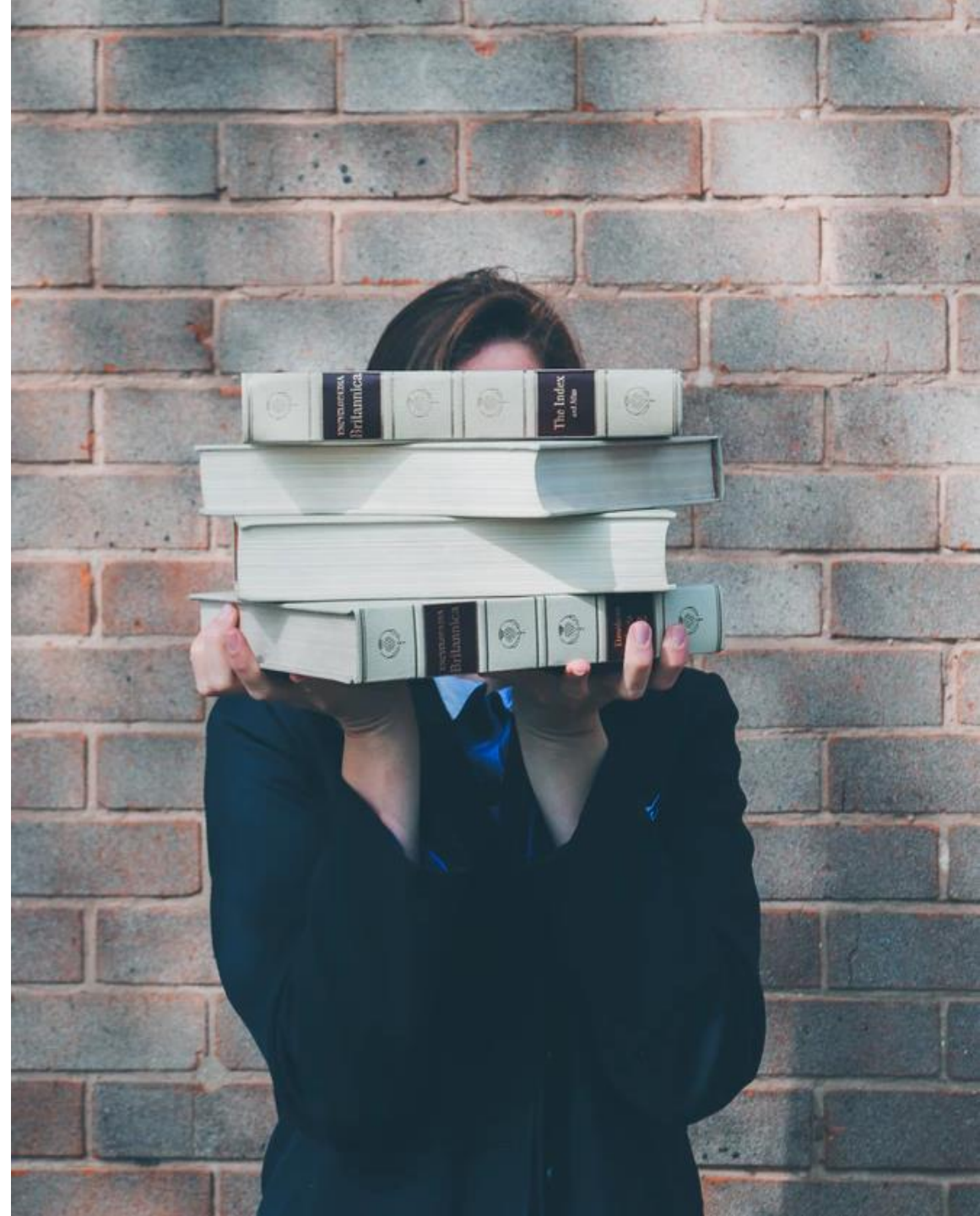
- Your degree & school (just don't start with this)
- Awards, grants, & scholarships (shows success beyond grades + grant-writing ability)
- Courses/works that influenced you
- Major papers, conferences, & publications



EXAMPLE

Over the course of my academic career at the University of Windsor, I explored my interest in the implications of female literary madness often.

In a third-year gender and literature course, I wrote on the humanizing influence of autobiography and first-person narration in “The Yellow Wallpaper” and Sylvia Plath’s “The Bell Jar.” During the final year of my undergraduate degree, I researched the coding of Katherina Minola as “mad” in Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* and proposed that this coding acts as a reaction and damper to her subversive female agency. ([major papers/courses](#))



PART THREE: PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

PRO TIP:

Don't include every job you've had. Stick to relating relevant experience (& save the rest for your CV).



DO INCLUDE

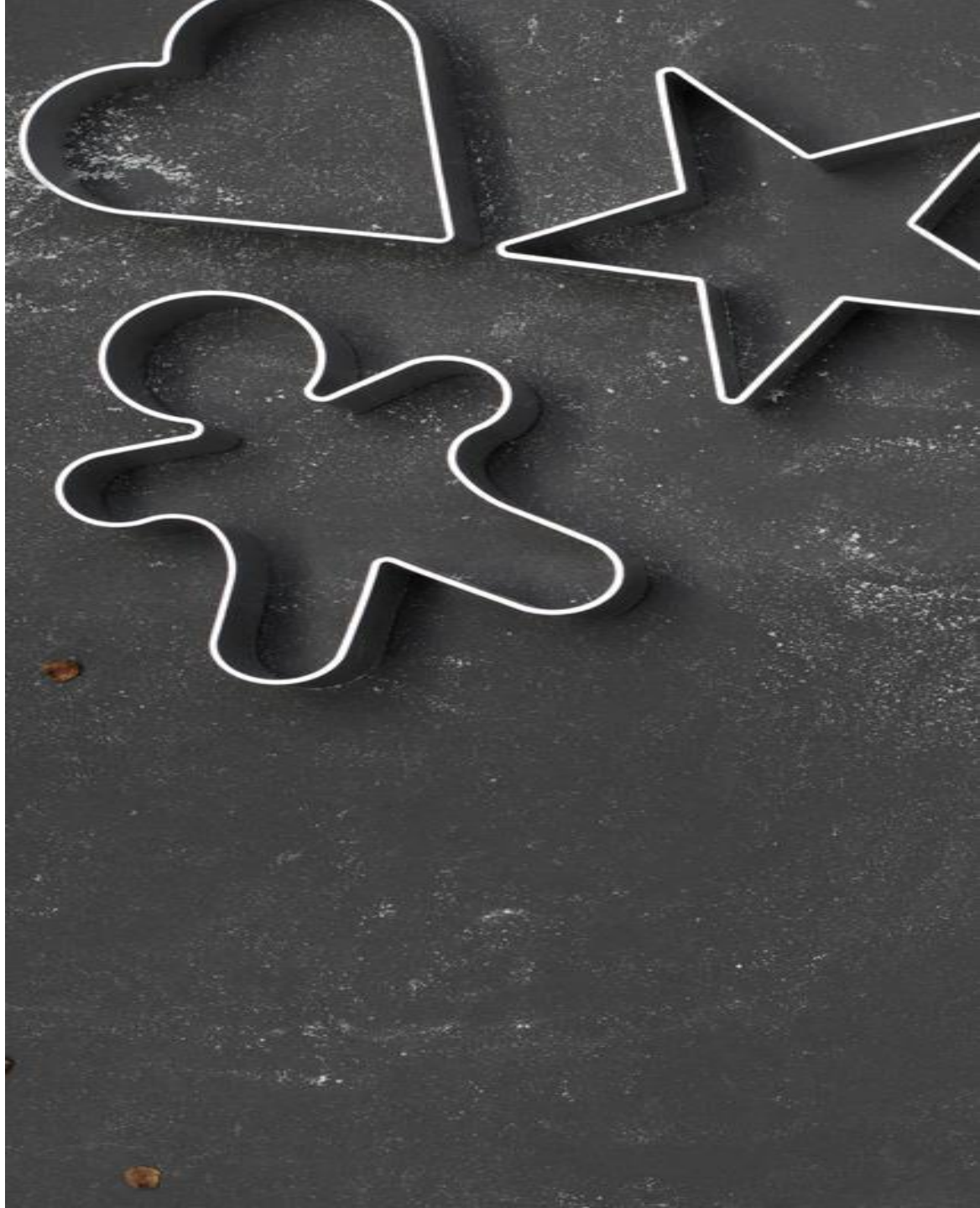
- TAs and GAs (academic work)
- Relevant work experience to your field (practicums, internships, etc.)
- Volunteerism relevant to your field
- Be sure to relate this to your field/studies



PART FOUR: SCHOLASTIC SUITABILITY

PRO TIP:

Don't use a 'cookie cutter' application for each school. They'll assume you don't know anything about their institution.



DO INCLUDE

- Why that school in particular?
- What resources would be useful to you?
Their library?
Specific collections?
- Look for profs who have expertise that matches your interests
- Shows that you took researching the school seriously



EXAMPLE

The University of Toronto's program would be the ideal setting in which to explore these ideas...[as] the coursework will allow me to engage with a variety of depictions of female voice and literary madness and prepare me for future research.

(school suitability)

Dr. Marlene Goldman, who has researched women's writing heavily, has a significant body of work in hysteria and madness. Her input and expertise would therefore be invaluable to my studies, as would her courses such as "Madness and Canadian Literature."

(course/professor suitability)





**Personal narrative
regarding how you
developed your interest**



**Academic credentials
(degree, school, scholarships,
grants, publications, major
papers, conferences)**



**Professional experience
work/internship/volunteer
(related to field!)**



**School selection
(why this school, why this prof
as supervisor, what resources,
etc.)**

HOW TO FIND MORE HELP!

Writing Support
DOES NOT offer
one-on-one
consultations for
graduate applications

Instead, book a
consultation with
Career Services via
mySuccess

You can also seek
help from one of the
professors you have
asked for a reference

QUESTIONS?

Remember, this slideshow and many others are available to download via the Writing Support Brightspace page.

Students can self-enroll as 'learners' either by selecting 'Discover' from the Brightspace landing page and clicking 'Enroll' on the Writing Support organization.