UC - Personal Insight Questions

<https://admissions.berkeley.edu/apply-to-berkeley/freshmen/freshmen-requirements/>

#### 1. Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes or contributed to group efforts over time. (finlit)

Things to consider: A leadership role can mean more than just a title. It can mean being a mentor to others, acting as the person in charge of a specific task, or taking the lead role in organizing an event or project. Think about what you accomplished and what you learned from the experience. What were your responsibilities?

Did you lead a team? How did your experience change your perspective on leading others? Did you help to resolve an important dispute at your school, church, in your community or an organization? And your leadership role doesn’t necessarily have to be limited to school activities. For example, do you help out or take care of your family?

When I started my financial literacy program, I intended on educating fellow students on money management. While only having 2 months to prepare, I took the initiative to brainstorm the process, such as clear delivery of my ideas. I also came up with interesting ways to get the students engaged by preparing a drama and mini games. As a leader, I managed the balance of being interactive with my group while respecting and building on each others’ ideas. I wanted to build a culture that prioritizes quality over quantity by choosing to work on one section a week and having other members check on our section weekly over Zoom.

While I led the team, the members helped me grow as a leader. In one instance, I insisted upon an “investment” portion in our presentation. Despite my persistence, the members said they didn’t believe it would be clear as we were teaching elementary kids. However, a thorough discussion, we to include a budgeting section instead. Through this, my team members helped me to learn the importance of understanding different perspectives, helping me become a more emphathetic leader.

As a result, we were able to successfully educate students on financial literacy in Jakarta and Maluku. I also learn the importance listening to others’ opinions to hear their perspective.

This experience allowed me to grow into a better leader, one that sees the value in collaborative discussion.

Hi Kaelyn,

It’s good that you have learned from others, but what about what others have gotten from your efforts? Did your students do anything that indicated that they grasped your ideas? Did your team members work better together because of your meetings and schedules?

C.G.

#### 7. What have you done to make your school or your community a better place? (KOMIB)

Things to consider: Think of community as a term that can encompass a group, team or a place — like your high school, hometown or home. You can define community as you see fit, just make sure you talk about your role in that community. Was there a problem that you wanted to fix in your community?

Why were you inspired to act? What did you learn from your effort? How did your actions benefit others, the wider community or both? Did you work alone or with others to initiate change in your community?

Growing up in a third-world country, I often see young kids, starting from the ages of 5, begging in the streets for spare change. In some cases, parents “rent” their babies to other adults to instill pity from affluent people when they beg for money. These children grow up with little to no schooling.

As a student, I decided to start an NPO called KOMIB to provide kids with education, regardless of their socioeconomic background. I visited Yayasan Al-Binyyah, a foundation for orphans to teach basic mathematics. I taught kids who were as old as twelve years old division, a concept they were unfamiliar with,

When speaking individually with them, I realized mathematics was the last of their concerns compared to survival. To motivate them, I designed activities that allowed them to understand the importance mathematics in a way that related to their conditions. I baked cookies with the class as most of the students cook to make a living, and divided the cookies show the concept of fractions. I saw many of them give me an Aha! look and started to ask about how to ensure people get a larger piece, which allowed me to teach them about multiplication. Over time, students became more and more engaged and curious, even after we finished our sessions.

After one month, I had to bring more teacher volunteers as more students came to study. I expanded our lessons, and now, we teach over 500 kids a month, ranging from small classes with only 10 students to an entire cohort in some schools. Our past work and student testimonials helped me to reach out to more unequipped schools and foundations in Jakarta, Bogor, and Bandung to provide free math lessons. Going forward, I hope to expand our lesson materials to basic literacy and finance and reach more children in Indonesia.

Hi Kaelyn,

Nice project that you’ve started! You connected your project to your community, providing a service that many are in dire need of. Since the prompts asks for how you made the community a better place, I would elaborate more on how the children have benefitted from your lessons. Did you see them applying mathematics in real life? Are they more interested in education and learning now? Educational resources are even scarcer in some areas outside of Jakarta. Did the expansion of your project address this to some capacity?

C.G.