Dessa Shapiro

Period 5

Due: 9/26

### **Comm App Due 11/15**

#### College essay prompt 1 draft

I hang suspended in the air, my body gently swaying. The only thing keeping me from plummeting to the ground is a bundle of fabric clasped tight in my clammy hand. Caught in indecision, I decide to dangle. As the seconds tick by, the quick beats of my pulse reverberate through my head. I am drowning in the frantic inhale and exhale escaping my lips. I know I must descend. But each time I lean back, I see images of a broken, bleeding body laying crumbled on the forest floor. I close my eyes. I find solace in the dark; within the inky blackness, there are no directions, no up to climb, and no down to fall. Instead of feeling trapped and tangled within a prison of silk, I feel protected, tethered, and the fear dissolves. Strengthening my resolve, I take one last shaky breath and let go.

I was an extroverted, curious child, always doing, always moving, and always bright. As time passed and the seasons faded into each other, my extroversion faded into something new. I was still moving and doing, but those actions were more internal. I was bright, in the way the sun is bright when seen through closed eyes. I started to feel more introspective and constricted within myself. My mind was a mess of jumbled pieces, unable to fit together. I wanted to define myself and feel more alive. So, I pushed myself into singing, dance, and theater, attempting to escape my mind, and in a way, it worked. It made me feel distinctive in a way I had yet to experience, but I still felt dissatisfied. Although I enjoyed these things, they pushed me into a competitive environment where the lead role was the ultimate goal, the lines were already written, the dances choreographed, and the lyrics set. They didn’t have the freedom of creativity and individuality I desired. One day in my second year of middle school, I discovered something. A friend suggested I try Aerial, a type of circus art and dance, which uses different apparatus such as a trapeze, hoop, sling, or silk.

When I walked into my first class, I was fascinated by the sight of bodies flowing through the air. They twisted, turned, and dropped in dazzling ways. In that instance, I knew I needed to be up there, detached from the ground beneath me. I needed to fly. I have never been afraid of heights, always looking down in awe and wondering closer to the edge. Infatuated with observing the world moving beneath me. But, the feeling of my own body suspended, my only support gripped within my hand, gave an unforeseen thrill of fear and joy. It allowed me the power to control how I wish to exist within space. I defined the rules by what I wanted to explore and create. I was free to experiment without fear of failure, my goal was to create for the sake of creation. It helped open my parameters, teaching me how to work independently, without any external biases clouding my thoughts. And as I returned to land, I could feel a difference in how I wished to regard my place in other environments. The jumbled pieces of my mind finally came together to create an ambiguous puzzle. Every piece fits together to create an infinite combination of ideas and thoughts. I could recognize the dichotomy of logic and abstraction that makes up my mind and find a way to connect them. I can now live my life looking through different eyes, better understanding what I want, need, and wish.

**Rewrite**

I hang suspended in the air, my body gently swaying. The only thing keeping me from plummeting to the ground is a bundle of fabric clasped tight in my clammy hand. Caught in indecision, I decide to dangle. I know I must descend. But each time I lean back, I see images of a broken, bleeding body crumbling on the forest floor. I close my eyes. I find solace in the dark; within the inky blackness, there are no directions, no up to climb, and no down to fall. Instead of feeling trapped and tangled within a prison of silk, I feel protected and tethered, and the fear dissolves. Strengthening my resolve, I take one last shaky breath and let go.

I was an extroverted, curious child, always doing, always moving, and always bright. As time passed and the seasons faded into each other, my extroversion faded into something new. I was still moving and doing, but those actions were more internal. I was bright, in the way the sun is bright when seen through closed eyes. I started to feel more introspective and constricted within myself. My mind was a mess of jumbled pieces, unable to fit together. I wanted to define myself and feel alive. So, I pushed myself into singing, dancing, and theater, attempting to escape my mind, and in a way, it worked. It made me feel distinctive in a way I had yet to experience, but I still felt dissatisfied. Although I enjoyed these things, they pushed me into a competitive environment where a set role was the ultimate goal, the lines already written, the dances choreographed, and the lyrics set. They didn’t have the freedom of creativity and individuality I desired. A friend suggested I try aerial, a type of circus art and dance that uses different apparatus such as a trapeze, hoop, sling, or silk. When I walked into my first class, I was fascinated by the sight of bodies flowing through the air. They twisted, turned, and dropped in dazzling ways. In that instance, I knew I needed to be up there, detached from the ground beneath me. I needed to fly.

I have never been afraid of heights, always looking down in awe and wondering closer to the edge, infatuated with observing the world moving beneath me. But the sensation of my own body suspended, with my only support gripped in my hand, provided an unexpected rush of fear and joy. It allowed me the power to control how I wished to exist within space. I defined my own rules, exploring and assembling what I desired. I was free to experiment without fear of failure, and my goal was to create for the sake of creation. I loved how I could manipulate the fabric, exploring new ways to hold myself up and balance my body. There were always ways to expand, and nothing was concrete; the structure was fluid and allowed me to build on others. Even when copying or learning something new, I could always create unique variations that made something individualistic. Unlike other activities, I never feel forced to follow a path. When I hit a wall, I can invent a new approach and alter myself until I succeed. Aerial helped open my parameters, teaching me to work independently without external biases clouding my thoughts. As I returned to land, I could feel a difference in how I wished to regard my place in other environments. The jumbled pieces of my mind finally came together to create an ambiguous puzzle, each piece fitting together to create an infinite combination of ideas and thoughts. I could recognize the dichotomy of logic and abstraction that makes up my mind and find a way to connect them.

**Ignore This (all pages after 1)** :

#### Same prompt diff writing:

I have held a love/desire for all things fantasy for as long as I can remember, as a child I would gaze out the window, with unfocused eyes, and a mind that was traversing the unknown of a nonexistent world. I believed the world in my mind could be just as beautiful as anything that existed in reality. As I grew older, I learned things about the world that altered my outlook and diluted my mysticism. I grew to be a more logical and realistic person, focusing my time on analysis and logic. Despite my mind maturing, I never lost the connection to my fantastical mental worldI started to feel that part fading with continual neglect. I needed to actualize it, make it something tangible. First, I tried taking dance classes, then, singing lessons, piano, and theater; But I never felt like those things succeeded in giving me the opportunity to express myself the way that I needed. In 7th grade, I was looking for a new extracurricular, and a friend recommended I take an Aerial class. A type of circus art and dance utilizing different apparatus such as a trapeze, hoop, sling, or silk. When I first started taking classes, I lacked a strong connection to the sport. I thought the skills were intriguing, but it was not a significant part of my life. As the weeks passed, I learned more technical skills and worked on my techniques. As I started improving, I started to enjoy myself exponentially more, I felt like I understood why people kept telling me to “keep with it” and “persevere” whenever I wished to abandon an activity in the past.

Aerial gave me more freedom than activities of the past, it made me feel like I had a natural talent, that I was skilled at something solely unique to me. It was something that gave me freedom from the expectations, judgments, and jealousy that came along with activities in the past. And allowed me a space to simply exist as an entity separate from the typical plights of life, giving me the feeling of existing within a fantastical private world, in which I was the protagonist. As I moved into high school, I started to feel trapped in the monotony of my educational life. Although I was doing well on paper, I felt unsatisfied with the results of my work, my creations seemed lacking. I started to feel like one of many trapped in being adequate, stuck in mediocrity. I knew I needed to bring something more if I wished to excel. So, I started mixing my mind, incorporating the lessons I learned from aerial into school work and projects I pursued. I could now see both parts of my mind simultaneously, instead of pulling one or the other to the forefront when I deemed it necessary. It was arduous at first, and I’m still very much learning how to balance. But, when I am stuck I know that I can always change the music to find a different rhythm to follow or a different objective to research. It helped me learn that I am allowed to combine contradictory things and see where it takes me.

Rewrite:

I have held a love/desire for all things fantasy for as long as I can remember, as a child I would gaze out the window, with unfocused eyes, and a mind that was traversing the unknown of a nonexistent world. I believed the world in my mind could be just as beautiful as anything that existed in reality. As I grew older, my mind metamorphosed, and I learned things about the world that altered my outlook and diluted my mysticism. I grew to be a more logical and realistic person, focusing my time on analysis and logic. Despite my mind maturing, I never lost the connection to my fantastical mental world. Eventually, I started to feel like that part of me was fading with continual neglect. I wanted to utilize that part of myself, and create something tangible that exists outside of my mind

So, I tried dance classes, singing lessons, piano, and theater; But those activities failed to manifest my mind. In 7th grade, I was introduced to Aerial. A type of circus art and dance utilizing different apparatus such as a trapeze, hoop, sling, or silk. From the beginning, Aerial was contradictory

Aerial gave me more freedom than activities of the past, it made me feel like I had a natural talent, that I was skilled at something solely unique to me. It was something that gave me freedom from the expectations, judgments, and jealousy that came along with activities in the past. And allowed me a space to simply exist as an entity separate from the typical plights of life, giving me the feeling of existing within a separate world, congruent to my mind. As I moved into high school, I started to feel trapped in the monotony of my educational life. Although I was doing well on paper, I felt unsatisfied with the results of my work, my creations seemed lacking. I started to feel like one of many trapped in being adequate, stuck in mediocrity. I knew I needed to bring something more if I wished to excel. So, I started mixing my mind, incorporating the lessons I learned from aerial into school work and projects I pursued. I could now see both parts of my mind simultaneously, instead of pulling one or the other to the forefront when I deemed it necessary. It was arduous at first, and I’m still very much learning how to balance. But, when I am stuck I know that I can always change the music to find a different rhythm to follow or a different objective to research. It helped me learn that I am allowed to combine contradictory things and see where it takes me.

## **Done- UC prompts: due 11/30**

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. Or Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.**

In my Junior year of high school, I was a Teacher's Assistant for my engineering teacher's Principles of Technology class. A class geared towards Freshmen focused on teaching basic engineering principles and skills. During the first few weeks of assisting, I felt overwhelmed. Although I had taken a similar class online the year prior, I realized I lacked hands-on experience in many of the skills we taught. I often found myself learning along with them and having to teach myself new things.

At first, I found it difficult to integrate myself with the students. I was in a gray area, not quite a teacher or a student. For the first few weeks, most would refuse to seek me for help, waiting until the teacher was available. Eventually, I realized that I needed to be the one to reach out first. I pushed myself to be the first to respond to raised hands and seek out confused faces. It wasn't easy. There were times I didn't know the answer, but instead of getting embarrassed and walking away, I stayed to help figure it out together. They started to come to me more and felt comfortable asking for help. I could tell that most still mainly depended on the teacher, but I knew I was progressing.

As the year continued, I started to feel more qualified as I adjusted to the role. I was able to participate in classroom management, regularly meeting with the teacher to discuss students, organization, and project ideas. I enjoyed observing the class and watching the students work to actualize the ideas I helped make. One of the class's main projects was working on a cohesive marble maze. Each group was given a wooden cube to design a path from one end to the other. The project resulted in an interconnected tower, with each part leading to the next. I felt like that project mirrored my experiences in the classroom. Although the process was messy, and nothing fit together from the start. I was able to accept my position and affect others.

1. **Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.**

2?) What would you say is your greatest talent or skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?

I was a curious child, always moving and bright. As I grew, something shifted. I was still bright but became more withdrawn. I felt constricted within myself; my mind was a mess of jumbled pieces. Searching for a creative outlet, I tried theater arts. But the lines were written, the dances choreographed, and the lyrics set - it was stifling. One day a friend suggested I try Aerial, a style of circus art mixed with dance.

When I walked into my first class, I was fascinated by the sight of bodies flowing through the air. They twisted, turned, and dropped in dazzling ways. I knew I needed to be up there, detached from the ground beneath me. I needed to fly.

The feeling of my own body suspended, my only support gripped within my hand, gave an unforeseen thrill of fear and joy. It allowed me the power to control how I wish to exist within space. I defined the rules by what I wanted to explore and create, free to experiment without fear of judgment, to create for the sake of creation. I loved how I could manipulate the fabric, exploring new ways to hold myself up and balance my body. There were always ways to expand, and nothing was concrete; the structure was fluid and allowed me to create from others. So, when copying or learning something new, I could add variations and make something unique. I have failed and fallen many times, struggling to catch myself before I hit the ground. But unlike other activities, I never feel forced to follow a path. If I am stuck, I can invent a new approach and alter myself until I succeed.

Aerial opened my parameters and taught me to work independently without external biases clouding my thoughts. The pieces of my mind finally came together, creating an infinite combination of ideas. The ideas previously confined are unleashed through aerial. I now look through different eyes with a better understanding of my subconscious and how I can integrate it while I create.

1. **Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?**

When I was 15 years old, I had the opportunity to get my lifeguard certification through the Junior Guard program at the beach. When classes started, I felt out of place. I immediately recognized that everyone else was familiar with each other, having been on the water polo team. Although I consider myself physically active, having been on the swim team, I fell behind the others. I could feel my body protesting as I pushed myself to keep up. As the program continued through the summer, I continued to struggle. Although I could feel myself adjusting to the training, I was still behind my peers.

One day, halfway through the program, we were practicing board rescue techniques. It was a cold, foggy day; the ocean was rough, and the current was strong. I was caught off guard; when a massive wave swallowed me. Suddenly submerged in icy water, I struggled to breathe. I found myself unable to penetrate the surface, my board blocking me. At that moment, I was terrified. Despite my fears and struggles, I decided to continue. Determined to see it through and receive my certification, I directed my focus inwards, no longer caring if I was judged or excluded by others. I accepted that it would be challenging and that no matter how hard I worked, I would fall behind. By the end of the program, I passed both the written and demonstrative tests, receiving my certification.

My lifeguard training experience helped alter my perspective in many ways. I began to value my mind, allowing me to disregard other people’s negative judgments and expectations. I have utilized these lessons when I find myself lacking motivation. Altering my perspective and knowing my capabilities helps me push myself to accomplish my goals. I can uncover a hidden value in challenging situations and view something less as a chore and more as an opportunity to learn. Through this practice, I have discovered that anything can be valuable depending on how you decide to view it, no matter how useless it can seem at first.

1. **Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.**

In the summer of 2022, I attended a month-long summer camp at UC Santa Cruz. It was an educational program with different clusters of students studying various subjects. I was in a cluster focusing on game development and design. I was surprised to be accepted to the program since I had only recently discovered an interest in game design and lacked experience. I was nervous about sharing a room with two strangers for a month. When camp started, I felt reassured. The instructors were excellent, and my roommates were friendly. The first week was an adjustment, getting used to the new environment. The classes were enjoyable and understandable since we mainly covered concepts and familiarized ourselves with the topics.

The second week brought trouble. Although socially, I had found a comfortable place with my roommates. Academically, I started to struggle as classes shifted focus to practical skills. When I was asked to design a simple animation from code, I did not know where to start. I had never worked with text-based coding before. I watched my peers soar ahead as I struggled to complete the most basic task. For the next few days, I continued to feel helpless. The teachers tried to accommodate everyone, but most of the class had taken previous classes and understood the basics. Despite trying my best to understand the explanations and tutorials, most of them caused more confusion.

For the rest of the camp, I started focusing on what I could understand instead of what I could not. I paid close attention to the teachers and pulled the basics from the more complex work they taught. I worked to create things within my capabilities. My projects were often less advanced, but I was proud to complete something that worked. Entering lessons with the expectation to learn without understanding at times helped me absorb more information. By the final week of camp, I knew I had improved exponentially. With a group, I was able to publish a completed game. As I headed home, I was excited about exploring the topics introduced in camp.

If there's anything else you want us to know about you, now's your chance. But remember, you should use this space only if you want to describe anything that you have not had the opportunity to include elsewhere in the application. This shouldn't be an essay, but rather a place to explain unusual personal or family circumstances, or anything that may be unclear in other parts of the application.

UC Prompt - rewrite 350 words

## **Supplementary questions**

### **Done- Carnegie Mellon: 01/03**

Most students choose their intended major or area of study based on a passion or inspiration that’s developed over time – what passion or inspiration led you to choose this area of study?

(300 word maximum)\*

My desire to study computer science was discovered relatively recently, mainly during the latter part of my junior year and throughout the summer. I first found an interest in computing when I took a computer graphics class in my sophomore year. It was one of the only classes that were able to engage me despite being online. Covid allowed learning independently through tutorials and self-experimentation. Throughout the year, I familiarized myself with programs such as photoshop, tinkercad, scratch, and blender. Despite my original focus being artistic as the year progressed, I was drawn to the more technical and scientific aspects of the programs we learned. I was enlightened about technology in a new way, discovering new ways to create and build through a computer screen. It was different from my past pursuit of drawing and designing, but I found the more mathematical and analytic art to suit me better. My interests were solidified when I took engineering design in my junior year. The class opened my parameters furth and allowed me to mix digital and physical interests. I could design projects digitally and end up with a physical creation. The expanse of possibilities within an engineering field, digital and physical, spurred my desire to pursue a similar study in future education. I look forward to experimenting with different types of engineering and science. As well as collaborating within separate fields to learn, produce and research.

Many students pursue college for a specific degree, career opportunity or personal goal. Whichever it may be, learning will be critical to achieve your ultimate goal. As you think ahead to the process of learning during your college years, how will you define a successful college experience?

(300 word maximum)\*

I wish to enter college with a mindset directed toward growth. Above all else, I hope to gain personal motivation through higher education. I expect to solidify a goal for how and what I create in the future. Although I know what general field of study I will pursue, I look to college to help define how I wish to place myself within a societal and economic work environment. I would define my success by what I will be able to invent and how I will be able to think. I believe that college should be a place to nurture through, and teach me how to work towards a goal no matter how simple or complex it may present. Although I am not unmotivated, I hope to find something to be drawn to in college. Something that can keep me working and that I look forward to pursuing when I open my eyes every morning. I think, especially in an engineering-directed field, it is critical to find something to obsess over. With so many new things to be discovered and ideas to be created, the ability of one's mind to grow is as significant as the knowledge gained from others.

Consider your application as a whole. What do you personally want to emphasize about your application for the admission committee’s consideration? Highlight something that’s important to you or something you haven’t had a chance to share. Tell us, don’t show us (no websites please).

(300 word maximum)\*

The most important aspect of myself I can highlight is my multifaceted nature. Whether it be my aerial dance or my interest in computers, I can always find a way to learn, grow and overcome obstacles. I love to learn, observe and absorb information about the world around me in any way it might present itself. My observative nature has led me to grow academically; as I integrate my personal life into my education. My current desire is not to be a “perfect student” or to “find myself” in college. But it is to find how I can contribute to change in the world, whether in my sphere or the entire planet. I have the desire to connect the different aspects of reality I observe. And even more so, to create something for my mind that I feel proud of. I know it will take time until I can reach the level necessary to invent, but I am more than ready to start putting in the work. I have always had a desire for something more, something beyond my scope of myself. Observing magnificent and sometimes horrifying creations of humanity has given me something to look forward to. Although I may not be considered a genius in any way, I believe I can live up to one if I try.

### **Done- NYU**: **01/15**

NYU was founded on the belief that a student’s identity should not dictate the ability for them to access higher education. That sense of opportunity for all students, of all backgrounds, remains a part of who we are today and a critical part of what makes us a world-class university. Our community embraces diversity, in all its forms, as a cornerstone of the NYU experience.

We would like to better understand how your experiences would help us to shape and grow our diverse community. Please respond in 250 words or less.

I live in a bubble. My town is in a wealthy area filled with privilege and opportunity; but lacking in economic, political, racial, and cultural diversity. Throughout my childhood, I was ignorant of how people outside my radius lived. I valued school and trusted what I was taught; placing blind faith in my teachers. I considered it a second home and felt a unique connection to my teachers and classmates. When I reached high school, I started to question my education. I was exposed to shocking things about the world through books and the internet. At first, I was resentful of my community, feeling deceived. I no longer saw my school as a place of truth. Despite my initial rejection, that environment has taught me to think independently. It taught me how to search for truth and never take things at face value because there are always multiple sides to a story. I used to loathe classroom discussions, dismissing classmates' opinions because I was set on my own. Now, I can see the value of observing outside views, even if I disagree. In a broader aspect, I have started to self-analyze and recognize when I may be incorporating an unconscious bias. I hope to take this mindset into my future education and career. The lessons from my past will help me accelerate when facing adulthood and creating beneficial relationships in college. It has pushed me to accept that people’s opinions are subjective and everyone has their truths.

*Answers to this question will be transmitted electronically, however it is not visible on the PDF preview.*

### **Done-RPI: 1/15**

**Why are you interested in Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute?\* max 250**

I am interested in the computational science research opportunities offered to undergraduates at RPI. I value practical learning and wish to apply knowledge to real-world examples and explore global issues. I believe RPI is best able to provide these opportunities due to the size of the student body and the community-based programs, which allow for educational diversity and opportunity. The variety of professional and leadership development programs will allow me to explore different positions and roles. As well as prepare me for future jobs and work experiences. I am specifically interested in the Arch program because it provides an option to create my schedule and alter the pacing of my education. I value the institution's focus on research, and the opportunities provided to the undergrads. I hope to start working, researching, and inventing things that can start to face global challenges and work towards making a positive influence. I would also love to take advantage of the numberouse research centers and explorer researching and learning in different countries. I am specifically interested in the Center for Computational Innovations and exploring the different possibilities with AI. RPI has a lot of different interesting social opportunities to experiment with, although I am not a major athlete I would love to try for club sports or get involved in other clubs. Overall it seems like a very inclusive and accommodating community that I would enjoy.

**Please briefly elaborate on one of your extracurricular activities or work experiences.\* max 300**

In the summer of my sophomore year, I had the opportunity to get a lifeguard certification through the Junior Guard program at the beach. When classes started, I felt out of place. Everyone was familiar with each other, having been on the water polo team. Although I consider myself physically active, having been on the swim team, I fell behind the others. I could feel my body protesting as I pushed myself to keep up. As the program continued through the summer, I continued to struggle. Although I could feel myself adjusting, I was still behind my peers.

One practice, It was a cold, foggy day; the ocean was rough, and the current was strong. I was caught off guard; when a massive wave swallowed me. Submerged in icy water, I struggled to breathe. I found myself unable to penetrate the surface. At that moment, I was terrified. Despite my fears and struggles, I decided to continue. I directed my focus inwards, no longer caring if I was judged or excluded. I accepted that it would be challenging and that no matter how hard I worked, I would fall behind. By the end of the program, I passed both the written and demonstrative tests, receiving my certification.

My experience helped alter my perspective in many ways. I began to value my mind and learned to disregard other people’s negative judgments and expectations. I have utilized these lessons when I find myself lacking motivation. Altering my perspective and knowing my capabilities caused me to push myself harder. I now view demanding activities as less of a chore and more as an opportunity to learn. I have discovered that anything can be valuable depending on how you decide to view it, no matter how useless it can seem at first.

### **Done-RIT: 01/15**

If RIT could create any course tailored to your interests, what would that course be about and what would you give as its title?

Please provide a course title and brief description. Max 75

Class: Social Technology

Course Description: A class that covers how technology is integrated into global social systems. Covers how different technology benefits or harms different countries throughout the globe. Teaches the basics of how to analyze and incorporate these ideas in projects/companies. Uses these concepts to build upon the current social technology system and practice brainstorming, prototyping, and creating technology that could positively impact society or improve upon existing systems.

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### **USC: 01/15**

The questions on this page are being asked by the University of Southern California

Describe how you plan to pursue your academic interests and why you want to explore them at USC specifically. Please feel free to address your first- and second-choice major selections. (Approximately 250 words)\*

I am interested in the computational science research opportunities offered to undergraduates at USC, especially in the Computer Vision, Robotics, Graphics, and HCI facilities. I value practical learning and wish to apply knowledge to real-world examples and explore global issues. I believe USC is best able to provide these opportunities due to the extensive research programs and different paths to take in future education, even within a specific major. Within a computer science major, I hope to explore the different paths and classes I take in the field, such as finding out what computer language I wish to specialize in by taking intro courses. The variety of professional and leadership development programs will allow me to explore different positions and roles to prepare me for future work experiences. I will also look to participate in study abroad programs in either Singapore(NUS), Hong Kong(HKUST), or the abroad research program at Tsinghua. USC also provides a lot of student support and academic advice, which I plan to take advantage of when deciding my education path and trying to succeed. I am interested in exploring the bigger picture of the Computer science field and deciding whether I wish to focus on design, analysis, engineering, or something else.

Your Unique Contributions to USC Viterbi

The student body at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering is a diverse group of unique engineers and computer scientists who work together to engineer a better world for all humanity. Describe how your contributions to the USC Viterbi student body may be distinct from others. Please feel free to touch on any part of your background, traits, skills, experiences, challenges, and/or personality in helping us better understand you.\*

The most important aspect of myself I can highlight is my multifaceted nature. I have always had many split interests within different fields, such as computational technology, art and design, economics, and the humanities. I love to learn, observe and absorb information about the world around me in any way it might present itself. I try to combine different subjects of knowledge to understand how to create something. I often find myself integrating my experience from dance classes into my engineering projects in school. I find it fascinating to observe different perspectives and see how group contributions can have positive influences, especially when people come from much different social and educational backgrounds. I grew up in a place lacking a lot of diversity that was secluded from the harsh reality many underprivileged people faced. After adjusting my mindset, I have learned to see the value of observing outside views, even if I disagree at first. In a broader aspect, I have started to self-analyze and recognize when I may be incorporating an unconscious bias. I hope to take this mindset into my future education and career. The lessons from my past will help me accelerate when facing adulthood and creating beneficial relationships in college. It has also pushed me to be more humble and accept that people’s opinions are subjective and everyone has their truths.

The Engineering Grand Challenges

The National Academy of Engineering (NAE) and their 14 Grand Challenges go hand-in-hand with our vision to engineer a better world for all humanity. Engineers and computer scientists are challenged to solve these problems in order to improve life on the planet. Learn more about the NAE Grand Challenges at [http://engineeringchallenges.org](http://engineeringchallenges.org/) and tell us which challenge is most important to you, and why.\*

The challenge currently most significant to me is developing carbon sequestration methods. I think climate change, significantly caused by the massive amounts of carbon accumulated in the atmosphere, is something that people need to prioritize now more than ever. We have all seen the global impacts of climate change, and the effects are predicted to worsen as humans continue to pump carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. It is important to me because I value the world we live in, and although I believe there are other habitable planets, we have no way of relocating. At this time, the earth is the only home we get. And although It may not be the most intriguing project to tackle for me, I believe it is the most important for humanity. Given the current history and global political environments, I find it unlikely that the world will be able to reduce carbon emissions to a necessary extent. Although many are making efforts to implement policies, and the populace has been aware of the issue for decades, the numbers continue to increase. So I think it is critical to focus on creating new methods and technologies to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere at a quick rate. I also think it would be extra beneficial to experiment with converting that carbon dioxide into energy or recycling it so it can get reutilized healthily.

### **Done- UW: 11/15**

**Writing Section**

**The writing section is a required and important part of your application. The UW requires that you submit your essay and short response below.**

**Format**

**Content, form, spelling, grammar and punctuation will be considered. You should write your statement first in a word processing program (such as Microsoft Word), and then copy/paste it into the text box below. Some formatting may be lost, but this will not affect the evaluation of your application.**

**We've observed that most students write a polished formal essay for the personal statement yet submit a more casual short response. Give every part of the writing section your very best effort, presenting yourself in standard, formal English.**

**Tips**

* **Some of the best statements are written as personal stories. We welcome your imaginative interpretation.**
* **You may define experience broadly. For example, experience could be a meeting with an influential person, a news story that spurred you to action, a family event, or something that might be insignificant to someone else that had particular meaning for you.**
* **If you don't think that any one experience shaped your character, simply choose an experience that tells us something about you.**

**Personal statement**

**The personal statement is our best means of getting to know you and your best means of creating a context for your academic performance. When you write your personal statement, tell us about those aspects of your life that are not apparent from your academic record:**

* **a character-defining moment**
* **the cultural awareness you've developed**
* **a challenge faced**
* **a personal hardship or barrier overcome**

**Directions**

**Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it. \*Max: 650 words**

As a child, I was astounded that I could jump, fly, and lift heavy objects, emulating the fictional characters I idolized. I have always loved the way the water made me feel weightless. When I was 15 years old, I had the opportunity to get my lifeguard certification through the Junior Guard program at the beach. I blindly jumped at the chance, neglecting to consider what the program would entail. When classes finally started, I felt out of place. I immediately recognized that everyone else was familiar with each other, a closed circle I could not hope to infiltrate. I quickly realized I was unqualified. Although I consider myself a physically active person, having been on the swim team before, I fell behind the others. My lungs struggled and my muscles ached as we ran and swam every morning. I could feel my body protest as I pushed myself to keep up. As the program continued through the summer, I continued to struggle. Although I could feel myself adjusting to the training, I was still behind my peers, most of whom had experienced years of water polo training.

One day, halfway through the program, we were practicing board rescue techniques. It was a particularly cold, foggy day, and the ocean was rough and angry. I could feel the strong pull of the current as I ran into the icy water with a 9ft board tucked under my arm. I slid onto the board and started to paddle towards my partner, playing victim in the depths. I was caught off guard; my vision limited by the dense fog when a massive wave swallowed me. Suddenly submerged in icy water, I struggled to keep oxygen flowing through my lungs. The salty spray temporarily blinded me, and I found myself unable to penetrate the surface due to my board resting above me. At that moment, I was terrified. The water had taken my power away, and I felt helpless. The rest of that day, I could not stop shaking. Despite my struggle, I decided to continue. I was determined to see it through to the end and receive my certification. I directed my focus inwards, no longer caring if I was judged or excluded by others. I accepted that I would be challenged and that no matter how hard I worked, I would fall behind. Throughout the summer, I held this knowledge in the forefront of my mind. By the end of the program, I passed both the written and demonstrative tests, receiving my certification.

My lifeguard training experience helped alter my perspective in many ways. I began to value my own mind, allowing me to disregard other people’s negative judgments and expectations. I used to be impressionable, trying my best to fit in even if I had to be disingenuous or go against my principles. Now when I notice myself falling into that pattern, I can recognize the situation and pull myself out. I have utilized these lessons when I find myself lacking motivation. Altering my perspective and knowing my capabilities helps me push myself to accomplish my goals in my own way. I can uncover a hidden value in challenging situations and view something less as a chore and more as an opportunity to learn. Through this practice, I have discovered that anything can be valuable depending on how you decide to view it, no matter how useless it can seem at first. On that day, I cursed the icy waves for pulling me under, but now I thank them for forcing me to learn how to swim.

~Lol I'm in pain~

Hehehhehehhehehehehehhehehehhhehehhheheh

**Short response**

**Our families and communities often define us and our individual worlds. Community might refer to your cultural group, extended family, religious group, neighborhood or school, sports team or club, co-workers, etc. Describe the world you come from and how you, as a product of it, might add to the diversity of the University of Washington.\* Max: 300**

I live in a bubble. My town is in a wealthy area filled with privilege and opportunity; but lacking in economic, political, racial, and cultural diversity. Throughout my childhood, I was ignorant of how people outside my radius lived. This view was mainly influenced by my schooling. As a child, I valued school and trusted what I was taught; placing blind faith in my teachers. I considered it a second home and felt a unique connection to my teachers and classmates. When I reached high school, I started to question my education. I was exposed to shocking things about the world through books and the internet. At first, I was resentful of my community, feeling deceived. I no longer saw my school as a place of safety and growth. Despite my initial rejection, the environment has taught me to think for myself. It has taught me how to search for truth and never take things at face value because there are always multiple sides to a story. I used to loathe classroom discussions. I dismissed my classmate's opinions because I was set on my own. Now, I can see the value of observing outside views, even if I disagree at first. In a broader aspect, I have started to self-analyze and recognize when I may be incorporating an unconscious bias. I hope to take this mindset into my future education and career. The lessons from my past will help me accelerate when facing adulthood and creating beneficial relationships in college. It has also pushed me to be more humble and accept that people’s opinions are subjective and everyone has their truths.

**Additional information about yourself or your circumstances**

You are not required to write anything in this section, but feel free to include additional information if something has particular significance to you. For example, you may use this space if

* You have experienced personal hardships in obtaining your education
* Your activities have been limited because of work or family obligations
* Unusual limitations or opportunities unique to the schools you attended

Max: 200

**Honors program:**

* honors.uw.edu to review the options.  
    
    
  If you no longer wish to apply to UW Honors, you must change your answer to 'No' at the top of this page. After doing so, you will no longer be required to fill out this page.  
    
  To be considered for admission to UW Honors, submit short essays which are separate from the UW writing section. Please review “[Tips for Applying](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhonors.uw.edu%2Fapply%2Ffreshman%2Ftips-for-applying%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cbgatewood%40collegenet.com%7C575d29990d9e4fa2042b08da7a4e504c%7C3993ea405bcd4f5499beedd19cae2d1e%7C0%7C0%7C637956774051500205%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=FXJTkNI1oQq87lDQ0usZA%2BkNf1qRq5hY2Qsq90fz1zI%3D&reserved=0)” to understand what we are looking for in your responses.  
    
  Respond to the essay prompts using no more than 300 words each.

**Why is an interdisciplinary education important to you? In your response explain why you are interested in the UW Interdisciplinary Honors Program.\***

Max: 300

**The Interdisciplinary Honors program encourages students to engage with their local, national, and global communities through a multidisciplinary lens. Tell us about a pressing societal concern that impacts and/or interests you. Why is this issue important to you and how do you imagine engaging with or addressing this concern while at UW?\***

Max: 300

### **Done-WPI: 01/15**

Worcester Polytechnic Institute seeks students who are the right fit for its academic and campus community. In what ways are you the right fit for the distinctive educational and campus experience that Worcester Polytechnic Institute offers?\* max 500

Outline:

As a student, I love to explore different types of learning. The unique educational programs at WPI would give me the unique opportunity to explore academically and give me my desired flexibility. I know I would excel under the 7-week classroom rotation because it would accelerate my learning and let me explore myself and discover new passions and interests. I look forward to exploring how I can integrate the humanities and arts into a STEM field. When I get to college, I want to start working as soon as possible, whether working a paid job, internship, volunteering, or even simply working to create something significant in school. WPI's focus on project-based learning mirrors my desire for more action-based education. When learning, I prefer to work towards creating something beneficial to others. I believe that just because college is a school, that doesn't mean you can't treat it as an opportunity to work towards a positive goal or get a head start in a career. In middle and high school, I often felt discouraged during group projects. I would usually end up doing the majority of the work since the others were disinterested and treated the project as a chore. In college, I hope to find people who are excited to innovate and can explore making and building ideas freely. I hope to surround myself with people who know they are doing productive, meaningful work and push themselves to make a difference. This environment is fostered through the undergrad project programs and overall project-centered learning. WPI puts time, energy, and investment into student creation, with project centers and educational opportunities throughout the globe. And throughout my future education, I wish to travel and gather experience from foreign places. At WPI I'll be able to explore different countries and get to work on improving my education as well as seeing how I can positively impact underprivileged communities. When I toured the campus, one of our guides told us a story about a group of students who traveled to Venice and worked to create a new water level measuring system that helped many local homes and businesses know when there would be flooding. It was the only school I had seen who spoke about projects that had been instantly utilized and used for a purpose. It inspired a unique passion towards college and introduced the possibility of something more; Although I have always been excited to go to college I was reserved to the idea that it would essentially mirror previous school experience. But after exploring the different opportunities offered at WPI, I have seen a new style of schooling that has opened my horizons and what I hope to get to experience in the future.

### **Colorado College**

In the following prompt, we are hoping to learn more about your discovery of and affinity for Colorado College. It’s an opportunity to reflect on what the distinctive academic experience of the Block Plan could mean for you.

We advise you to take your time, do your research, and give us some specifics about how the college would impact you and how you would impact the college. It’s a good idea to participate in an information session, browse our website, and carefully edit before submitting — after all, this is another opportunity for you to share your writing skills. Please see this [short video](https://www.coloradocollege.edu/admission/for-students/explore-campus/app-advice-9.html) for additional insight.

Why do you wish to attend Colorado College and how would the Block Plan serve your educational goals? (no more than 200 words)\*

As a student, I love to explore different types of learning. The unique educational programs at Colorado College would give me the unique opportunity to explore academically and give me my desired flexibility. I know I would excel under the Block Plan classroom rotation because it would accelerate my learning and let me explore myself and discover new passions and interests. Colorado Colleges' focus on exploration-based learning mirrors my desire for a more active and productive education. When learning, I prefer to work towards creating something beneficial to others. I believe that just because college is a school, that doesn't mean you can't treat it as an opportunity to work towards a positive goal or get a head start in a career. In a workplace, projects are often worked on by people in different academic fields working together. Colorado College's educational structure mirrors this and can help me prepare for a work environment. I also look forward to exploring the different research opportunities and discovering how I can contribute to progressing technology. Colorado College also offers many social opportunities to experiment with; I would love to get involved in clubs and other student activities.

What are you doing….. Hmmmmmmmmmmmmm

Spying on you… when it’s time to write this one - you might find this website and example helpful -

<https://www.collegeessayguy.com/blog/worcester-polytechnic-institute-wpi-supplemental-essay>

Also a refresher on the school - <https://www.wpi.edu/admissions/undergraduate/what-we-look-for>

## **Scholarships**

<https://equitable.com/foundation/equitable-excellence-scholarship>

<https://www.mensafoundation.org/what-we-do/scholarships/us-scholarships/>

<https://www.mensafoundation.org/what-we-do/scholarships/us-scholarships/>

<https://blog.collegevine.com/scholarships-for-women-in-stem/#scholarships>