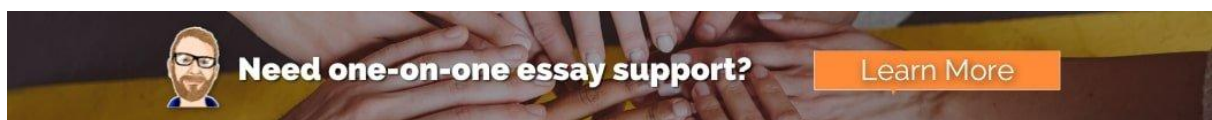
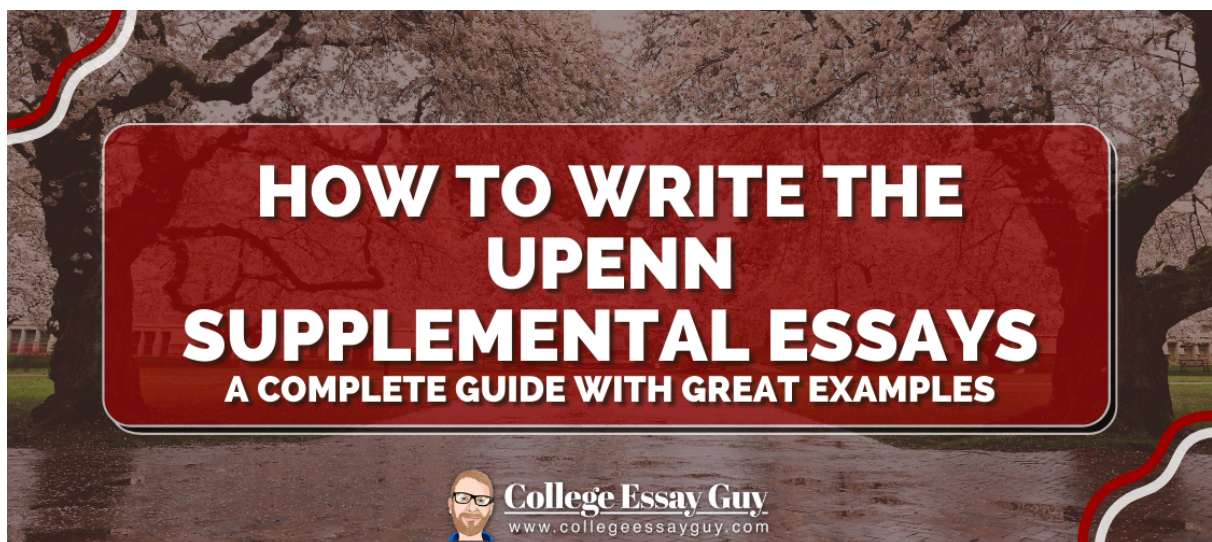


How to Write the University of Pennsylvania Supplemental Essays: Examples + Guide 2022/2023



UPenn has a long history (as in, older than the US itself) as a strong academic institution. Founded by Ben Franklin, the university prides itself on helping to educate leaders in both academia and public service.

UPenn's supplemental essays have for a long time primarily focused on some variation of "Why us?," offering you a chance to show the school who you are through linking your skills/qualities/values/interests to the awesome things UPenn offers. In other words, how do you and the school fit together?

Additionally, UPenn has several possible prompts for students applying to dual-major or specialized programs.

If you want to get a clearer sense of all that UPenn is looking for, you can explore an extensive, by-the-numbers look at their offerings, from enrollment and tuition statistics to student life and financial aid information, on its [Common Data Set](#). And for insights into how the university envisions itself and its role, and how it wants to grow and evolve, read its [strategic plan](#). Reading through this will give you a strong idea of what UPenn values.

WHAT ARE THE UPENN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY PROMPTS?

UPENN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY PROMPT #1

*How will you explore community at Penn? Consider how Penn will help shape your perspective and identity, and how your identity and perspective will help shape Penn. (150-200 words)**

UPENN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY PROMPT #2

*For students applying to the coordinated dual-degree and specialized programs, please answer these questions in regard to your single-degree school choice; your interest in the coordinated dual-degree or specialized program may be addressed through the program-specific essay. Considering the specific undergraduate school you have selected, describe how you intend to explore your academic and intellectual interests at the University of Pennsylvania. (150-200 words)**

UPENN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY PROMPT #3

Write a short thank-you note to someone you have not yet thanked and would like to acknowledge. (We encourage you to share this note with that person, if possible, and reflect on the experience!) (150-200 words)

HOW TO WRITE SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAYS #1 + #2 FOR UPENN

1. How will you explore community at Penn? Consider how Penn will help shape your perspective and identity, and how your identity and perspective will help shape Penn. (150-200 words)

2. For students applying to the coordinated dual-degree and specialized programs, please answer these questions in regard to your single-degree school choice; your interest in the coordinated dual-degree or specialized program may be addressed through the program-specific essay. Considering the specific undergraduate school you have selected, describe how you intend to explore your academic and intellectual interests at the University of Pennsylvania. (150-200 words)

These are both fairly standard “Why us?” prompts, with the first prompt focusing on community and identity, and the second focusing on academics and intellect. But as the following guide explains, you’ll want to be sure to think of this not simply as “Why them?” but as “Why us?”—as in you + the school—and why you’d be a great fit together. One way we sometimes joke about this is to think about the essay as though you’re helping the school understand why your online dating profile and its online dating profile are perfect for each other, and how you’d probably make great partners.

Always be sure to answer the question the prompt asks—again, the first prompt is a “Why us?” regarding Penn’s community. What specific elements intrigue you? Show the admission officers how you have reflected on how you’ve come to be the human you are, how Penn can help you become the human being you want to continue growing to be, and how you hope to impact others in Penn’s community.

With the second prompt, link to specific elements of Penn that will allow you to continue exploring what you believe in and care about, what has shaped you academically and intellectually.

Penn’s website offers many videos charting different Penn students’ experiences. Exploring them may give you a clearer sense of what elements specific to Penn excite or intrigue you.

One important caveat—if you’re also completing one of the dual-degree or specialized program prompts for Penn, the school specifies that you “please answer these [“Why us?”] questions in regard to your single-degree school choice; your interest in the coordinated dual-degree or specialized program may be addressed through the program-specific essay.”

For a complete guide to the “Why us?” essays, [click here](#). Here’s a condensed version:

Step #1: Do your research.

Spend 1 hr+ researching 10+ reasons why UPenn might be a great fit for you (ideally 3-5 of the reasons will be unique to UPenn AND connect back to you).

Step #2: Use [this chart](#) to map out your research.

Step #3: Decide on your approach.

Approach #1: The Basic, Solid “Why us?” Essay That Includes a Bunch of Reasons

Here’s an outline for a basic, solid “Why us?” essay:

Clear thesis that names the academic area(s) you want to pursue and maybe charts the path of the essay

Main reason #1 and 3-4 specific details

Main reason #2 and 3-4 specific details

Main reason #3 and 3-4 specific details

An ending that maybe discusses what you’ll give back

Approach #2: The “3-5 Unique Offerings” Strategy

Find 3-5 opportunities *that are particular to the school* (i.e., available at no other school or no other school you’re applying to), and connect each one back to you.

Approach #3: The “One Value” Strategy

How it works: Identify one core value that links you to the school and tell a story.

1. Find a way in which you and the school are deeply aligned.
2. Take your time crafting the essay.
3. Find a way to be vulnerable.

Could I create a hybrid approach by focusing on a central theme, but still listing a few reasons?

Yup.

Let’s look at some examples of pairs of past student essays:

UPenn Supplemental Essay Example Pairs:

Example 1:

Herding sheep at Washington Crossing Historic Park was my first window into the effects of climate change. Extreme summers forced the sheep to lay lethargically in an 18th century barn as their pastures wilted. Driven to make a difference in climate change awareness at my school, I joined the environmental club, EnAct, and organized a state-wide climate change conference. I tended to the school's hens after joining the Garden Apprenticeship Program, and I organized book drives, beach sweeps, and trail cleanups while leading the Service Learning committee.

But, I yearn to impact the community beyond one-time initiatives.

At Penn, I want to make long-term, institutional change that will resonate for future generations. As a member of the Penn Environmental Group, I will campaign for the elimination of #6 plastics on campus and help organize GreenFest. I will learn the art of sustainable design through projects like the student-led Climate Action Plan. My experiences leading the Service Learning Committee and EnAct give me the unique perspective of environmentalism through a community lens.

Collaborating with a diverse group of peers with unique interests, I will work towards making a dent in what I feel is the largest obstacle facing our generation.

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Tips + Analysis

1. Use clear, direct structural elements. The hook gets us curious both about the student (you've been herding sheep?), and about how this connects to UPenn (we have faith she'll get to the link, provided it doesn't take too long).

2. Show how you'll engage in the future through how you've engaged before.

The first paragraph shows some nice elements of previous community engagement—driven by some of the student's core values—that then link to how the student plans to continue that engagement within the Penn community. This shows she's spent time researching the school and contemplating how she and the school fit together. The connection to core values also increases the reader's confidence that the student will actually follow through on this at Penn.

3. Show parts of who you are through showing your values. As mentioned above, the author shows elements of identity through the values that have driven past engagement and will drive future engagement.

Here's the other essay this student wrote. Note that it was written for when the prompt was 450 words, but the approach and specificity of content is what you want to focus on here. With some cuts, this would work great for the new word count.

Example 2:

Whether proving the Pythagorean theorem or delving into a 13th century Spanish poem, I revel in patterns. I look beneath the numbers and words on the page to understand their history: millennia of mathematical genius that contributed to a formula, contact of two cultures that forever altered the structure of a language, or an economic graph that really represents a mocha fad in Philadelphia.

The presence of patterns in language has always fascinated me. Every word we speak bears the burden of ancient wars, socioeconomic disparity, and lost traditions, and continues to affect the lives of citizens today. In the Venezuelan refugee crisis, independence protests in Cataluña, and indigenous inequality in Mexico, language poses a barrier to international productivity.

Language has also posed a barrier in my own life, in my relationship with my grandmother. While at Wharton, I want to take advantage of the fact that Penn is one of the only institutions to offer classes in Gujarati. I hope to learn my family's heritage language and gain a deeper understanding of global linguistic diversity.

The summer before senior year, I had a window into linguistic studies at Penn while interning at the Cultural Evolution of Language Lab. I was exposed to psychology and cognitive linguistics by researching thematic relationships formed in the brain, and in a project about bilingual code-switching, I had the opportunity to design my own artificial language. I was able to create the language patterns that had intrigued me for years.

After studying linguistic theory and the origins of Hispanic dialects around the world, I have come to realize that my interests lie in the applications of language. That's where Wharton comes in. By using my knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese culture to analyze economic case studies in Latin America, I hope to merge my language skills with my fascination for economic policy.

The interdisciplinary nature of the Wharton curriculum epitomizes that combination. By studying international negotiations and participating in simulations to derive economic theory, I hope to develop the problem solving and critical thinking skills necessary to understand the deep complexities of societies around the world. I plan to follow the Business Economics Track in the Business Economics & Public

Policy concentration, and pursue a secondary concentration in Global Analysis. In classes like Nations, Politics and Markets and Consumers, Firms & Markets in Developing Countries, I will gain a political and cultural perspective of international economics.

I also plan to continue my high school experiences studying Spanish by pursuing a minor in Latin American Studies from the College. I look forward to the course Diplomacy in the Americas in the Penn Model OAS Program, where I will get to combine my interests in Latin American culture, community service, and contemporary politics.

At Wharton, a linguist-geek like myself will find a home where students work together to make a change in a complicated world.

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Tips + Analysis

1. Again: clear, direct structural elements. The hook, particularly the 13th-century Spanish poetry reference, gets us curious about who this student is and how her brain works. It also immediately sets up a focus of the essay—patterns and language. There’s a clear thesis in the fifth paragraph that directly links the elements of discovery in the previous paragraphs with UPenn and how it’ll allow her to continue to enhance her exploration. Each paragraph has a clear topic sentence, so even if the reader is reading quickly or skimming, they’ll have a clear sense of where she’s heading. And it closes with a quick conclusion.

2. Show you’ve done your research. The latter part of the body discusses specific classes and programs the school offers and how they connect to what the student wants to pursue. We get the feeling that she isn’t applying simply because the school is on a ranking list somewhere or that she just skimmed some basic information, but rather that she has taken the time to think about what UPenn offers and how that fits what she wants in an education.

3. Connect details about the school to your values. We often call this the “so what” element of the essay—don’t just tell UPenn admission officers how great their school is (they know). Get into why those details connect to some of your core values by reflecting on what they will allow you to pursue or explore, and why those things matter to you. Bonus points if you can link details that excite you about the school to things you’ve already done, as the student above does by the Cultural Evolution of Language Lab.

4. Show us your intellect through your exploration and curiosity. Lines like, “Every word we speak bears the burden of ancient wars, socioeconomic disparity, and lost traditions, and continues to affect the lives of citizens today,” show us that this student has spent time exploring this on a much deeper level than most people tend to.

Here’s another pair of examples for these prompts:

Example 3:

At Penn, learning and growth happen outside of the classrooms, too. How will you explore the community at Penn? Consider how this community will help shape your perspective and identity, and how your identity and perspective will help shape this community. (150-200 words)

My friends who attend Wharton don’t talk primarily about the classes or clubs. They talk about the people, specifically how vastly different they are. A term one friend used was anti-me, a person with whom we share so little in common that even casual conversation becomes learning.

That concept of an unknown anti-me excites me. If my dorm neighbor studies at SEAS, perhaps I’ll find myself at PennApps with them, learning to code for the first time. If a classmate writes for Penn Appétit, I’d love to learn about food and tour Philadelphia restaurants with them.

I’m also excited to be someone else’s anti-self. Since Wharton clubs are open to all Penn students, I hope to convince my roommates to join Social Impact Consulting with me (after all, social responsibility transcends major). As a family business entrepreneur, I’ll bring a client-side perspective to Consult for America. I imagine perpetual mutual learning and PPI Student Group discussions that spill over into late night talks in the Quad. Maybe I’ll even spread my love for R&B music by dragging my friends to a Spring Fling concert.

I hope I’ll be a fun anti-self to chat with.

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Tips + Analysis

Before you read the above academic “Why us?” essay, take a minute to think about who you think this student is based on the above Community “Why us?” example.

Like, actually pause and get a picture in your mind.

We want you to do so so that, once you read his academic piece in a minute, you can reflect on how the pieces work together to add dimension and depth to each other.

Above, the “anti-me” idea offers a good window into the student and shows he’s ready for college, as colleges generally see themselves as places that serve to challenge our preconceived notions and cherished ideas. This is something that many people find uncomfortable, as it’s generally more pleasant to feel as though the ways we conceive of ourselves and the world are correct. But learning to ask uncomfortable questions and to have calm but complex dialogue is key to intellectual and emotional maturity. This essay shows a student who seems ready to continue taking steps down that path.

Additionally, he does a nice job weaving in a few different aspects of the Penn community he hopes to engage with, to shape, and to be shaped by.

Now here’s another essay by the same student, his academic “Why us?” (again, for a version of the prompt with a longer word count):

Example 4:

How did you discover your intellectual and academic interests, and how will you explore them at the University of Pennsylvania? Please respond considering the specific undergraduate school you have selected. (300-450 words)

At heart, I’m both regulatory bureaucrat and capitalistic entrepreneur.

Coming from a small business-owning family, I’ve grown up finding ways to one-up the competition, from boosting website search ranking with unconventional SEO to negotiating with book suppliers to cut costs. After all, our rent depends on our profits.

However, I also hold enormous respect for regulation. I vividly remember seeing my second grade classmate Nelson sprawled on the asphalt in front of the Chinese school we both attended, accidentally run over by his teacher. I later discovered that afterschool was unlicensed: no safety training, no inspections, nothing. Years later, when my mother opened her own afterschool business, I filed the licensing documents and installed government-mandated guardrails. Nelson reminds me that, though burdensome, regulation is crucial.

The afterschool industry taught me the inseparability of business and policy, but also sparked my curiosity concerning how political economics can leverage that relationship for maximal social benefit. In my Democratic Party internship, I examined how to incentivize below-market-rate housing construction without reducing overall supply. At FBLA Nationals, I delivered a presentation on management practices to reduce oil spills, increasing profits while meeting environmental standards.

Penn strikes me as a school surprisingly similar to the afterschool industry: an environment where practical learning occurs through doing and where business and policy can be explored in tandem.

Penn's interdisciplinary nature allows me to dive deep into politics while applying business to civics through the Wharton BEPP concentration. As State Chair of CAYPA, I've struggled with effectively lobbying businesses, so I'm eager to research Corporate Reputational Dynamics under Professor Abito, investigating the impact of different social activism strategies on business self-regulation. I haven't seen such research anywhere outside Wharton. Further, Penn's one-university system would allow me to take non-Wharton classes like Free Speech & Censorship. I'm looking forward to discussions amid the 2020 election, especially debating whether social media hate speech deserves First Amendment protections.

*I'm drawn to Penn as a school which will challenge me to apply concepts to current events, as even foundational classes like ACCT102 are taught through case studies and simulations. I saw Penn's emphasis on practical application during a dialogue with Professor van Bethem, who has already altered my stance on compliance credit trading by contextualizing in terms of environmental policy. I'm excited to merge my FBLA business management background with my CAYPA social advocacy experience through Wharton Impact Venture Associates, a practical, social-impact focused marriage of business and civics (though I believe activism regarding when **not** to invest is equally effective to compel social progress).*

Whether I become a leader in the afterschool industry or an elected official regulating it, I know Penn will enable this Capitalist Bureaucrat to catalyze purposeful impact.

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Tips + Analysis

1. And again (because they're super helpful), use clear, direct structural elements. Notice how the first line performs a few functions here: It pulls us in—we're curious what exactly the student means by this claim, plus it shows some of his personality—and there's a slight wry humor to the juxtaposition. Again, this essay has clear topic sentences, a clear focus in each paragraph, and a clear conclusion, which bookends the essay succinctly and effectively.

2. Show you've done your research. The latter part of the body discusses specific classes and programs that the school offers and how they connect to what the student wants to pursue. We get the feeling that the student isn't applying simply because the school is on a ranking list somewhere or that he just skimmed some basic information, but rather has taken the time to think about what UPenn offers and how that fits what the student wants in an education.

3. Show the development of your interest through moments that connect to core values. Each paragraph provides details that show both intellectual and emotional links to his chosen field, and that link to his core values (community involvement, integrity, etc.). And he does a nice job of increasing the degree of his interest and involvement (e.g., internship, FBLA Nationals), illustrating his dedication. Bonus points here for raising the stakes by mentioning his family's rent in part depends on his work.

HOW TO WRITE THE UPENN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY FOR PROMPT #3

Write a short thank-you note to someone you have not yet thanked and would like to acknowledge. (We encourage you to share this note with that person, if possible, and reflect on the experience!) (150-200 words)

Write a short thank-you note to someone you have not yet thanked and would like to acknowledge. (We encourage you to share this note with that person, if possible, and reflect on the experience!) (150-200 words)

We're not positive, but we suspect that UPenn was inspired to create this prompt because of one of its more famous professors, [Dr. Martin Seligman](#), who founded and has popularized the field of Positive Psychology.

Specifically, one tool Seligman created to help people increase their sense of well-being is the Gratitude Visit. Here's how he describes it:

Close your eyes. Call up the face of someone still alive who years ago did something or said something that changed your life for the better. Someone who you never properly thanked; someone you could meet face-to-face next week. Got a face?

Gratitude can make your life happier and more satisfying. When we feel gratitude, we benefit from the pleasant memory of a positive event in our life. Also, when we express our gratitude to others, we strengthen our relationship with them. But sometimes our thank you is said so casually or quickly that it is nearly meaningless. In this exercise ... you will have the opportunity to experience what it is like to express your gratitude in a thoughtful, purposeful manner.

Your task is to write a letter of gratitude to this individual and deliver it in person. The letter should be concrete and about three hundred words: be specific about what she did for you and how it affected your life. Let her know what you are doing now, and mention how you often remember what she did. Make it sing! Once you have written the testimonial, call the person and tell her you'd like to visit her, but be vague about the purpose of the meeting; this exercise is much more fun when it is a surprise. When you meet her, take your time reading your letter.

Because this is a brand-new prompt this year, we don't have any examples for it yet, but we'd actually recommend approaching it using Seligman's guidance and advice.

Your tone here can be more informal/conversational. Write this as though you're actually going to give it to the person you're grateful to. Then, ideally, give it to them.

Some gratitude steps:

Find a quiet space (we'd recommend something like a mountain top or the beach or just climbing a tree, if possible, but you get the idea).

Grab a pen or pencil and some paper.

Close your eyes.

Think about *gratitude*. Spend some time reflecting on what in your life you're grateful for.

That last step might be more nebulous for some than others, so for a more concrete way to think about gratitude, just to get your mind in the right space, you can play with a version of a Stoic meditation often called "The Last Time"—it's easier to feel gratitude for things (even stuff like chores) when we think about the fact that there'll be a last time we get to experience them, and we probably don't know it at the time. For example, for a parent, there's a last time they'll get to pick up their child and carry them to bed. (Unless your parents are insanely strong and continue doing so into your teens and 20s. In which case, amazing.)

Think about something you used to do with someone—it can be as simple as playing hide 'n seek with a friend or relative—that you've maybe done for the last time (though we'd

recommend never giving up hide 'n seek). Visualize that experience with them. Let the gratitude for what they brought to your life wash over you. Then keep following that flavor. Explore moments and experiences that help your readers see your openness, engagement, and sense of connection.

Side note: If you want to explore more tools Seligman and others have built around [the science of happiness](#), [head here](#).



SPECIALIZED/DUAL-DEGREE PROGRAM PROMPTS

Here are all the special degree programs and their additional prompts:

Bio-Dent: Seven Year Bio-Dental Program

Prompt 1: Please list pre-dental or pre-medical experience. This experience can include but is not limited to observation in a private practice, dental clinic, or hospital setting; dental assisting; dental laboratory work; dental or medical research, etc. Please include time allotted to each activity, dates of attendance, location, and description of your experience. If you do not have any predental or premedical experience, please indicate what you have done that led you to your decision to enter dentistry. (250 words)

Prompt 2: List any activities which demonstrate your ability to work with your hands. (250 words)

Prompt 3: What activities have you performed that demonstrate your ability to work cooperatively with people? (250 words)

Prompt 4: Please explain your reasons for selecting a career in dentistry. Please include what interests you the most in dentistry as well as what interests you the least. (250 words)

Prompt 5: Do you have relatives who are dentists or are in dental school? If so, indicate the name of each relative, his/her relationship to you, the school attended, and the dates attended. (250 words)

Computer and Cognitive Science: Artificial Intelligence

Why are you interested in the Computer & Cognitive Science: Artificial Intelligence program at the University of Pennsylvania? (400-650 words)

DMD: Digital Media Design Program

Why are you interested in the Digital Media Design (DMD) program at the University of Pennsylvania? (400-650 words)

Huntsman: The Huntsman Program in International Studies and Business

The Huntsman Program supports the development of globally-minded scholars who become engaged citizens, creative innovators, and ethical leaders in the public, private, and non-profit sectors in the United States and internationally. What draws you to a dual-degree program in business and international studies, and how would you use what you learn to make a contribution to a global issue where business and international affairs intersect? (400-650 words)

LSM: The Roy and Diana Vagelos Program in Life Sciences and Management

The LSM program aims to provide students with a fundamental understanding of the life sciences and their management with an eye to identifying, advancing and implementing innovations. What issues would you want to address using the understanding gained from such a program? Note that this essay should be distinct from your single degree essay. (400-650 words)

M&T: The Jerome Fisher Program in Management and Technology

Explain how you will use the M&T program to explore your interest in business, engineering, and the intersection of the two. (400-650 words)

Describe a problem that you solved that showed leadership and creativity. (250 words)

NETS: The Rajendra and Neera Singh Program in Networked and Social Systems Engineering

Describe your interests in modern networked information systems and technologies, such as the Internet, and their impact on society, whether in terms of economics, communication, or the creation of beneficial content for society. Feel free to draw on

examples from your own experiences as a user, developer, or student of technology.
(400-650 words)

NHCM: Nursing and Health Care Management

Discuss your interest in nursing and health care management. How might Penn's coordinated dual-degree program in nursing and business help you meet your goals?
(400-650 words)

VIPER: The Roy and Diana Vagelos Integrated Program in Energy Research

How do you envision your participation in the Vagelos Integrated Program in Energy Research (VIPER) furthering your interests in energy science and technology? Please include any past experiences (ex. academic, research, or extracurricular) that have led to your interest in the program. Additionally, please indicate why you are interested in pursuing dual degrees in science and engineering and which VIPER majors are most interesting to you at this time. (400-650 words)

These programs are highly competitive (even more so than admission to UPenn itself). Notice that almost all of them have a word count limit of 650—the same length as your personal statement. They're expecting you to get into some solid depth and detail regarding how and why you want to pursue this path. Read the prompt carefully, and be sure to respond to all elements of it.

A sample essay for one of the programs (Huntsman) appears below. Though the focus of each prompt is different, the approach is largely the same for many of them—how you came to have the interests you do (see “Why Major”), then shift into how the program at UPenn specifically fits you and your interests (“Why us?” elements again, without repeating what you wrote for Prompts 1 and 2, and how you'll be able to use your education to address specific issues or concerns in the field.

The sample below focuses mostly on what personal connections and insights have drawn the student to this area.

Example #5

Prompt: *The Huntsman Program supports the development of globally-minded scholars who become engaged citizens, creative innovators, and ethical leaders in the public, private, and non-profit sectors in the United States and internationally. What draws you to a dual-degree in business and international studies, and how would you use what you learn to make a contribution to a global issue where business and international affairs intersect? (400-650 words)*

During a family barbecue that crowds my house with a hundred hungry relatives, getting a prized lamb chop can be warfare. At one barbecue, my uncle ate every lamb chop

straight off the grill. As part of the eldest generation--those who worked in Newark plastic factories to build a life for his children--he could take advantage of the vulnerable without repercussions. The younger generations went hungry and their protests did not survive his public condemnation.

Though this is perhaps a simplification, I've come to see this annual family dilemma as a microcosm of oppression. Around the world, the voices of the weakest populations are suppressed by the elite. In the Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, corrupt judges are a barrier to checking the Mexican president's power. Centralized government in London prevents educational development in Scotland. And right at home, wealthy organizations like the NRA finance campaigns so the interests of the public are undervalued in policy. The lack of representation halts political progress and economic development worldwide. The voices of the people go unheard.

The Brazilian empire once thrived on democratic institutions, but two-hundred years of centralization and corporatism diminished the voices of the people, especially that of minorities. Meanwhile, industrialization and agribusiness led to inequality between the developed south and the rural north. Today, indigenous communities in the northeast rainforests lack the resources to be represented in policy. Illegal loggers ravage the Amazon, desperate for agricultural land, while indigenous communities suffer violent displacement.

In response to recent inflation and fiscal crisis, the President reduced funding for the government environmental organization, IBAMA, which serves to impede exploitation of the Amazon. But this backfired. International companies like H&M have stopped buying Brazilian resources like leather, and European countries have become reluctant to carry out the planned Mercosur Treaty.

The reduced funding for IBAMA also revealed a deeper issue: inequality and underdevelopment. Loggers and miners are forced to work illegally on protected land just to make a living. Indigenous communities are belittled by the elite, and lack the support of local police. Low literacy rates in these regions inhibit political participation. Loggers and indigenous communities alike need a voice.

My interest in understanding policy and society through the perspective of citizens, rather than governments, draws me to the Huntsman Program. Values entrenched over thousands of years shape a nation's political culture and economic behavior. After studying the history and governments of six countries in AP Comparative Government and Politics and researching the qualitative impacts of economic policy and foreign relations while at a wealth management firm, I have come to understand that economic and political success is shaped by the people.

My passion for Spanish opened my eyes to the religious beliefs, historical inequality, and cultural values that define the changing identities of Latin America. By learning the

language, I got to know the people behind the figures. At Huntsman, I'll expand my knowledge of Latin America by studying Portuguese as my target language. My desire to understand how people's perspectives contribute to Latin American economics and politics leads me to a Wharton concentration in Behavioral Economics, and a second College major in Latin American Studies.

At Huntsman, I hope to gain a global understanding of culture, history, and perspectives, and use that knowledge to effectively give people a voice. As a global political economist, the knowledge I gain at Huntsman will allow me to tailor educational and economic policy to the cultural values and political beliefs entrenched in Brazilian society.

A few hours without lamb chops inspired me to listen to people's voices. To learn about the culture, history, and voices that, ideally, would shape the policy that affects citizens' lives. There is more to policy than men in suits sitting at a mahogany table. Whether at the micro level of a greedy uncle, or the macro level of the Brazilian government, the voices of the people define success.