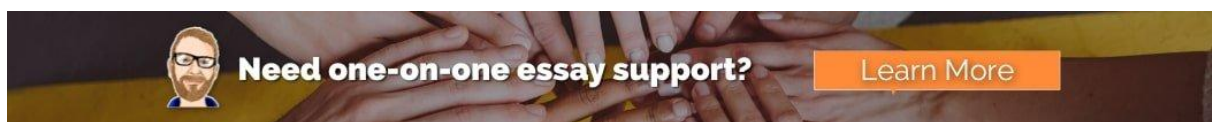
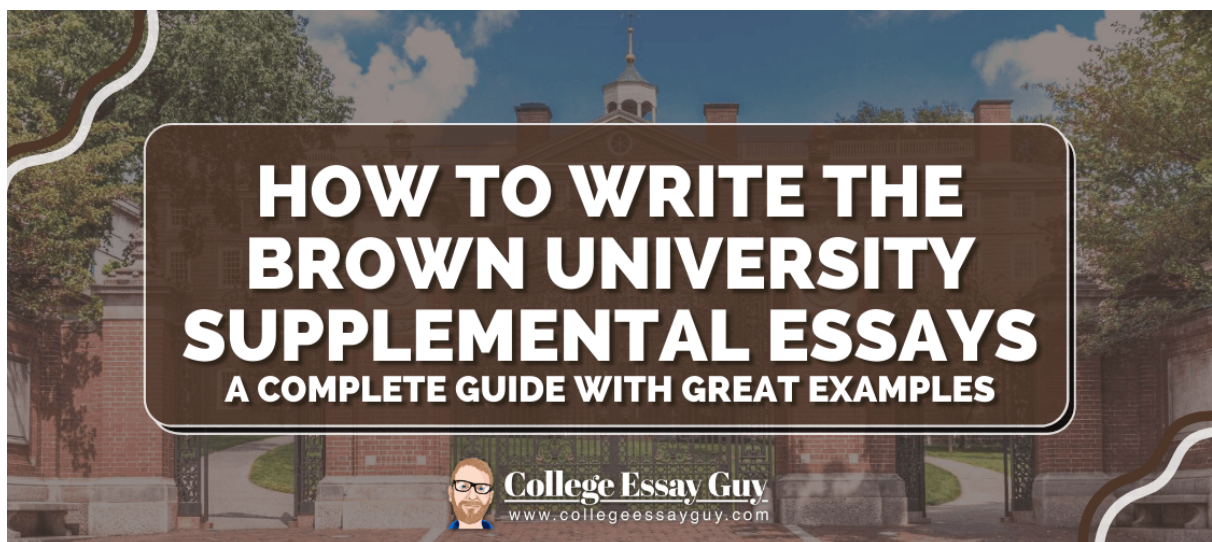


How to Write the Brown University Supplemental Essays: Examples + Guide 2022/2023



HOW TO WRITE THE BROWN UNIVERSITY SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAYS

Brown University is perhaps most famous for its **Open Curriculum** and the freedom and opportunity that it provides students for charting their own academic journeys.

Unlike colleges with a more structured academic curriculum (see Columbia University, St. John's College, and University of Chicago), Brown provides optimal academic flexibility to the right type of student.

In Brown's required supplemental essays, you'll be asked how Brown's Open Curriculum will help you on your own academic journey, but also how you'll connect with your peers and contribute to the greater community at Brown, as well.

Finally, students are asked to define "home," whether that be a concrete or abstract home, and to also talk a bit about one of their extracurricular activities.

Before you dive into the prompts, you can get an extensive, by-the-numbers look at Brown's offerings in its [Common Data Set](#), and for deeper insights into how the university wants to grow and evolve, read its [strategic plan](#).

WHAT ARE BROWN UNIVERSITY'S SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY PROMPTS?

PROMPT #1

Brown's Open Curriculum allows students to explore broadly while also diving deeply into their academic pursuits. Tell us about any academic interests that excite you, and how you might use the Open Curriculum to pursue them while also embracing topics with which you are unfamiliar. (200-250 words)

PROMPT #2

Brown's culture fosters a community in which students challenge the ideas of others and have their ideas challenged in return, promoting a deeper and clearer understanding of the complex issues confronting society. This active engagement in dialogue is as present outside the classroom as it is in academic spaces. Tell us about a time you were challenged by a perspective that differed from your own. How did you respond? (200-250 words)

PROMPT #3

Brown students care deeply about their work and the world around them. Students find contentment, satisfaction, and meaning in daily interactions and major discoveries. Whether big or small, mundane or spectacular, tell us about something that brings you joy. (200-250 words)

PROMPT #4

Required for applicants to the PLME (Program in Liberal Medical Education) Applicants

Committing to a future career as a physician while in high school requires careful consideration and self-reflection. What values and experiences have led you to believe that becoming a doctor in medicine is the right fit for you? (250 word limit)

PROMPT #5

Required for applicants to the PLME (Program in Liberal Medical Education) Applicants

Health care is constantly changing, as it is affected by racial and social disparities, economics, politics, and technology, among others. How will you, as a future physician, make a positive impact? (250 word limit)

PROMPT #6

Required for applicants to the PLME (Program in Liberal Medical Education) Applicants

How do you envision the Program in Liberal Medical Education (PLME) helping you to meet your academic personal and professional goals as a person and as a physician of the future? (250 word limit)

PROMPT #7

Required for applicants to the Brown | RISD Dual Degree Program

The Brown | RISD Dual Degree Program draws on the complementary strengths of Brown University and Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) to provide students with the opportunity to explore diverse spheres of academic and creative inquiry, culminating in a capstone project that interrelates the content, approaches, and methods from two distinct learning experiences. Based on your understanding of the academic programs at Brown and RISD and the possibilities created by the BRDD program's broadened learning community, specifically describe how and why the BRDD program would constitute an optimal undergraduate education for you. As part of your answer, be sure to articulate how you might contribute to the Dual Degree community and its commitment to interdisciplinary work. (650 words)

HOW TO WRITE EACH SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY PROMPT FOR BROWN UNIVERSITY

HOW TO WRITE THE BROWN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY #1

Brown's Open Curriculum allows students to explore broadly while also diving deeply into their academic pursuits. Tell us about any academic interests that excite you, and how you might use the Open Curriculum to pursue them while also embracing topics with which you are unfamiliar. (200-250 words)

This prompt is your classic "Why us?" essay, with a Brown-specific twist that asks you to focus on one aspect of Brown: its renowned Open Curriculum program. Before you start brainstorming, we recommend checking out this [complete guide on how to write the "Why us?" essay](#). Pay close attention to the "Why Cornell" and "Why Penn" examples, which are our favorites.

Here's the short version of how to write the typical "Why us?" essay:

Spend 1 hr+ researching 10+ reasons why Brown's Open Curriculum might be a great fit for you (ideally 3-5 of the reasons will be unique to the school *and* connect back to you).

Make a copy of [this chart](#) to map out your college research.

Create an outline for your essays based on either Approach 1, 2 (recommended), or 3 in the full guide above.

Write a first draft!

Here's a great example. Note how it starts with a very specific interest the student would like to pursue at Brown.

Example:

After growing up on diplomacy and a love of politics, I am eager for a college experience that would allow me to decipher the complexities of foreign relations negotiations, while also being able to specialize in Middle Eastern politics.

Brown's Open Curriculum would feed my inquisitive mind, allowing me the flexibility to pursue the International and Public Affairs concentration while also exploring a wide range of interests. For example, in Making Decisions, I'd learn the factors that impact choices, helping me to analyze negotiation tactics. In Spain on

Screen: 80 Years of Spanish Cinema, I'd continue to pursue my love of Spanish by learning about its cultural landscape in a fun, unique way.

With the Development track and focus on the Middle East region, I'd have access to an exciting combination of classes. With economic diplomacy becoming a powerful tool in international relations, I could better understand the power of economic influence through Diplomacy, Economics and Influence, while The Making of the Modern Middle East would strengthen my understanding of the region's historical evolution and the associated political and economic implications.

I'd also capitalize on the Watson Institute's resources, especially the Center for Middle Eastern Studies and the Rhodes Center for International Economics and Finance, attending workshops and researching Middle Eastern developmental challenges.

After being able to explore a wide range of interests at Brown, rather than having to choose one narrowly focused concentration, I'd build important skills like assertiveness and empathy that could assist me as a compassionate diplomat.
(250 words)

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Tips + Analysis:

Embrace “and.” A big selling point at Brown is its open curriculum, which allows you to take classes across several disciplines and explore outside your major. Brown shows how important this flexible approach to learning is by devoting a whole supplemental essay prompt to asking what you'd do with the opportunities the open curriculum offers. A key part of acing this prompt is to think expansively rather than in the confines of a single academic interest. If you're primarily interested in biology, also consider other classes you might want to explore out of sheer curiosity. Don't feel like you need to lay out a hyper-specific career path. Brown is all about embracing the “and” of learning, and it'll serve you well to take a similar approach in your essay. Notice that, in this example, the student notes a primary interest in Middle Eastern international relations but also demonstrates excitement for Behavioral Science, Spanish language, and film. This makes his response more multi-faceted and shows that he really understands Brown's approach to education.

Get specific. The great thing about this essay is that it's clear the student has done his research. Take a close look at Brown's course catalogue and list of majors to see what you'd actually want to take if you ended up going

there. Citing specific classes, professors, and areas of study is a great way to show your dedication to the university and how you'd make the most of what Brown has to offer. This student highlights a specific concentration/track (International and Public Affairs/Development with a focus on the Middle East), some classes (Making Decisions and Spain on Screen: 80 Years of Spanish Cinema), and some campus resources he'd want to make use of (Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Rhodes Center, etc). If you need help brainstorming these kinds of details, check out our BEABIES Exercise to get started (Tool #2 on [this post](#)).

Highlight connections. Although Brown wants you to have fun exploring outside the confines of a specific major, it also wants to see that you're not choosing topics randomly. In the meat of your essay, demonstrate how your interests connect. This student does a great job of sharing his understanding of how Behavioral Science would help him with negotiation tactics, while a Spanish language class would give him a greater grasp on different cultural landscapes. The key is that when he mentions an interest, he always explains the why behind it.

Because this prompt takes such a unique approach to the "Why us?" we figured we'd gift you with a bonus example.

Example:

After seeing The Vagina Monologues, I began exploring gender independently. From watching Mrs. America to reading The Second Sex, I sought solidarity and inspiration in art, media, and literature that shed light on marginalized voices. Studying an online course on international women's health, I became more informed on topics such as female circumcision, son preferences, and domestic violence – and more enamored of the process of self-directed, interdisciplinary learning.

Brown's Open Curriculum would allow me to double concentrate in Gender and Sexuality Studies and Economics while exploring other areas such as Modern Culture and Media. The S/NC option will encourage me to take courses such as The Late 60's: Film Countercultures, an area I am deeply interested in but new to.

Brown will allow me to build an interdisciplinary understanding of gender and economics with a classroom of self-driven students. Through Inequality of Income, Wealth, and Health, I will explore the causes of inequality, and how poverty can be addressed by economic policies and public education. Through A Gender Perspective on Women and Enterprise, I can examine gender inequality in

economic areas including property ownership, capital, and markets. In addition, I am fascinated by the differences journal's approach to gender studies --- analyzing it with race, culture, and art.

I am excited to become the architect of my own education at Brown, realizing my academic vision with a group of passionate and motivated students. (234 words)

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HOW TO WRITE THE BROWN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY #2

Brown's culture fosters a community in which students challenge the ideas of others and have their ideas challenged in return, promoting a deeper and clearer understanding of the complex issues confronting society. This active engagement in dialogue is as present outside the classroom as it is in academic spaces. Tell us about a time you were challenged by a perspective that differed from your own. How did you respond? (200-250 words)

Here's an essay written for Princeton that would also work well for this prompt (though it would have to be trimmed to meet the smaller word count):

Example:

"Why on earth do you have to volunteer at places like that?" My dad spoke abruptly during our drive home.

I had just finished working at an LGBT-friendly bar, raising funds for an LGBT workplace diversity campaign. As I walked out smelling like tobacco and beer, his face stiffened. But I knew what angered him more was that I'd turned down a volunteering opportunity at the UN and chosen the Beijing LGBT Center, an NGO he deemed illegitimate.

"Because..." I began.

"I don't want you to work there anymore."

Dreadful silence prolonged in the car. I was devastated that he didn't approve of the work I'd prided myself in.

But I didn't tell him these things. I hadn't (and haven't) come out to him yet.

I love my father. He's the superman who let me ride on his shoulders, who spent his savings on providing me the best education possible, and who cried when I told him I was lonely in boarding school.

But he didn't want me volunteering at the bar. And I didn't want to let him down.

So I compromised.

I never worked again at the bar. I could continue volunteering at the LGBT center, but not more than twice a week. And I should never discuss my work publicly.

As I gave in to my family's wishes, my mind flashed back to my other queer activists who had not. A transgender woman, Qing, has a father who hasn't spoken to her in ten years because she refuses to cut her long hair. Nana's mother nearly disowned her because she married her girlfriend.

I've come to realize that activism isn't just about marching in rainbow parades and running ambitious campaigns. It may involve conflicts with our loved ones who hold opposite beliefs. Upholding personal beliefs could lead to a broken family, and vice versa. There is not a right answer but only a matter of choice.

And that's a painful lesson. (324 words)

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Tips + Analysis

Bring it back to you. Although the prompt asks you to talk about a perspective you encountered that was different from your own, remember that the person reading your application ultimately wants to know more about you. This writer centers her essay around her father's disapproval of her LGBTQ+ advocacy/volunteer work. But she makes sure to bring their difficult conversations back to how it informed her own perspective and the compromises she had to make as a result of her father's beliefs. Think about how you can weave yourself into the story as you write. Why? This will make you an active participant (rather than a passive observer) in your own story.

Consider the nuance. As you're writing, you may be tempted to tie your response up into a neat little bow. It might seem nice to end on a happy or resolved note. But beliefs and values are complicated. We don't normally encounter perspectives different from our own and immediately accept them. More often than not, difficult conversations end in some mix of compromise and disagreement. Don't be afraid to talk about that tension in your essay. It

can be fundamental to demonstrating your depth of character and maturity. Notice, for example, how this student openly admits to struggling with accepting her dad's judgements—and how that vulnerability makes it easier to empathize with her. The ending is painful, and the student doesn't shy away from sharing the messiness of her growth. When you're writing, reflect on the kinds of conversations you have and what you learned from them. Even if you didn't change someone else's worldview, you can still have a topic worth writing about.

Incorporate dialogue (or don't). This student does an excellent job of using the tough conversation she had with her father about her bar job as a way to illustrate their conflicting viewpoints, quickly hooking us into her narrative. When used effectively, dialogue can bring readers into the action in an interesting, evocative, and visceral way. Especially in answering a prompt like this about ideas, engagement, and communication, dialogue can be a useful literary tool (Brown even mentions dialogue in the prompt itself!). However, too much dialogue or mundane snippets of conversation can be boring, eating away at your already-limited word count. Use your best judgement and consider whether dialogue would be a smart storytelling device for you.

HOW TO WRITE THE BROWN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY #3

Brown students care deeply about their work and the world around them. Students find contentment, satisfaction, and meaning in daily interactions and major discoveries. Whether big or small, mundane or spectacular, tell us about something that brings you joy. (200-250 words)

We think of this prompt as being very similar to Stanford's "what's meaningful and why" and "what makes you excited about learning" prompts. Check out [that crash course here](#) for discussions and examples of those. When approaching this Brown prompt, think about these key phrases as you brainstorm a possible topic and go to write: "care deeply about their work and the world around them," "contentment, satisfaction, meaning," "daily interactions and major discoveries." Seize on any one of those that speak to you. Maybe it's a pet project you started to improve your community (care deeply), or a hobby you do for the fun of it (satisfaction, meaning), or even your mastery of derivatives and integrals (hey, that's some students' love language). Whatever you choose, make sure it's something that truly brings you joy and that can generate 200-250 words of content.

Here's an essay written for another school that would work well here.

Example:

Last summer, I became an addict.

A pickleball addict. A pickler. I had once dismissed the game as an old dude's sport, or merely just too hard. However, the game grew on me as I went from barely keeping the ball in bounds, to serving aces and hitting consistent put-away shots for hours on end. The game's simplicity blew my mind, and I quickly became hooked.

As the school year began, I couldn't come to terms with the fact that I would only be able to play twice per week, instead of my usual five. So, I founded the Ralston Valley Pickleball Club, and it quickly transformed into one of the most populated clubs at school. Students from many different cliques and backgrounds come together weekly, whether through casual games or competitive, organized tournaments.

The staggering rate at which my peers formed new connections daily happily surprised me, as the game's effects were not simply left on the Pickleball Courts: the hallways at my school reverberated with new conversations. By utilizing an unusual, inclusive sport, I was able to introduce my immediate community to the diversity all around them. (189 words)

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Tips + Analysis

Consider starting with a powerful one-liner. The first sentence of this essay is cryptic, smart, and a little funny, and it makes you want to keep reading. The second and third sentence fragments are even better. The writer has barely written 10 words, and already we feel like we know so much about him. It's a lovely beginning. Stumped on how to start this (or any) essay? [This blog](#) has some ideas that may help.

Use structure to highlight your narrative arc. Although this essay is short, the author has a clear story to tell. The story has distinct parts. He became interested in pickleball, founded a pickleball club because he enjoyed it so much, and spread his love of the sport to other members of his school community. Those are the points he's trying to convey, and you can see them reflected in each of his paragraphs. Simple paragraph breaks like these can help you clarify your main points to your reader.

Emphasize uncommon values. This author picked a pretty cool topic, but he could have easily written a boring essay if he hadn't connected it to

interesting insights and values. When we think of sports, some words that come to mind might be physical health, athleticism, sportsmanship, or competition. However, reading this essay, we see the author has emphasized values that aren't as commonly written about in sports essays, like simplicity, community, connection, and happiness. The essay takes us in an unexpected direction, which a) makes us want to keep reading and b) helps this essay (and applicant) stand out.

BROWN PLME

If you're applying to other BS/MD programs, we have an [in-depth BS/MD guide here](#), built from advice from BS/MD admissions readers. For examples and analysis from Brown's PLME program, keep reading.

HOW TO WRITE THE BROWN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY #4

Required for applicants to the PLME (Program in Liberal Medical Education):

Committing to a future career as a physician while in high school requires careful consideration and self-reflection. What values and experiences have led you to believe that becoming a doctor in medicine is the right fit for you? (250 word limit)

HOW TO WRITE THE BROWN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY #5

Required for applicants to the PLME (Program in Liberal Medical Education):

Health care is constantly changing, as it is affected by racial and social disparities, economics, politics, and technology, among others. How will you, as a future physician, make a positive impact? (250 words)

At first glance, this prompt may seem intimidating, since the topic is politically, socially, economically, and culturally charged. But solid brainstorming techniques will help you break this essay down into smaller chunks. Before you start writing, identify a current problem in the healthcare system that means something to you (Ex. lack of transparency about medications, accessibility challenges for low-income students, etc). Try this technique:

Step 1: Write that problem down on the center of a piece of paper.

Step 2: Draw lines off it to the right and left.

Step 3: At the ends of the lines on the left, brainstorm reasons why that problem bothers you (Ex. I'm a student, and I have trouble getting my medications, so this is a personal problem).

Step 4: At the ends of the lines on the right, brainstorm ways you could address that central problem (Ex. federal regulation, fewer financial incentives for doctors to prioritize wealthier patients, etc).

Step 5: As you build out your mind map, start to identify the bones of your eventual essay:

Problem

Reasons why it affects, concerns, bothers, or motivates me

Potential solutions to make a positive impact

Your essay doesn't necessarily have to be that linear, but having these basic building blocks will help you to make this broad prompt more digestible.

Brown changed the word count this year, so we don't have a 250 word example to show you. But here's an essay we love that was written for another school but could work well for this prompt. While it would have to be 200 words shorter for this year's Brown prompt, the content, structure, and specificity are the key takeaways.

Example:

People should not have to pay extraordinary prices for necessary emergency treatment in the United States. If doctors turn patients away because they can't pay, what's the point of the profession? I want to become a doctor and create structural changes within the United States healthcare system to transform the medical field.

My interest wasn't initially as firm as it is now, rather I was just curious at the beginning. I dedicated hours to explore the medical field. After I became eligible in the middle of my junior year, I applied, interviewed, and was accepted as a volunteer at AMITA Health Hospitals. In March, I got my vaccinations and fulfilled the requirements to volunteer; however, COVID-19 struck—the program was shut down. Despite this obstacle, I persisted. I virtually shadowed doctors and continued learning about the medical field through Virtual Pre-medicine Shadowing and the BRAINterms Summer Seminar Series.

The experience of Trauma Surgeon Dr. Brian Williams and his surgeries for gunshot wounds impacted me. It was the first time I was exposed to images of

gunshot wounds. I had never imagined myself before being able to save people who had experienced such horrible injuries. He dealt with such difficult cases on a daily basis, but rather than it frightening me, I wanted to take up a similar challenge. The joy Dr. Williams expressed when telling stories of the patients who lived made me realize what an honor it is to have the expertise over life and death.

The cascade of information from the lives of actual doctors made me realize that I wanted to be one myself. So, how could I help people or get involved if I couldn't treat patients directly?

As a junior, I took Advanced Biological Systems in order to expand my foundational knowledge of biology, but I had a desire to learn beyond the classroom. I wanted to deeply dive into biology and the medical aspect of the field, so I cold emailed professors in hopes of pursuing an internship through IMSA's Student Inquiry and Research Program. I was accepted by Dr. Daniel C. Lee at Northwestern University and am currently interning there. Learning about the functions of the heart as well as cardiac magnetic resonance imaging was fascinating and solidified my interest in biology.

A degree in Healthcare Management & Policy would allow me to further understand my interests in policy and medicine. I'd be able to learn about the intersection of those two interests with the Georgetown curriculum through the health policy analysis track with a pre med concentration. The major would prepare me for my future aspirations as a doctor and a policy maker working to change health care legislation, and it would allow me to pursue research and internship opportunities with more understanding of my favored fields of study. (465 words)

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Tips + Analysis

Start with the problem. In this essay, it's really easy to find the healthcare problem that the student is addressing because it's in his first paragraph. Right from the start, we know he'll be talking about making prices more equitable in the healthcare system. It helps orient the reader and contextualize the rest of his essay. You don't want your reader to be confused or have to search for your thesis in the body of your response.

Talk about yourself. This might seem obvious, but it's easy to forget to do this when answering this kind of prompt. Many students get so sucked into identifying and describing problems that they forget to discuss what unique solutions they'd bring to the table. This student first makes it clear what frustrates him about the healthcare system, then he delves into his personal

experience volunteering at AMITA Health Hospitals and shadowing a trauma surgeon. He also mentions specific high school classes and research opportunities that prepared him for studying medicine. He smoothly transitions from the problem to his academic background. Remember, this is *your* application, so don't shy away from discussing *your* accomplishments. That being said, don't lose track of answering the prompt as you talk about yourself. In the end, this student circles back to the original problem and discusses how a degree in Healthcare Management & Policy would help him take action in the medical field through policy implementation. Had he been writing to this prompt, he could have expanded more specifically on what policy measures he'd take to effect positive change. The more you can do to show you've done your research and are prepared to take real action, the better.

Emphasize persistence. One aspect of this essay that really stands out is the student's grit and determination in making the most out of the opportunities available to him. Even though his volunteering job was interrupted by COVID, he made the most of his opportunities by signing up for external seminars and virtually shadowing doctors. Even though he was disturbed by the gunshot wounds he observed Dr. Brian Williams treating, he turned it into a source of ambition and motivation. He advocated for himself by cold-emailing professors, and landed a great college-level internship. Whenever you can, show how you overcame obstacles or worked with what you had in a meaningful way. It's not about what's handed to you, it's about making the effort to reach for what may be just outside your grasp.

HOW TO WRITE THE BROWN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY #6

Required for applicants to the PLME (Program in Liberal Medical Education):

How do you envision the Program in Liberal Medical Education (PLME) helping you to meet your academic personal and professional goals as a person and as a physician of the future? (250 word limit)

Think of this one as another "Why us?" prompt, but this one's all about the PLME program. Here are some steps you can take as you prepare to write this prompt:

Step 1: Do your research. If you haven't already, do a deep dive into the program, looking for courses and opportunities that appeal to you. How do you see yourself taking advantage of those offerings? What "why me" elements can you add in connecting what you've already done with what you hope to do in Brown's PLME program?

Step 2: Take a moment to think through what “your academic personal and professional goals as a person and a physician of the future” are. The prompt is essentially asking to learn more about two aspects of your aspirations: How do you want to grow (academically) as a person in the PLME? And what are your professional goals as a future doctor?

Step 3: Make a copy of [this chart](#) to map out your research.

Step 4: As you write, think about dividing the essay into two parts: the first outlining your personal and professional goals, and the second using specifics (courses, professors, research opportunities, etc.) to show how you expect the PLME program to help you attain those goals.

Here’s a nice example of a student who did just that. Brown also dropped the word count for this prompt from 500 to 250, but the example below nicely illustrates your goal with specific details and “so whats”, and would just need cuts.

Example:

Throughout preschool, I was only fluent in Tamil, so I carried a bright green piece of paper covered with crayon scribbles and coffee stains. Wrinkled beyond perception, it was my key to communicating with those around me. Over the course of two years, my mother had written translations that would enable my teachers to understand what I was saying at any given point in time.

After that green paper had come and gone, I started to notice new ones appear every once in a while. First, it was just a simple guide on verbs in Spanish, then it was a trigonometry review in Precalculus, until finally it was my formula sheet for Chemistry. At this point in time, the green sheet of paper represented a bridge between two worlds: one that was unknown and one that was familiar. Since I valued it so much, I made it my goal to become such a bridge. As a hospital volunteer, I spoke in Spanish, Telugu, and Tamil in order to help visitors find what they were looking for. This is where my interest in the medical field stems from—forming connections. My goal, as a physician, is to better my patients’ social and emotional health in addition to their physical well-being.

PLME will give me the opportunity to explore my interests in a shorter, more structured timeframe, while also encouraging growth in various fields during my two years as an undergraduate student participating in medical school coursework. I hope to take part in Brown’s study abroad programs (if Covid allows it!), participating in extensive learning in places like Argentina and Japan. I’m very eager to study biology and medicine through the lens of new cultures. Additionally,

within Providence, I'd be privileged to lend my skills to the Community Health Advocacy Program.

At Brown, I want to continue my love of research. When I was a research assistant at the University of Illinois, I collected data on pancreatic cysts; but I would like the chance to participate in research on my particular interest in neural pathways and how they relate to cognitive function. I am especially intrigued by Dr. Sasaki's work on how both the REM and NREM sleep cycles affect the learning process. I might also finally get the chance to conduct the study on total recall (not the movie) that I designed in my psychology class.

From the limitless opportunities for exploration to a simultaneous science-oriented and clinic-oriented approach throughout my PLME experience, I'm confident that Brown will be a place in which I can thrive and become the bridge I have always sought to be— that green sheet of paper, connecting the known and unknown.
(444 words)

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Tips + Analysis

Connect to Brown's resources. This essay isn't just about you. It also isn't just about Brown or the PLME program. "Why us?" = why you + why Brown/PLME. So try to craft a response that both demonstrates your unique interests and connects those to what the college/program has to offer. This student highlights her interest in traveling, translation, and connection in relation to medicine by talking about her experience volunteering at a hospital. She then connects those personal experiences to specific opportunities at Brown, like studying abroad in Argentina or Japan, participating in the Community Health Advocacy Program in Providence, and doing research on sleep cycles. We get a distinct sense of her excitement to engage with what the school has to offer. It's specific to the PLME program and her love of medicine, but it also expands to the broader university. Getting as specific as possible about the clubs, labs, classes, majors, or professors you want to engage with will show that you've done your research—and that you've found lots at Brown to be excited about.

Explain your impact. The author here doesn't just reference opportunities at Brown in passing; she does so with intention. Every time she mentions a campus organization, professor, or aspect of the PLME program, she explains *why* she's interested in it and *what* she'd do with it as a resource. Writing about the contributions you see yourself making helps admission

officers envision your impact on their campus environment. It also shows that you're thinking through your involvement in the community on a deeper level, demonstrating a commitment to Brown's core values.

Make your structure clear and logical. This essay is easy to follow because separate thoughts and experiences are grouped in separate paragraphs. The first few are more about how the student developed an interest in medicine as a kid/young adult. The next few are about Brown and the PLME program resources she'd want to take advantage of. And the last paragraph is more broadly about her goals and why she wants to become a physician. These clear paragraph/content delineations make the essay easy to read and understand in the context of the prompt.

HOW TO WRITE THE BROWN SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY #7

Required for applicants to the Brown|RISD Dual Degree Program:

The Brown | RISD Dual Degree Program draws on the complementary strengths of Brown University and Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) to provide students with the opportunity to explore diverse spheres of academic and creative inquiry, culminating in a capstone project that interrelates the content, approaches, and methods from two distinct learning experiences.

Based on your understanding of the academic programs at Brown and RISD and the possibilities created by the BRDD program's broadened learning community, specifically describe how and why the BRDD program would constitute an optimal undergraduate education for you. As part of your answer, be sure to articulate how you might contribute to the Dual Degree community and its commitment to interdisciplinary work. (650 words)

Brown and RISD's Dual Degree program is no joke. Only about 15-22 students are accepted each year out of a large pool of applicants. To get on your reader's radar, this needs to be a stand-out essay. Think of it sort of like a personal statement + "Why us?" hybrid. And just like for your personal statement, great brainstorming is key. Here are some of our favorite brainstorming exercises to get you started:

Essence Objects Exercise: 12 min.

Values Exercise: 4 min.

21 Details Exercise: 20 min.

Everything I Want Colleges to Know About Me Exercise: 20 min.

The Feelings and Needs Exercise: 15-20 min.

Remember, you want your Dual Degree essay to be distinct from your personal statement and your other Brown supplemental essays. It's okay if certain themes or values overlap or intersect, but try to talk about something you haven't already covered in other parts of your application. Here are some general tips as you start writing:

Do your research! After brainstorming about yourself, explore the university's website. What courses would you want to take? What concentrations interest you? What clubs or sports teams could you be a part of? Really think through the way you'd structure your experience at the two universities. Your reader won't be able to envision you in the program if you can't envision yourself there.

Make interdisciplinary connections. That's what this program is all about: finding unique ways to marry an undergraduate education in something like Public Policy, Economics, History, or Arabic to an interest in a specific artform or style like Silkscreen, Film, or Industrial Design. Your reader needs to know how you'd benefit from an education at both RISD *and* Brown. What could you do with skills from both institutions that you couldn't do by attending just one of these schools? That's a question you should be looking to answer in your response.

Details! Be specific. The more visceral details you can share about yourself and what you're discussing, the better you can distinguish yourself from the other applicants. Use memorable language and evoke unique images that are likely to stick with admission officers.

Remember, sometimes, the key to writing is getting started. Your first draft doesn't have to be perfect. When in doubt, write it long, then cut it later after you've gotten all your thoughts on paper. The goal here is to emphasize your personal values and experiences, then tie those to the specific resources of the Dual Degree program and how you'd make use of them. Of course, this is easier said than done, but great planning, research, and brainstorming will set you up for success.

With all these tips and examples in mind, you're ready to start writing the Brown supplemental essays!