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Appeals Procedure for the Caseworker

1. Contact the appellant via phone and email.

It is critical to get a hold of the student ASAP so that the caseworker has more time. Once you get in contact with the student, make sure they send you (if you don't have it already)

- Personal statement they submitted in November (must be exactly the same)
- High school grades including senior year.

In the same conversation it is critical that the caseworker have the appellant request their *letter of recommendation*. Please refer to the document abstract to understand what letters are appropriate.

2. Read and Evaluate the personal statement.

Ask important questions that may help you better understand why this student was not accepted. Is the statement clear? Are there portions of the statement that can use more explanation? Did the appellant include relevant information?

3. Call the appellant and begin brainstorming the letter of appeals.

Make sure to keep in mind that the admissions committee wants to know about "new and compelling evidence." To facilitate this process the caseworker needs to ask some important questions

- On what grounds does the appellant think they should appeal?
- Does the appellant work?
- Does the appellant have any special family obligations or special circumstances?
- Has anything important changed since the time the appellant applied?
- How has the appellant continued to challenge themselves in their senior year?
- Clarify important aspects of the personal statement (very important)

4. Work on a letter of appeal outline and send it to the appellant.

A first draft should be written in a matter of a day or two. Have them send it to you via email ASAP. Correct the draft and send it back with comments. Repeat this process until the letter of appeal is completed.

5. Once you know enough about the appellant, begin writing the letter of support

To have a better idea of what a letter of support should look like please refer to the abstract and examples. Remember the letter is on behalf of a given center, so essentially you have the credibility of the center in your hands.

6. As soon as your letter is done, submit it to the Appeals Committee for review.

The review committee should return it within a matter of a day or two with appropriate corrections and feedback.

7. Have the appellant send all the necessary documents RECEIVED by April 15, 2008 to:

bridges Multicultural Resource Center
Re: Appeals
516A Eshleman Hall
Berkeley, CA 94720

5-7 days
to find out on
my Berkeley APP
mail by 12th



Appeals Submission Document Abstract

- A) **Letter of Appeal (appellant):** This letter should be no more than one page long. It should be simple, direct, and effective. This is the appellants chance to prove that the admissions committee made a mistake on refusing admission to the applicant. It must contain convincing evidence that suggests that the something has change since the student initially applied in the fall, that they failed to properly explain a portion of their application, or that they failed to include new and compelling evidence in their initial application.
- B) **Transcripts including senior year (appellant):** These are not necessary, but they particularly helpful if the appellant had really good grades in their senior year. More importantly, if the student failed to mention certain circumstances that affected their performance in school, transcripts can really help their case.
- C) **Two letters of recommendation (appellant):** Should contain at least one from a teacher, preferably in the senior year. Teachers recommending the student should be in math, science, English, or History. Strategies as to whom the recommenders should be may vary from the focus of case to case. Another effective strategy is to get a recommendation from a teacher in a subject that the student struggled. Make sure that the recommendation is good before submitting it. The recommendation should be signed on the envelope.
- D) **RRC Letter of Support (caseworker):** This is a letter of support on behalf of a specific center. This is the caseworkers opportunity to showcase the appellant's strength as a candidate and what they bring to the university. Letters of support will be reviewed by the appeals overview committee and approved on an individual basis by each center. Remember, these letters are an endorsement of the appellant by the center and must be taken very seriously. We will also attempt to get faculty to sign on to this letter.



Letters of Appeal:: Example #1

Dear Pamela L. Burnett,

Upon receiving my admission decision letter my immediate reaction was disappointment. However, after an extensive review of the application I submitted in November, 2001, I have realized that I may have been unclear about my personal and family circumstances. It is for this reason, and my recent academic and leadership achievements in the first semester of my senior year that I find grounds for an appeal.

*I have lived in a single parent household since the age of four. My father has made absolutely no financial contributions toward me or any other member of my family. He has not been involved in my life since the age of twelve. His current whereabouts are uncertain.

*I am a minority among minorities. I am white skinned, native Spanish speaker, first generation, Latino Jew, who has been harassed and misjudged since intermediate school. Today I still face the struggles of both blatant and subtle racism, often not considered Latino (for my white skinned and blue eyes) in a very predominantly Latino community.

*During my junior year my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and had to go through various tests and operations, followed by weeks of radiation. During her illness and treatment, I had trouble concentrating on coursework (especially in the sciences).

Despite these struggles I have proven to be a strong leader in my community and classroom. I have shown a determination to learn and grow despite distractions: I have attempted to master a third language (Japanese), serving as the ambassador of the city of Montebello and representing it (as a Latino citizen) in Ashiya, Japan; stayed with the same rigorous schedule; and even became a graduate of a high school equivalent to one in Argentina. My senior year semester first semester grades have demonstrated my true academic potential, taking the most rigorous schedule of my high school career, and yet earning my best marks. During my senior year, I have shown great leadership and determination, leading fundraisers through the California Scholarship Federation (where I am President and recently have become a life member) to provide nearly \$2,000 to needy college bound seniors. Furthermore, I have used my voice as a writer and Assistant Editorial Editor of my school publication to make a difference, by informing my school community of serious issues such as teen age sex and civil liberties in America after September 11.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider my recent academic achievements and are able to reevaluate my application in the context of the personal circumstances that I may not have been clear about before. I hope I have adequately completed a portrait of myself, and that I will be allowed the opportunity to pursue a great education at your campus.

Sincerely,

*school wants reassurance
that student will be okay once here



Letter of Appeal:: Example #2

Ms. Pamela L. Burnett:

After months of anxiously anticipating a decision from your institution, I was extremely disappointed to learn I had been denied admission. After having carefully reviewed my application, submitted November 2003, I realize that I had omitted some personal circumstances that jeopardized my ability to paint a clear picture of myself. It is for this reason, and my recent academic and leadership achievements in the first semester of my senior year that I find grounds for appeal.

The first term of my junior year I saw a very close friend of mine die of Leukemia. Her death was hard and depressing for me and it severely affected my schoolwork. As a result my grades for the first term of my junior year suffered greatly. After a great deal of reflection and mourning I was able to regain my focus in school and since have maintained stellar grades. Despite the toll which this episode had on my work and overall mental health, I now value this experience as one which has allowed me to do a great deal of personal growth.

Being the oldest in my family, I have always been assigned the responsibility to take care of my two younger siblings. In my original application I failed to include this outside commitment. I have dedicated, and still dedicate, around 20 hours a week to looking after my brother and sister and helping them with their homework and everyday tasks. Berkeley's close proximity to my home will allow me to not only pursue my academic aspirations, but maintain the responsibilities which I have to my family.

In my last year of high school I have taken a new and proactive approach to my education attempting to learn and tap into abilities and resources which I thought I had never possessed or simply could not learn. This winter, Rotary International sponsored a speech contest for the Interact Club at my campus where to my surprise, I won first place and went on to compete with the first place winners of other schools in the district level. At the district level I also won first place, achieving highest distinction in writing and presenting a speech, later to compete in regionals. My newfound ability in communication has allowed me to gain the confidence I needed to chair a committee for my student government to help recruit accomplished alumni to come speak to current students.

This year my father was temporarily unemployed and my commitment to home and family was even more so extended than usual. During his unemployment not only did I continue to be the main support figure for my siblings but took on a greater responsibility by helping my father in his pursuit for new employment. Despite this additional stress, my schoolwork in my senior year remained focused.

I would like ot express my gratitutde and appreciation for having taken the time to reconsider my personal circumstances and reviewing my recent accomplishments. What I have become, learned and attained recently, I affirm makes me a strong candidate for your university, not only as a student but as a growing young adult as well. I hope I have succeeded in providing you with a clearer picture of who I am and how I



can enhance the Berkeley campus community, and that you will grant me the opportunity to pursue a higher education at the University of California Berkeley.

Sincerely,

lucerotorres@berkeley.edu

Mailing address:

Freshman Appeals Committee
ID # + name

University of California Berkeley
100 Morris Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94720-1200

or you can email me at lucerotorres@berkeley.edu or call me at 510-642-3914 if you have any questions.

I believe I have made a home at UC Berkeley and I would like to continue my education here. I am looking forward to meeting you all and I hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Lucero Torres
University of California Berkeley
100 Morris Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94720-1200



Letter of Appeal:: Example #3

Ms. Pamel Burnett:

Upon receiving notice of my denied admission status I was extremely disappointed. I have reviewed my original application submitted in November of 2002 and have realized that there are certain elements of it that may have been overlooked due to a lack of clarity. In addition, my recent academic accomplishments and new leadership activity give me reason to believe that I am highly qualified applicant and that the decision regarding my acceptance to the University of California at Berkeley be reconsidered.

*I began to work part-time in the final semester of my sophomore year. My first employer overworked me to the point where I was working 36 hours a week. This affected my schoolwork and my overall health. I did not have the time or energy to fully focus on my schoolwork or extracurricular activities. My lack of time, especially for summer projects, prevented me from enrolling in more honor and AP courses. Initially I contributed half of my paycheck to our household, but eventually I utilized my earnings for the payment of my college fees over the summer and savings for my education.

*I am a first generation, college bound Latina. Although my parents have greatly supported my education, they have been unable to assist me due to their lack of schooling. This has forced me to become self-reliant and to find assistance and guidance from outside sources.

*I am a native Spanish speaker. I began school not understanding my classmates or instructors. By listening and imitation I have mastered the English language. I also act as my parents' interpreter and translator at times.

**now
school is
structured
& now it
hinders me
resources
available)*
*Due to the class scheduling structure at my high school I was unable to enroll in additional AP courses. I was forced to choose between honor courses only offered the same period. This situation limited my plan for more rigorous class schedule.

*There are certain family obligations that make it difficult for me to leave far from home to attain a higher education. Berkeley is close enough to home so that it may be possible for me to succeed in school while allowing me to attend to my duties.

*This year I was chosen as one of eighteen participants in a special project called Every 15 Minutes held on our campus. Its main purpose is to show teens the dangers and seriousness of drinking and driving. It shows our generation that our youth does not make us invisible. My leadership abilities and persistent and determined attitude have contributed to being selected by administration and staff to leave an impact on our student body. Our goal is to discourage drinking and driving, promote responsible decisions making and make students realize that there are serious consequences to all our actions.



*My newly submitted first semester grades of my senior year illustrate my persistent goal to succeed while acting as a positive role model on campus and in my community. This year I am juggling part-time work, various soccer teams, a variety of club activities, Peer Helping, Student Reaching Out, Fundraising for the Relay for Life, and tutoring at three different schools in our community among other activities.

Your time taken to reevaluate my academic and overall accomplishments is greatly appreciated. I assure you that I will contribute many aspects of my life to your campus, not only as a competitive student, but also as part of your community through organizations and involvement in activities. I hope that I will not be denied the opportunity to pursue the best education and my goal of success at your university.
Sincerely,

Yours sincerely,
Xiaoxia
Xiaoxia is a Chinese woman born in 1992. A graduate from a community college in her home town, she has been accepted into several universities in the United States. She is currently attending the University of California Berkeley, where she is majoring in Psychology and minoring in Sociology. She is involved in several clubs and organizations, including the Chinese Student Association, the Asian American Student Union, and the Black Student Union. She is also a member of the Women's Soccer team and the Women's Lacrosse team. She is a dedicated student and a hard worker, always striving to do her best. She is a great addition to any university and we are excited to have her join our community.

- put bigger pie together
- connect their experiences to Berkeley
- our next leaders



Letter of Support:: Example #1

Dear Appeals Committee,

The purpose of this letter is to support XXXXXXXX appeal to be granted admission to the College of Letters and Science for the fall 2003 or Spring 2004 semester. We feel that given his unique experiences he not only posses the qualities that are vital for success as a student and leader at the university, but would add to the overall campus community in an intangible and immeasurable way.

XXXXXX's success in school given the obstacles he has faced and the circumstances he has been forced into make him simply at a glance a noteworthy candidate for admissions. While many of his peers had the luxury of summer camps, traveling, and simply lounging, XXXXXX utilized the summers of his youth by working in the fields with his father.

Instead of complaining or simply quitting, XXXX took his need to work as a valuable learning experience and shifted his frustration with him and his families' adversity as an impetus to succeed. XXXXX has made an aggressive commitment and pursuit to education, attempting to become the first member of his family to attain an opportunity at perusing a degree of higher education. XXXXX demonstrates the kind of commitment to learning that is admirable of any person, much less one that has faced the overwhelming amount of obstacles which he has.

XXXXX's responsibility to family and school however extend beyond working summers and receiving outstanding grades. Instead, consistently throughout his high school career, Abraham has taken care of his younger sibling on an average of fifteen to twenty hours a week. What is even more so impressive however, si that despite his extended obligation to family, Abraham actively participates in his community, is a leader on the soccer field, and receives outstanding academic markings.

The pressure to succeed and burden of responsibility is not one limited to home. Abraham, being one of the only few working class students of color in his Advanced Placement and Honors classes was presented with a very distinctly different classroom experience than most of his affluent and privileged peers. Initially school administration denied him the opportunity to enroll in a variety of Advanced placement and Honors courses, often treating him in a very antagonistic manor. XXXXX was not phased. Not only did he successfully find a way to enroll in these courses to bolster his possibilities of attending an institution of higher education, but he excelled.

XXXXX has pressures from every aspect of his life. In the classroom, being one of the few Chicano students in Advanced Placement and Honors classes he feels the pressure to succeed, as if his performance is somewhat indicative of the judgment his classmates may make on the capacity of his peoples. And yet, XXXXX willingly and resiliently responds, time after time.

We feel that XXXXX's persistent ability to respond to pressure, responsibility, adversity, and obligation make him a more than qualified applicant for admission. Moreover, his experiences in their entirety lead us to believe that he will without a doubt enrich the Berkeley community and become an active and dedicated leader within it. We kindly ask you to reconsider your previous decision and grant Abraham admissions.

Sincerely,

University at California, Berkeley | 516 Eshleman Hall | Berkeley, CA 94720 | 510.642.3914

bridgesinfo@berkeley.edu | <http://bridges.berkeley.edu>