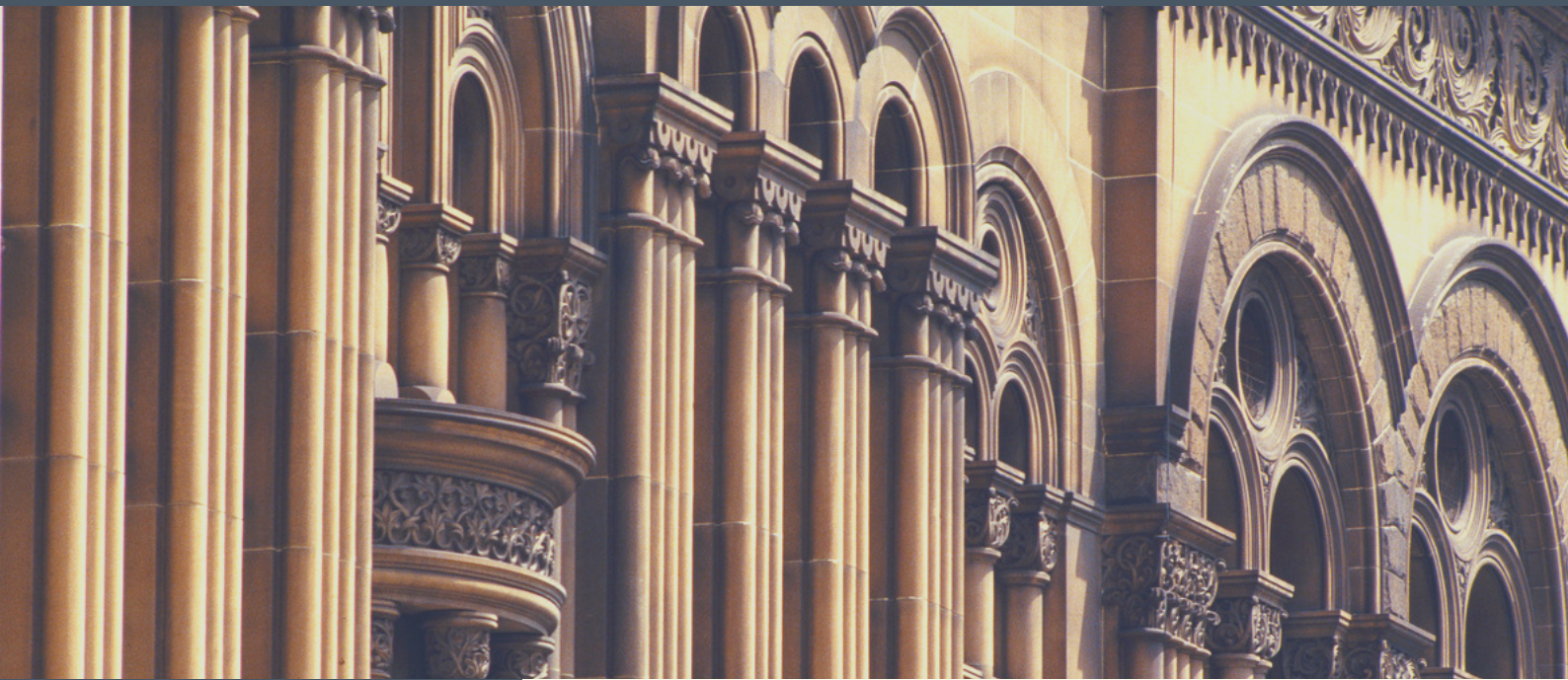


JULY NEWSLETTER

FROM LAMEIRE COLLEGE CONSULTING



CHECK OUT WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Tips for the Common App Essay**
- **Studying Business at the UCs**
- **Understanding College Board Scores (SAT I and SAT II)**

The Big Tip for Common App: Avoid the Resume Dump, Focus on the Story

Your instinctive approach to Common App might be to address your accomplishments and what you're proud of. Although UC essays want to see "resume" content in their essays, Common App doesn't want this at all. The Common App is a place to showcase your personality and softer skills to colleges. You will have plenty of places in your application to present your accomplishments and awards (Think supplement essays, transcripts, and activities lists). The Common App essay is not the place to do it.

My second piece of advice is that you have to have a conflict, a problem, tension, or a challenge: something to create a narrative arc in your essay. This essay is really more storytelling than it is an academic paper. How many books or short stories have you read that didn't have a conflict? I'm going to safely assume your answer is zero.

Now, if you have decided upon a quality or trait that you think is representative of yourself and appealing to colleges and you have a conflict you've faced or a problem you've solved, how do you structure the essay?

There are tons of options, but here are a few pointers.

First, open strong. Your introduction could be a scene (start right in the middle of the action), a list, a quote, or a piece of dialogue (again, start right in the middle of the conversation). Be descriptive. Give colors, names, smells, and sounds to pull the reader in.

Then, provide the background information needed to understand the situation, followed by presenting the problem you faced, and finally show what you did to overcome it. This section should tell the story of what happened and what you learned.

Finally, reflect. What's the big picture here? What are the applications and implications of this experience? And, the most important question: So what? Why should a college care? Make sure you answer these questions, without being cliché about saving the world or curing terminal illnesses.

Overall, this essay should be unique to you. It should be clear that no one but you wrote this essay. Write what is true to you, rather than what you think colleges want to hear.

- *Claire Schadler*



Studying Business at the UCs

One of the toughest decisions to be made during the application process is choosing the major that you want to study in college. Although many students do end up changing their majors once or twice (or in some cases, many times...) once they are in college, it can certainly be a daunting task when you're faced with choosing the one you'd like to start off your college career with.

In this month's edition, we will focus on a popular major of interest for many of our students: business. Now, it's important to note that out of the University of California (UC) system, there are only a few schools at which you can find traditional business majors. Instead, Cal State Universities (CSUs) are where you will be able to find the more "practical" majors. At nearly every one of the CSU campuses you'll find some variation of a Business Administration degree offered. On the other hand, out of the UCs, the only campuses that offer a Business Administration major are UC Berkeley, UC Irvine, and UC Riverside.

With that being said, there are still ways that you can pursue an interest in business while attending a UC. Although they might come under different names and vary in how much they will prepare you for your path in the business world after college, these business-related alternatives are something to consider if a major in Business Administration is not offered at the UC campus (or campuses) of your choice. Consider the following alternatives to a purely business-focused program at each of the UCs not mentioned above:

UC Davis - At UC Davis students can choose to take Economics (a common alternate when Business Administration is not an option) or Business Information Management. Two additional, interesting options are Mathematical Analytics & Operations Research, and Organizational Studies (under the Sociology department). The Mathematical Analytics and Operations Research is meant for students who are interested in taking a scientific approach to business by using math to analyze big data and business trends. The Organizational Studies major, on the other hand, takes a more soft-science approach to business.

UCLA - At UCLA, students can choose between Economics, Mathematics/Economics, Business Economics, and Financial Actuarial Mathematics. As a UCLA graduate, I do need to give a disclaimer that the Business Economics major was not highly regarded as a great alternative option for students interested in an intensely business-focused education. The Financial Actuarial Mathematics program, however, was great for students wanting to go into accounting after college.

(... continued)

UC Merced - UC Merced offers probably the least alternatives for a business major out of the UCs. At Merced, students can choose between the ever-present Economics and Management & Business Economics.

UC San Diego - UCSD offers a variety of business-related alternatives, with several having an international focus. At UCSD, students can choose to take Economics, Mathematics-Economics, or Management Science. The internationally-focused majors that I'd like to highlight are housed under International Studies, and include International Studies - Economics and International Studies - International Business.

UC Santa Barbara - From student testimony, UCSB is a great option for those students interested in a career in the actuarial sciences after graduating from college. Aside from the ubiquitous Economics major, students can also choose between Actuarial Science, Economics & Accounting, and Financial Mathematics & Statistics.

UC Santa Cruz - Finally, we have UCSC. Students have Economics and Business Management Economics to choose from. Aside from these, however, are two interesting options reflecting the spirit of the school: Environmental Studies/Economics, and Global Economics. Although UCSC is not quite known as a powerhouse in producing business students, these are interesting alternatives for those students who are interested in business but looking for a slightly different experience.

It's important to reiterate that the effectiveness of these business-related options in preparing students for a future in the business world can vary widely from UC to UC, and oftentimes the decision comes down to what exactly the students hope to get out of their undergraduate experiences as well as the direction they'd like to be heading after graduation.

In next month's edition, we will cover alternative majors to another very popular interest of our students: computer science.

- Shirley Young



UNDERSTANDING SAT I & SAT II

You've done the difficult part: preparing for and taking the SAT or SAT Subject Tests. Now, what are your options in terms of submitting your scores as part of your college applications?

First, let's discuss cancelling scores. You only have 72 hours to cancel your scores. You should only choose this option if you are 100% sure that something went wrong during your test. For example, you missed an entire section, became sick during the test, or made a mistake filling in the bubbles on your answer sheet. If you choose to cancel your scores, you will not get a score report, and you will not find out how you did on the test. I highly recommend that if you just feel a little uncertain about how the test went, don't cancel your scores.

Once you decide you are going to keep your scores, what are your options at this point in the process? The College Board has created a policy called College Board Score Choice, which allows students to decide which test scores to submit. Therefore, if you take the SAT test in March and again in May, you are able to use the test date with the higher score. This policy also applies to the SAT Subject Tests where you can choose which test scores you want to submit, even if you took multiple tests on the same day. For example, if you took Physics and Math II on the same day, you may choose whether you want to submit only Physics, only Math, or both Physics and Math.

Although The College Board has created the Score Choice option, not all colleges have decided to use it as part of their application process. Colleges have the option of requiring all scores, recommending all scores, or following the Score Choice policy and allowing students to decide. However, for both the SAT and the SAT Subject Tests, the College Board does not send out scores without a student's consent, so nothing will be sent out unless a student requests that their scores get sent.



In order to be clear about the expectations of the schools you are applying to, it's important to look into each school's policy on submitting scores. Also, colleges often update their policies, so check their website for the most current information.

One important distinction to point out is that this policy is not the same as superscoring. Superscoring refers to colleges creating a composite score from the highest score on individual sections of the SAT test. For example, if you received a 700 on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing section and 720 on Math for your March test, but you received a 750 and a 680 for your May test, some colleges will only consider your 750 and 720, giving you a 1470. As with score choice, not all colleges use superscoring, so you need to check each college's website to determine whether they use this process or not.

- Claire Schadler