

A photograph of the Berkeley Campanile tower, a tall stone clock tower with a blue-tiled roof, set against a clear blue sky. In the foreground, a group of students are sitting on a stone balustrade. To the right, a building with a red-tiled roof and blue windows is visible. The image is framed by a yellow diagonal banner in the top right and bottom right corners.

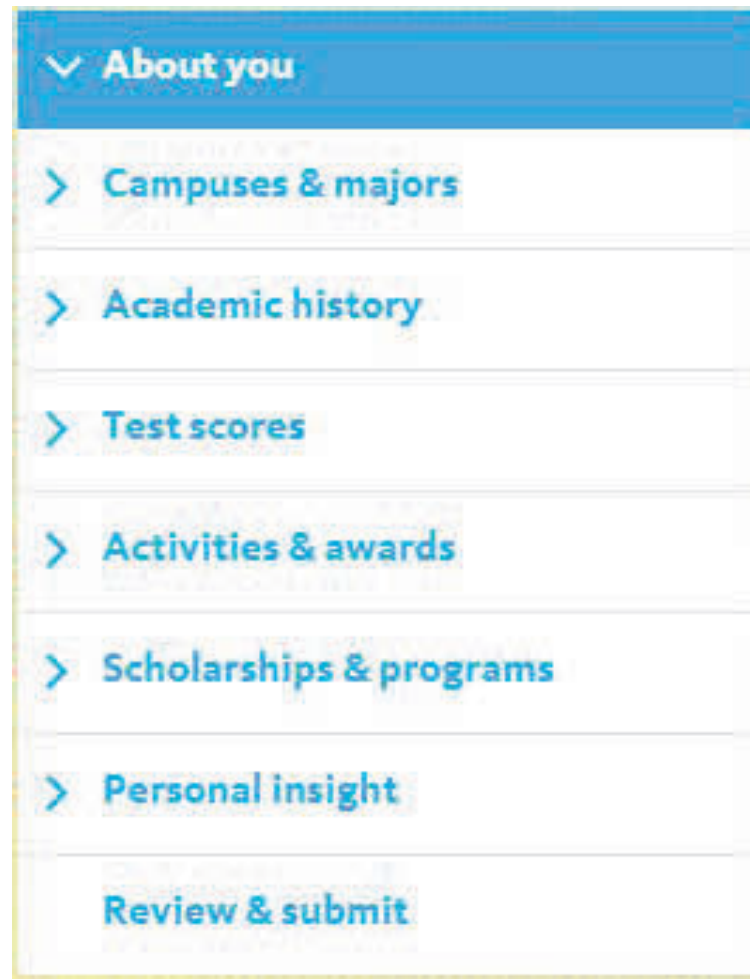
DISCOVER BERKELEY

admissions.berkeley.edu/contact-us

Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

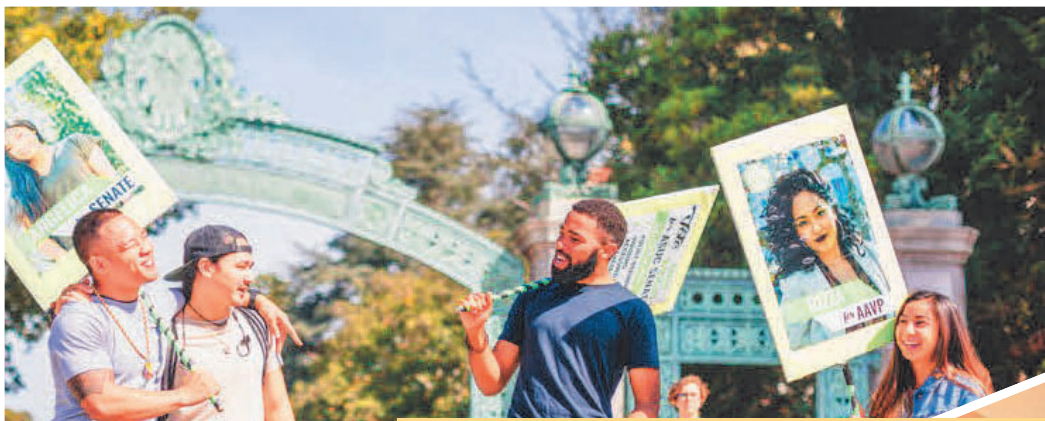


8 Sections of UC Application



A screenshot of the UC Application sections menu. The menu is displayed as a vertical list of items, each with a chevron icon to its left. The first item, 'About you', is highlighted with a blue background and a white chevron. The other items have a white background with a blue chevron. The items are: 'About you', 'Campuses & majors', 'Academic history', 'Test scores', 'Activities & awards', 'Scholarships & programs', 'Personal insight', and 'Review & submit'. The menu is set against a white background with a blue border.

- ▼ About you
- > Campuses & majors
- > Academic history
- > Test scores
- > Activities & awards
- > Scholarships & programs
- > Personal insight
- Review & submit



Activities & Awards



Activities & Awards

- Time Frame
 - High School
 - Does not have to be school related
- Commitment
 - Local, state, national
 - Positions held
 - Years, weeks, hours
 - Leadership

Activities & awards

Add activities & awards



You've told us what you did inside the classroom, and now you'll have the opportunity to tell us about what you're most proud of outside the classroom. We're looking for quality, not quantity — which means that even though you'll have room to tell us about 20 activities and awards, make sure to focus on the ones that are most important to you. Choose experiences that demonstrate commitment, responsibility, leadership, and most of all, genuine interest.

Add an activity or award

I have no activities or awards to report

Activities & Awards

- Write out full name then use acronyms
- Abbreviating is OK
- Write about your role, what you did
- Was it selective? Give quantitative measures



Activities & Awards

- Description, not definition
- Capture your accomplishments in each activity
- Best estimate of time commitment
- Consider non-traditional activities (caring for siblings, working unpaid for family business)

▼ 1. Extracurricular activity

[Delete](#)[Edit](#)

Name of the activity

Volleyball (HS & Club)

What you did

10 yrs. playing club, Diamond league, national traveling team. Selected for Jr. Olympic Team 2018. HS: 3 yrs varsity, captain 2 yrs. 2016, 2017 won CIF.

When you did it

9th grade

10th grade

11th grade

12th grade

Time you spent

30.0 hours per week

40.0 weeks per year

Activities & Awards

✓ 2. Award or honor

Name of the award or honor

Soaring Eagle

Level of Recognition

School

Type of Award

Academic

When you did it

11th grade

Requirements for the award

Given to one student every year for academic performance.

What you did

Did good in school.

Activities & Awards

✓ 3. Award or honor

Name of the award or honor

Soaring Eagle

Level of Recognition

School

Type of Award

Academic

When you did it

11th grade

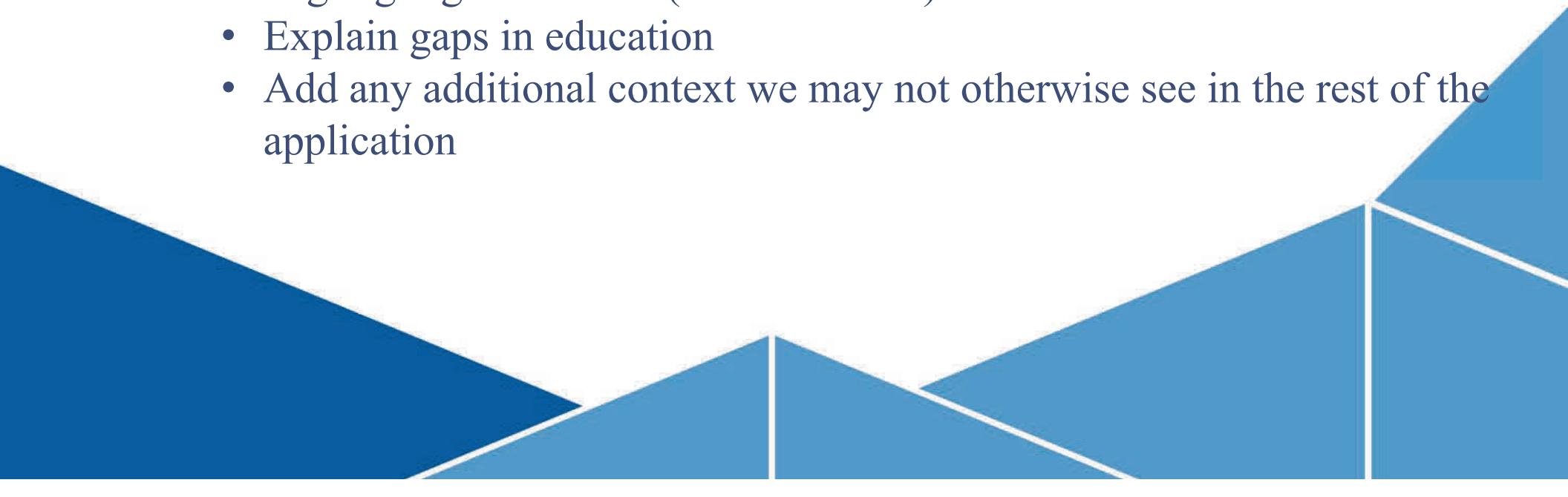
Requirements for the award

Academic excellence award. Students must have a 3.8+ GPA to be eligible. Only 1 person selected for the award out of 450 students in graduating class. Comes with \$100 scholarship.

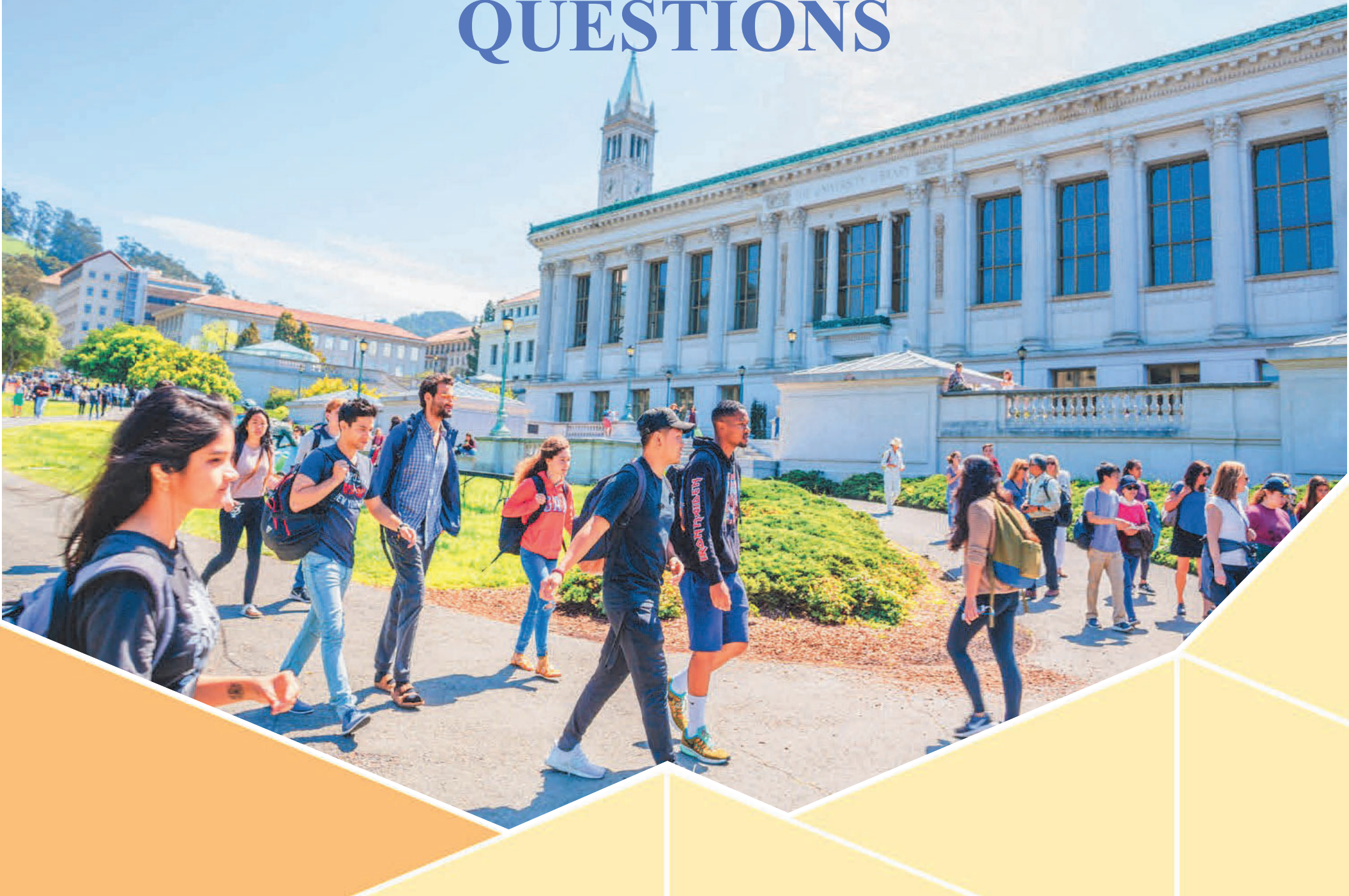
What you did

I worked really hard to earn this award. I chose to attend zero period so that I can work with my peers to get my assignments done. I also attended after school tutoring. For subjects I wasn't too confident in I used the Khan academy for additional practice and watched a lot of YouTube videos on the subject matter. I had to do all of this at school because I don't have access to a computer or internet at home.

Additional Comments

- Two additional comments boxes
 - Academic History & Personal Insight Questions
 - 550 word limit
 - Optional
 - Additional comments should:
 - Explain bad grades, grade changes, repeating a course
 - Highlight grade trends (i.e. C's to A's)
 - Explain gaps in education
 - Add any additional context we may not otherwise see in the rest of the application
- 

PERSONAL INSIGHT QUESTIONS

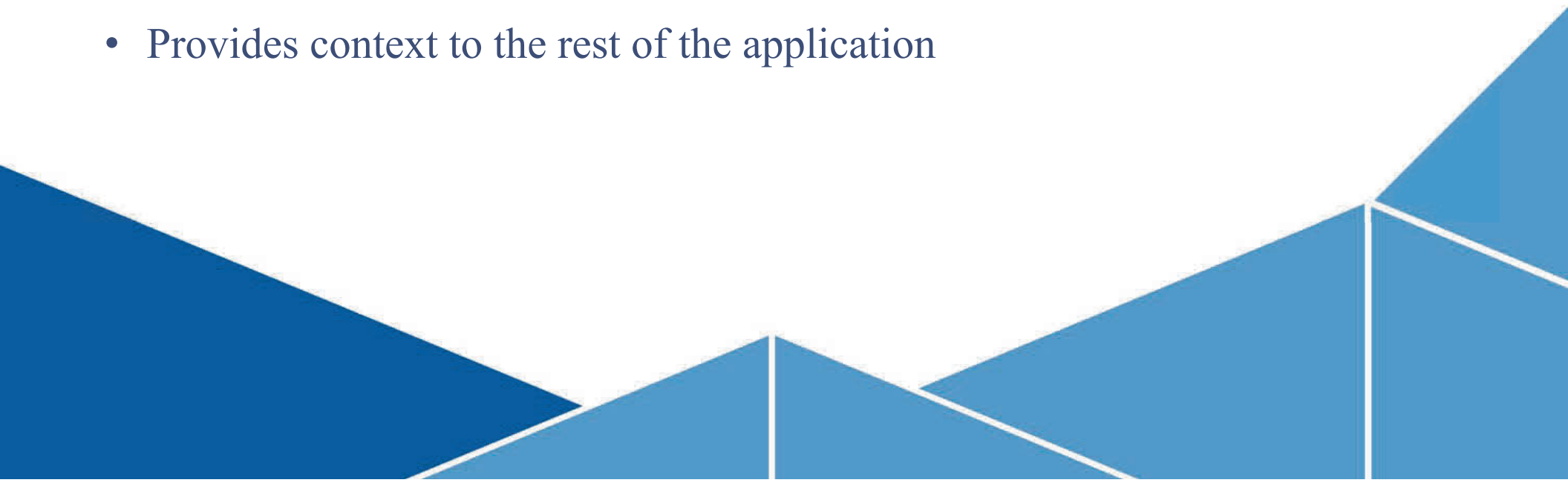


The Basics of the PIQs

Instructions

- You will have 8 questions to choose from
 - **Freshmen:** Must respond to 4 of the 8 questions
 - **Transfer:** Must respond to the first question and choose 3 of the remaining 7 questions
- Each response is limited to a maximum of 350 words
- Which questions you choose to answer is entirely up to you: But you should select questions that are most relevant to your experience

Why are the PIQs Important?

- You can't submit your application without them!
 - Opportunity for self-advocacy
 - Sets students apart
 - Provides context to the rest of the application
- 

What the PIQs are not?

- An audition
- An academic essay
- A vocabulary quiz
- Creative writing pieces
- A retelling of one's entire life story

PIQs and Application Review

THE 14 FACTORS THE UC SYSTEM WEIGHS

1. Grade-point average
2. Test scores
3. Performance in and number of courses beyond minimum a-g requirements
4. UC-approved honors courses and advanced courses
5. Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC)
– CA residents only
6. Quality of senior-year program of study
7. Academic opportunities in California high schools
8. Outstanding performance in one or more academic subject areas
9. Achievements in special projects
10. Improvement in academic performance
11. Special talents, achievements and awards
12. Participation in educational preparation programs
13. Academic accomplishment in light of life experiences
14. Geographic location

Note: No single factor determines admission.

The Prompts

Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes, or contributed to group efforts over time.

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

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

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

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

Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.

What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?

Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you stand out as a strong candidate for admissions to the University of California?

Transfer Questions

Please answer the required question

1. Please describe how you have prepared for your intended major, including your readiness to succeed in your upper-division courses once you enroll at the university.

ANSWER

Please answer any 3 questions below

1. Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes, or contributed to group efforts over time.

ANSWER

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

ANSWER

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

ANSWER

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

ANSWER

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

ANSWER

6. What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?

ANSWER

7. Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you stand out as a strong candidate for admissions to the University of California?

ANSWER

PIQ - Information

Essay vs Personal Insight Questions

- ❑ It's not an essay
- ❑ This is your interview with UC
- ❑ It's never read alone

For Your Information ...

- ❑ Responses are not graded
- ❑ Grammar/spelling mistakes will not hurt a student's admission
- ❑ Sob stories do not guarantee admission
- ❑ "I" and "my" statements are encouraged
- ❑ One response is read by all UC campuses to which the student applies



PIQ - Things to Do

- Be specific in your responses (who, what, when, where, why, how)
- Choose quality over quantity of examples
- Start early, get feedback, revise
- Focus on more recent experiences
- Choose questions that will give us the most context about you

PIQ - Things to Do

- Write as if you are speaking to a stranger and treat it like an interview
- *SHOW US YOUR JOURNEY*
- Use a word processing document then copy and paste into the application
- Remember the application will cut each response at 350 words

PIQ – Things Not to Do

- ❑ Use clichés, quotes, or jokes. Remember to use your own words
- ❑ Write about a particular UC campus
- ❑ Write about events in the distant past
- ❑ Be ashamed to brag

PIQ – Things Not to Do

- ❑ Write about everyone but yourself
- ❑ Duplicate information that can be found in other parts of the application
- ❑ Assume we know anything about you
- ❑ Treat this like an essay for an English class

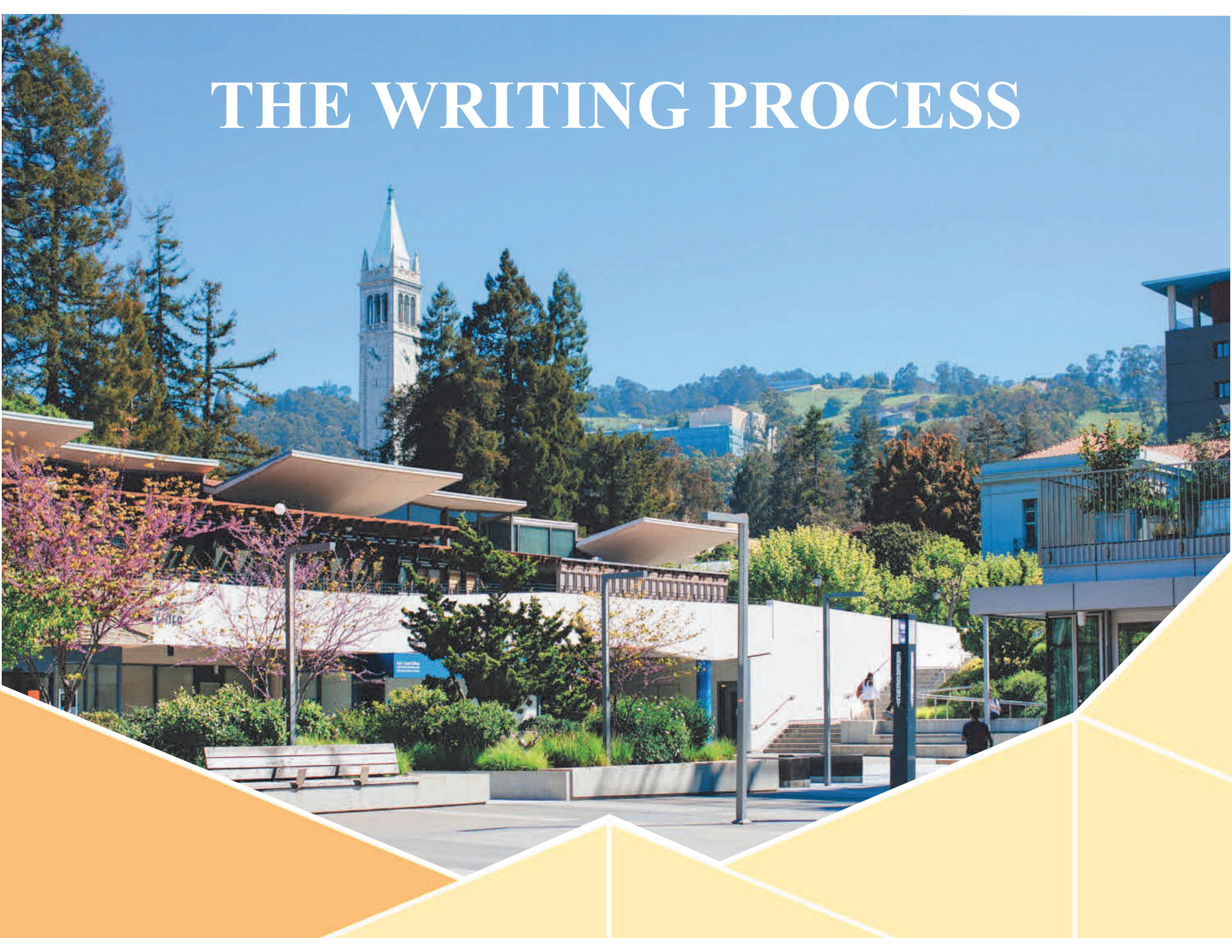
Pop Quiz

- ☐ True or False: It's “bad” to mention race, ethnicity, sexuality, citizenship, religion, political views, etc. in my PIQs.
- ☐ True or False: There any things I should not say in my PIQs that may be held negatively against me.
- ☐ True or False: My responses will be shared with the public.

Pop Quiz

- True or False: There's a perfect combination of PIQs that will increase my chances of admission.
- True or False: There's a “perfect” PIQ response.

THE WRITING PROCESS



PIQs in a Few Words


- Leadership
- Creativity
- Talent/Skill
- Educational Opportunity/Barrier

CHOOSE ONE WORD

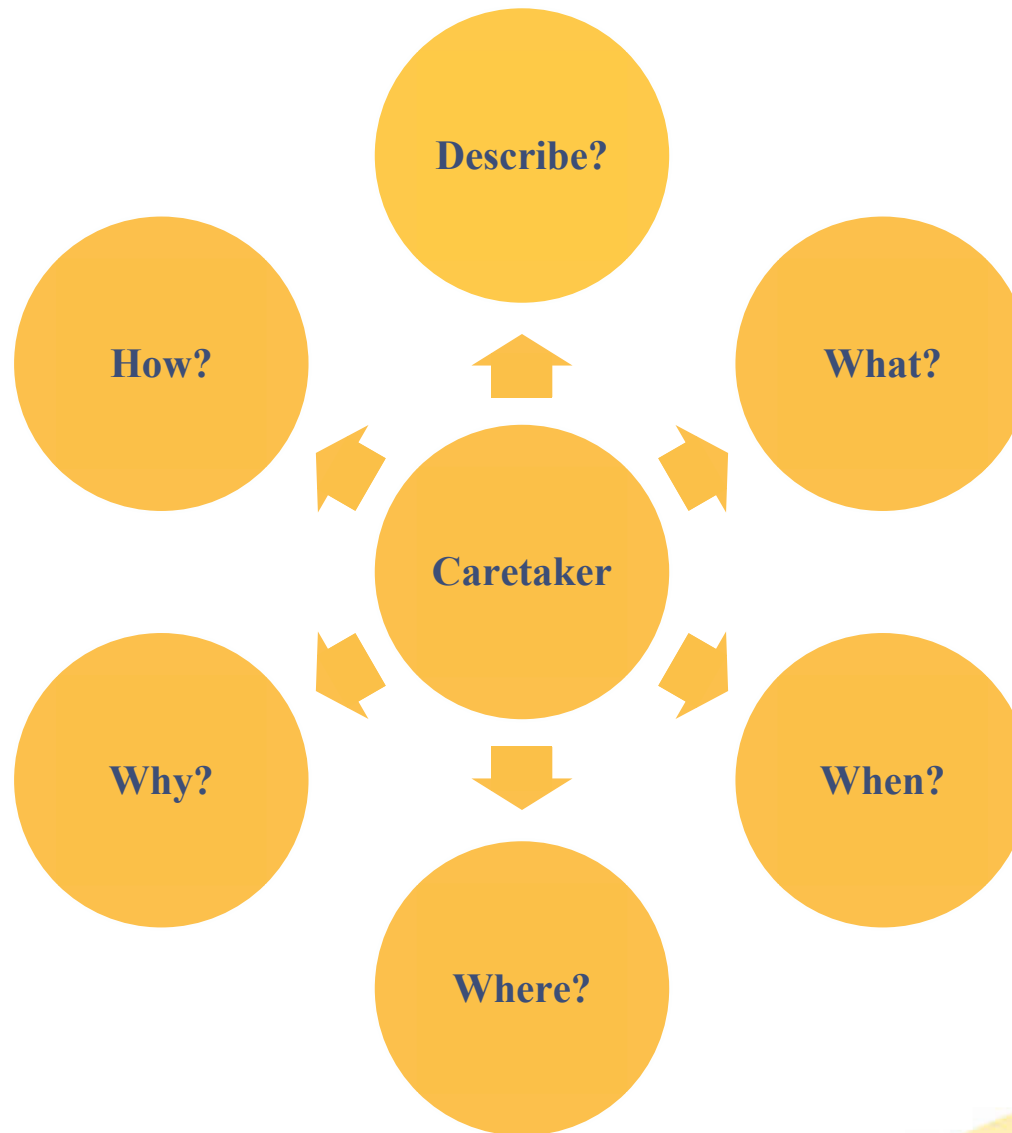
LEADERSHIP

The bottom of the slide features a decorative graphic composed of several overlapping triangles in two shades of blue. On the left, a dark blue triangle points upwards. To its right, a lighter blue triangle points downwards. Further right, another dark blue triangle points upwards, and on the far right, a light blue triangle points downwards. These shapes are arranged to create a jagged, mountain-like silhouette along the bottom edge of the slide.

List Your Experiences

1. President, Study Body
 2. President, Honors Society
 3. Captain, Robotics Competition
 4. Caretaker, Siblings & Grandparents
 5. Manager, Local Restaurant
- 
- The bottom of the slide features a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping triangles in shades of orange and yellow, creating a modern, abstract background.

Brainstorm – Break It Down



Final Steps

1. Write Freely – don't limit yourself to writing your thoughts within 350 words
2. Shorten your response to 350 words by omitting things that don't add value/context to your responses
3. Revise, share for feedback, and polish

Self Care

We acknowledge that PIQs can be very emotionally draining and traumatizing for some of you, so we encourage you to take a break when necessary. Drink water and nourish your body. Surround yourself with positivity. Don't compare your writing to others because your journey is unique. Be True to yourself. Follow your instincts. Trust the process. Be kind to yourself. Rest. Recharge. Remind yourself that you are enough. Recognize your hard work and accomplishments!

- Raices Transfer Scholars Program

RESOURCES



PIQ Information

- UC PIQ Webpage

- <http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/how-to-apply/personal-questions/index.html>

- UC Berkeley PIQ Webpage

- <https://admissions.berkeley.edu/personal-insight-questions>



THANK YOU

and GO BEARS!