

## **WRITING THE COLLEGE ESSAY**

### **What is the essay and why is it important?**

- Opportunity to present your voice
- Personality “equalizer”
- Opportunity to tell admissions something else they should know about you

*Would I want this person to be my college roommate??*

### **Writing Process**

- Not about certain # of drafts, but quality and authenticity
- Start by running with several ideas, gradually narrowing
- Consider what you want to accomplish with this essay
- Get feedback from those who know you well and those who don't know you as well

### **What makes a “good essay”?**

- Help readers get to know and like you
- Be honest without looking like you are trying too hard (e.g., over thesaurus-ing)
- Show rather than tell
- Develop a story that no other applicant can tell
- Don't repeat info already mentioned in application

### **Overused Essay Topics**

- *Sports taught me about teamwork and staying committed to my goals*
- *Trip to a foreign country broadened my horizons (focus on you, not new place)*
- *Community service taught me about the importance of helping people*
- *Leadership taught me how to lead and work well with others*
- *Overcoming hardship (don't focus on what you think admissions wants to hear)*

### **Brainstorming**

- Review general prompt questions
- Review answers that you developed in brainstorming worksheet
- Narrow to 4 - 5 topics
- What do you think? Things you'd want to write about?
- Develop outline
- Opening (catchy, unique, to the point) and closing (what's next?)