The Summer Times
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Bus Rides, and Zoos, and Malls– Oh my!

By Emma Stillings

On Sunday, July 5, 2015, a group of Summer College Students went to the exotic location of Syracuse, New York to visit the Rosamund Gifford Zoo and the Carousel Mall. The day started bright and early as the buses left with almost 100 excited students at 8:30 am, traveling to northward to the Zoo. There, the spirited animals wowed students and RCAs alike with their adorableness (This RCA’s favorite animals were by far the red pandas). After spending a gloriously sunny morning wandering about the Zoo, the students once again boarded the buses and headed for Destiny, USA – one of the largest malls in New York. In Destiny, everyone was left to their own devices and told to meet the buses at 5 pm, leaving students and staff with four hours to shop to their hearts content. At 5:30 pm, the buses departed without a hitch and returned to Ithaca, NY, dropping off happy, if somewhat exhausted, students and staff.
How to Write the Perfect Admissions Essay

By Cornell Admissions

Except for the SAT, no part of a college application seems to elicit as strong a reaction among high school students as the college essay. Some fear it; others loathe it; and most wonder why they have to write it at all. Regardless of your own personal feelings, consider this one fact: the essay is the only piece of the application over which you have absolute control. So why not use it to your advantage? Before you can figure out how to make the most of your essay, you should probably take a moment to think about why the essay is there in the first place.

College applicant pools tend to be self-selecting. This means that the students who have applied to the college have determined ahead of time (most often with the help of their counselors) that there is a possibility they will be admitted, even if that possibility is a slight reach. The result is an applicant pool that is generally similar in academic achievement: good grades, good test scores, rigorous course selection, good rank, etc. As you can guess, it doesn't take long before a lot of those students start to look alike, at least when it comes to the numbers. So that's why colleges ask for everything else: extracurricular activities, interviews, recommendations—and essays.

The essay is your voice in the application. When put in context with other pieces, it should help admissions officers learn as much about you as they can. One of the myths of essay writing is that there is some “right” topic, and unless you stumble across it, you are doomed. This is simply wrong. Don’t try to second-guess what admissions counselors want to read. The truth is that they want to read whatever you want to write. That’s the way they get a sense of who you really are. That said, there are some tips you should keep in mind.

First of all, don’t waste the opportunity. Essays about favorite stuffed animals or the posters hanging in your room might be fun to write, but chances are, they won’t really help the admissions committee get to know you very well.
Second, don’t bite off more than you can chew. World hunger, homelessness and the AIDS epidemic are problems worthy of serious attention, but they are incredibly complex issues. Trying to fit a discussion of them into 650 words or less may make your genuine concern seem like superficial understanding. This isn’t to say that you shouldn’t write about topics such as these. Just make sure you know what you are getting into.

Third, show, don’t tell. Admissions counselors will be much more impressed by a story about how a class president overcame student apathy and administrative red tape to raise $2,000 for literary awareness than they will be by another student who simply says “I am a good student leader.” In fact, the best essays are those that let the reader draw their own conclusions. Any essay that ends with, “Because of this experience, I now know the value of (insert appealing quality here)” hasn’t done its job. Let your essay speak for itself.

Finally (and most importantly) PROOFREAD YOUR ESSAY! Then proofread it again. Then give it to someone else to proofread for you. Careless editing can ruin an otherwise perfect essay. Granted, given the volume of applications, admissions officers don’t generally read with a red pen in hand—but you can be sure that whatever errors they do find will be circled. If you don’t care enough to edit your essay, admissions officers may question your interest in their school—and that certainly is not the message you want to send.

Regardless of what you write, remember this: A stellar essay won’t get you in, nor will a poor essay necessarily keep you out. The essay is only one piece—one very important piece—of the puzzle. If you have a weak academic record, chances are the essay won’t make much of a difference.

With admissions officers constantly on the lookout for reasons to admit you, make sure you use your essay to give them a few.

Editor’s note: Have more questions?

Come to College Fair on Monday, July 20, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. in to talk with admissions officers from many institutions.

The Inside Scoop on College Admissions is also on Wednesday, July 22, from 5:00-6:30 p.m. in the Donlon Formal Lounge.
Happy 4th of July!

Last week was filled with many Independence Day events. On July 1st, Summer College students enjoyed fireworks while laying on the Slope that overlooks Cayuga Lake. They were also joined by many Ithaca residents and residential staff. On July 4th, Summer College had its annual barbeque. Residential staff grilled burgers and hot dogs while residents enjoyed various field day activities on Court-Kay-Bauer Quad. Check out all the photos below!
Faculty Spotlight:  
Professor Michael C. Dorf,  
Robert S. Stevens Professor of Law  

By Mia Leung

The ruling of Obergefell v. Hodges, the case that legalized same sex marriage across the country was one that will no doubt be one that goes down in the history books. It’s also one that is incredibly significant for me because it was the case that got me interested in law. Upon the recommendation of one of my professors, I went to the Supreme Court of the United States’ (SCOTUS) blog and read over the opinions and briefs. I stumbled onto a page containing a slew of brief amici curiae, briefs written by outside parties regarding a case before the court. I read quite a number off that page one of them Professor Dorf’s, co-written with Professor Laurence H. Tribe of Harvard Law.

When I checked back to SCOTUS’ blog over the weekend there was a new posting, “Symposium: In defense of Justice Kennedy’s soaring language.” Its author was none other than Professor Michael Dorf. The name sounded familiar and I checked the bio at the top of the page: “Michael C. Dorf is the Robert S. Stevens Professor of Law at Cornell University. He blogs at dorfonlaw.org.” The moment my eye hit the “Cor” of Cornell I started to get a little bit jittery (and for once it had nothing to do with the cup of coffee I had downed earlier).

The next day during class I asked one of my professors if she would assist me in arranging a meeting with Professor Dorf. I had so many questions about the case and about Constitutional Law. Emails were exchanged, people were spoken to, one thing led to another, and I not only got to meet Professor Dorf, but my Foundations in American Law class had the privilege of having Professor Dorf come in as a guest speaker. The class was vibrant and certainly a memorable one. We had studied Constitutional Law from a more theoretical perspective so it was pretty cool to track a case from start to finish. We weren’t terribly well acquainted with Con Law, so Professor Dorf helped to break down unfamiliar concepts.

I had the opportunity to sit down with Professor Dorf later that afternoon and found that he is just as interesting as the case he knows so much about. He received his BA and JD from Harvard College and Harvard Law respectively. Dorf originally studied physics as
an undergraduate, but as a member of the Harvard debate team was interested in “the activities that lawyers do.” Originally interested in the international law of arms control, Professor Dorf became interested in Constitutional Law during his first year in Law School, the Fall of ’87, Louis Powell’s resignation led to “phenomenally interesting” Senate hearings, as Dorf described them, for Robert Bork who did not successfully win the domination. The hearings were like a “two week seminar on Constitutional Law” for Professor Dorf and piqued his interest in Con Law.

One of the people who testified against Bork would be one of Dorf’s professors at Harvard, Laurence Tribe, the two would co-author a book in addition to the Obergefell v. Hodges brief. Anthony Kennedy, who Dorf would later clerk for, would eventually get the appointment and go on less than twenty years later to write the Obergefell decision. His tips for law students: “find something that confuses you.” Professor Dorf added that “good or profound confusion, the kind of confusion that he believes sends law students into the realms of the law that are perhaps a bit murkier where they can make “interesting progress” with “interesting questions.”

Many thanks to Professor Dorf for visiting us in Foundations in American Law and to my professors for their help.
This week on campus…

**Monday**
- WRITING WALK-IN SERVICE- 7-10pm, 2133 Balch Hall
- MATH TUTORING SERVICES- 7-9pm, 2132 Balch Hall
- BASKETBALL INTRAMURAL- 6-8pm, Jessup Grove and Pleasant Grove Basketball Courts
- YOU: IN 500 WORDS OR LESS- 2:30-3:45pm, Uris Auditorium
- SCAVENGER HUNT- 7-8:30pm

**Tuesday**
- COMMUNICATION FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS- 6:30-8pm, Balch Unit 1 Lounge
- WRITING WALK-IN SERVICE- 7-10pm, 2133 Balch Hall
- MATH TUTORING SERVICES- 7-9pm, 2132 Balch Hall
- SOCCER INTRAMURAL- 6-8pm, Appel Fields 1 and 2
- INTRO TO 626- 5-6pm, 626 Thurston Ave.

**Wednesday**
- LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP- 8pm, Donlon Formal Lounge
- WRITING WALK-IN SERVICE- 7-10pm, 2133 Balch Hall
- MATH TUTORING SERVICES- 7-9pm, 2132 Balch Hall
- VOLLEYBALL INTRAMURAL- 6-8pm, Dickson Sand Volleyball Courts

**Thursday**

**Friday**
- SHIPS AND ISLANDS- 7-8pm, Court Kay Bauer Quad

**Saturday**
- MINIONS MOVIE- 9am-2pm, Cayuga Mall

**Sunday**
- BUTTERMILK FALLS- 10:30am-2:30pm
Love to write or take pictures? Join the summer Times!

Meetings every Monday and Tuesday from 5-6pm in Balch Lounge. Email Mary Melati (mam542@cornell.edu) for more information.