

Need Help Session Update: College Essays & the Arts

It is safe to assume that a love of dance, music, theatre, visual arts and/or creative writing brought you to SPCPA. If you are considering continuing with any of these subjects as a college major or are trying to explain why you chose an arts high school in a college admissions essay (or scholarship application) here are a few observations to consider...

- [Arts research](#) shows that dancers are self-motivated, disciplined and focused, expressive in communicating emotions, thoughts and feelings.
- [Music education](#) enhances students' understanding and achievement in non-musical subjects. Musicians are trained to handle complexity.
- [Theatre-trained applicants](#) are energetic, enthusiastic, and able to work under pressure, have polished communications and human relations skills and a can-do confidence.
- [Visual artist](#) improve communication and teamwork skills, help develop focus, unleash passion, and expand abilities to see from multiple perspectives.
- [Creative writing](#) requires compassion, contemplation, and curiosity. The practice improves your ability to think in general. Good writing yields great thinking!

Whatever your track **an education in the performing arts requires teamwork, creativity, perseverance, adaptability, precision, vision, the ability to delay gratification/accept corrections, and often develops excellent communication, time management and organizational skills.** Non-artist admissions department readers don't necessarily "get it." Essays that highlight skills that you will bring to college based on the work you have done at SPCPA can help them recognize how relevant your experiences are even if you're pursuing a non-Art path. You will be a great addition to their college community!

Looking for more general essay tips? Consider this [Write the World](#) essay or this one from [Stanford](#). Stuck on the "Why (college name)" essays? Click [here for examples](#). Trying to make connections between performing arts training and the "real" world or something "practical" like business? Click [here](#). Worried that time spent studying what you love in college may be unwise? Read this post by NYT's writer [Robert Frank](#). Struggling with a "Why (college major)" question? Viewing the following videos might help: ["Do You Need the Right College Major?"](#) and ["Why your major will never matter"](#).

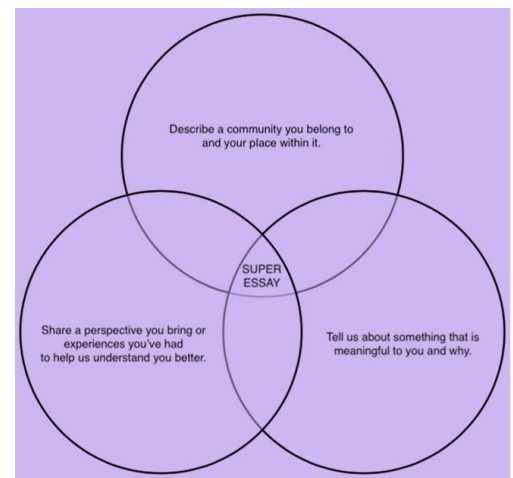
Important information for college applications:

SPCPA School Code: 242 284

Counselor: Alison Green
(greena@spcpa.org)

School Information:
16 W 5th St
St Paul, MN 55102
(651) 290-2225

Lots of Essays to Write? Here is a tip from [The College Essay Guy](#):



Here's the short version of how to write a Super Essay:

1. Collect all your college essay prompts in a spreadsheet and list all the schools you're applying to, their required essay prompts, and your chosen topic.
2. Choose 2-4 activities, ideas, or passion projects that might work as a potential Super Topic.
3. In the "topics" column of your essay tracker, note which topics might work for which prompts.
4. Brainstorm and write a Super Essay that works for all the prompts you've identified



Hidden in every application essay question is another - "what does your answer mean for me (the school)? Remember the dating analogy (both parties have to "like" each other to make a match)? Does your essay demonstrate that connection?

College Application Support...



SPCPA transcripts/student reports are NOT processed during the dates listed below:

Thanksgiving Week (November 19 – 28)

Winter Break (December 17 - January 2)

All requests with 1/1/22 deadlines must be received by 12/9/21!!

General College Essay Thoughts...

Do...

- View each essay prompt as an opportunity to interject your “voice,” passions, interests and perspective into the process. Essays help turn “statistics” (GPA, test scores, course names) into well-rounded individuals.
- Analyze the question and understand the requirements. Did you answer every part of the question? How does your response add to what you’ve already submitted?
- Start with a great opening sentence. Admission representatives read thousands of answers to the same questions. Be memorable.
- Have defined goals for each part of your application including the essays. Know what you want the reader to take away from your response. Ask your editors if you accomplished your goals.
- Look for ways to incorporate the unique experiences/skills you have gained from attending a conservatory. Consider how all those hours of class/practice leading up auditions/juries/J-terms/senior pieces have impacted your ability to problem solve, develop your work ethic/ leadership, improve communication skills, work with people, manage a project/competing expectations, deal with conflict/disappointment/ adversity/diversity, multi-task, improve self-discipline/focus, gain confidence, think outside the box/improvise, hone your interests/ expectations, make meaningful choices, etc? How have the Arts helped you better understand yourself and/or the human condition? How does this choice better explain you? How did this choice help you “find” you?

Don't...

- Procrastinate. Give yourself enough time to not only meet the deadline but also to read and revise your work! Let the “inspiration” settle a day or two before you submit it.
- Bring too many voices into the process. It’s advisable to have an editor or two evaluate your essay for clarity, relevance and grammatical correctness. It also helps to have someone who knows you well read it to see if it “sounds like you,” but this is not an essay by committee activity.
- Repeat information found somewhere else in your application. Essays should add to or build upon what the reader already has learned about you.
- Try too hard to impress the reader with an oversized vocabulary. They won’t have time to pull out a dictionary to understand your message. Think of it as a conversation more than a lecture.

College Application

Tips!



1. Ask yourself, “Could anyone else have written this?”
2. Start Early
3. Stay Organized
4. Make a Resume
5. Preview your Application

Prepavenue.com

STUCK?

5 WAYS TO JUMP-START YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY

1. **Make a list** of all the essays you have to write
2. See if you can **use an essay for more than one school**
3. **Punch through writer's block:**
 - Think about the essay while you're doing something else
 - Instead of sentences, write details and moments you remember.
 - Talk it out before you write.
4. **You don't have to have a unique topic** – just write about YOU.
5. **Ask for help.** From a teacher, guidance counselor, or professional.

www.applyingtocollege.org