

The logo for the UC Counselor Conference, featuring the words "COUNSELOR" and "CONFERENCE" in white capital letters on blue rectangular backgrounds, with "CONF" in white on a yellow background.

COUNSELOR
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The Personal Insight Questions: An Interview in Writing

UC Counselor Conference
September 2017

The logo for the University of California, featuring the words "UNIVERSITY", "OF", and "CALIFORNIA" in white capital letters on blue rectangular backgrounds, stacked vertically.

UNIVERSITY
OF
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Please note:

The content for this PowerPoint is from
the 2017 UC Counselors Conference
and UCLA's Admissions Office

Overview

- Purpose of the Personal Insight Questions (PIQ's)
- Basics
- The PIQ's
- Case Studies
- Recommendations/Tips
- Common Mistakes
- Additional Comments Section



Purpose of the Personal Insight Questions

- Lets students express who they are, what matters to them and what they want the UC to know
- Allows the student to tell THEIR OWN story.....
What want to hear it!
- Can be used for selection depending on the campus
- Provides context (scholarships, selection, gaps in education, etc...)



Purpose of the Personal Insight Questions

- Opportunity to introduce yourself to the people reading your application
- Adds clarity, depth, and meaning to your overall application
- An opportunity to DISCUSS challenges, accomplishments, and achievements rather than list them
- Brings your overall application to life by providing insight to your personal experiences





The Basics

Each question aligns to one or more of the 9 comprehensive review factors for transfer students that campus consider in their admission decisions.

- Students must answer 4 questions in total
 - 1 required question for all Transfer Students
 - 3 of their own choice out of 7
- Maximum 350 words for each question
- All questions have equal value



Required Question for Transfer Students

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.

- **Don't list courses taken...** (Already in academic history portion)
- **Share in-classroom or out of classroom experience** (volunteer, internship, work, etc...) **that contribute to your interest in the major**
- **Including your readiness to succeed...** Remember you are both the writer and editor of your PIQ – so decide how much of this do you want to address/include.



Choose 3 from following 7

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



Choose 3 from following 7

4. Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity
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?
6. What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?
7. Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you stand out as a strong candidate for admission to the University of California?

Brainstorm Topics

- Experiences inside/outside the classroom
- Leadership opportunities
- Examples of creativity
- Special talents/ skills
- Educational opportunities or barriers
- Personal triumphs or challenges
- Improving school/ community
- What makes you, you

Tips and Recommendations

- Relax!
- Get started early and attend workshops
- Brainstorm topics
- Write persuasively
- Write in 1st person – Use “I” and “My” statements
- Answer the question! – It’s responses to questions/short essay prompts.
- Proofread and edit – Spelling and grammar
- Use the PIQ guide



Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Talking about one campus
- Inappropriate use of humor
- Creative writing (Poems, clichés)
- Quotes
- Generalities
- Repetition
- Asking Philosophical Questions
- Acronyms





Additional Comments Section

- This is an optional section and should not be used to answer an additional personal insight question.
- 550 word maximum
- You should use this section to:
 - Provide additional clarification or expand on an honor, award, activity
 - Share information regarding a nontraditional school environment or unusual circumstance
 - Describe anything else that you HAVE NOT had the opportunity to include elsewhere in your application

Questions?

Personal Insight Review Sessions with an English Instructor

IVC Transfer Center

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