

COLLEGE CONNECTION GUIDE: “THE MECHANICS OF APPLYING TO COLLEGE”

College Connection recommends that all students should set up their common application accounts in the Spring semester of their junior year of high school. (Please see: commonapp.org.) The main college essay prompts are published in late January of the student’s junior year, providing ample time for a student to commence work on the main college essay. In this regard, the last main college essay prompt always provides a ‘catch-all’ prompt that allows a student to write on “any topic of your [the student’s] choice.” The main college essay’s word count is between 250-650 words. While the vast majority of high school, as well as some private, college counselors advise their students to craft a 500 word main college essay, in this area, as in all other areas, College Connection charts its own course by helping its students craft dynamic, determinative 600-650 word main college essays. Students applying to more prestigious domestic colleges also need to understand that, along with their main college essay, they will need to pen one to three additional supplemental college essays per college, with each supplemental college essay bearing its own individualized word/character count. The good news here is that once the student creates a common application account, and inputs the names of the student’s chosen colleges, thereafter, the common app will provide the supplemental essay topics for each of the student’s colleges, along with the supplemental college essay’s individual word/character counts.

Please note: Not all colleges use the common app college application portal. Some colleges, such as the University of California (admission.universityofcalifornia.edu), MIT (mitadmissions.org), and most of the colleges located in the United Kingdom (ucas.com) use their own college application portal. In this regard, please note further that the United Kingdom’s UCAS college application portal requires the student to pen a far more technical 550-1000 word personal statement essay, having the applicant, in the essay, demonstrate a strong nexus between the applicant’s experiences -both inside and outside of the classroom- with the applicant’s chosen course of study. While most high school, as well as, private college

counselors advise their students to craft a 750 word personal statement, in this area, College Connection, again, charts its own course, helping its students craft dynamic, determinative 900-1000 word personal statements.