Comparing Application Platforms and the Use of Digital Media

April 17, 2018
9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenters</th>
<th>Contact us at</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Griesemer</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Maryland, MD</td>
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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand technical differences among application platforms and how they drive the ways colleges ask questions and construct response “fields.”

2. Increase awareness of the many different routes applicants may take in responding to essay prompts and other application requirements.

3. Analyze and evaluate specific examples or “case studies” from successful applications that included links to online content or digital media uploads.
Yale finds creative use of technology opens new possibilities for admissions

POSTED ON JUNE 14, 2017 BY NANCY GRIESEMER
The Problem with Putting All Your Eggs in One Basket...
MAKING COLLEGE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL STUDENTS

Coalition Expands Access with New Eligibility Criteria

The Coalition Partners with Up Next. Learn more

Sign Up for a Counselor Webinar

CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT / START AN APPLICATION
Get started with the Coalition's free tools.
OTHER PLAYERS

CollegeNET
Liaison
CollegeGreenlight
Hobsons
Cappex.com
Universal College Application
QuestBridge
Coalition in 2016-2017

- 90+ original members
- 40+ applications launched
- 1 Coalition-exclusive member
- 100,000 accounts created
- 49,000 applications submitted by 39,000 students
Coalition in 2017-2018 (as of today)

- 147 public and private colleges and universities
- 100+ applications launched
- 3 Coalition-exclusive members
- 423,969 accounts created
- 245,000 applications submitted by 139,896 individual applicants
MyCoalition Benefits

Start Early, Stress Less

More advocates for students

Free college planning and application tool to support students

Coalition Fee Waiver

Opportunity to present credentials in unique and creative ways

Smart College Choices
22% of ALL Coalition applications submitted this year were from students qualifying for a fee-waiver. 20% were from first generation students.
The number of students using fee-waivers to apply to the University of Maryland-College Park increased during 2017-2018
50% of Coalition apps were to colleges offering multiple applications (last year was 20%)
“…we saw students use the Coalition platform in a host of innovative ways that improved their applications—submitting in lieu of (or in support of) their personal statements: videos, artwork, and graded papers.”

James G. Nondorf, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Advancement, The University of Chicago
“...we believe it’s good to have another option for students to apply. Further, we like the option for students to show other ways to [bring] creativity into the essay questions section. It brings other elements into our review process and fits who we are.”

Chris George, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, St. Olaf College
“Technology has transformed how we process applications, but not how we create content for these applications. I really felt we needed to make a change. We were looking at more and more essays that felt like they had been written by 47-year olds and not 17-year olds.”

Jeremiah Quinlan, Dean of Undergraduate Admission, Yale University
On the Coalition Application, Yale allows students to upload a document, image, audio file, or video created (any ONE thing of the student’s choosing) in the last 4 years that is “meaningful” and related to one of two topics provided.

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Yale Supplement

Before we saw the dead shark, we had already begun to smell its stewing innards. My friend and I carefully scooped it up and gently placed its head in the bucket. I took hold of the tail, she took hold of the bucket, and we set off for the Island School campus with a sort of awkwardly uneven jog. With only about an hour of time for the endeavor, we had no time to waste.

When we finally arrived back at campus, we found the shark researcher and got down to business. The researcher warned us that the stench would only get worse, so we plugged our noses and made the first calculated cut. My heart was beating out of my chest with excitement. We ran our fingers over the nictitating membrane and the dermal denticles. Then we opened the stomach of the highly-evolved hunting machine to discover two fresh-ly-eaten octopuses, a rare and incredible find. We peeped inside the mouth to admire the gory layers of teeth and noticed dozens of little parasitic isopods that had sucked the life out of the poor creature. This moment ignited my passion for learning as much as I possibly can about the ocean and its inhabitants, an interest that has inspired me to want to do everything in my power to protect these natural beauties.

— Alexandra Bauman
On the Common App, Pomona's essay supplement requires an upload with a maximum file size of 2000 KB. Unlike the entirely different supplement on the Coalition application, there is no invitation to submit videos, art or illustrations—only instructions relative to a written essay. This student independently decided to enhance her essay by adding the art work using Google Drive integration.

The following is an art piece I completed to accompany my response to the prompt. The medium used is oil pastel. The dimensions of the piece are 36 inches by 24 inches.

“Regardless of what you believe, it takes disagreement to strengthen your argument, to know truth, and to support your opinion in the face of dissent. Black Lives Matter is an issue because we have communities isolated in their own points of view. And without dissent, agreement is assumed.”
“Choosing to work on newspaper not only reinforces the currency of her message, it also suggests the person represented is disposable. And writing over that beautiful face, to me, was pretty visceral and demoralizing. So, I thought the image did a great job reinforcing her essay.”

-- Pam Shore, College Advisory Service
Another Yale Supplement

“My attached file is the video that my Computer Science Club created for the Verizon Innovative Learning App Challenge. The goal was to plan and propose an app that we wanted to create.”
Reed Supplement

Reed requires that you submit one item of your choosing from your locker. Since students come to Reed to live the life of the mind, please briefly describe how the locker item you’ve selected will give us insight into the way your mind works.
“To allow Reed to get to know me, I thought it might be helpful to show how I think through art: not just visually, but also kinetically. Art has always been the way in which I process the rest of the world, letting me not only express myself, but also understand my environment.”

-- Molly Herro, Reed Class of 2020 (from California)
“Teenagers create and consume video content on a daily basis. College admission officers are often themselves right out of college . . . They use Snapchat and all of these video apps. Video is emerging as the most powerful way to get to know someone without actually meeting them.”

--Ethan Lin, Former Head of Education, ZeeMee
WELCOME TO MY LIFE!
What counselors have to say
"Honestly, do admissions officers have the time to review all of this? ... It feels like an incremental demand on applicants (and IECs and all that try to support them)."

-- New York-based IEC
“This year, I’ve started looking at students’ lists to see if they even need to do Common App (since two of our most popular public universities are now participating with the Coalition App but not Common App). However, so far every student has at least one school that uses Common App but NOT the Coalition App. So they may be using both apps, with several schools on their lists participating with both — and a decision will have to be made on which to submit in those cases.”

-- Philadelphia-based IEC
Four ways to apply.

You may apply through the Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success; the Common Application; QuestBridge®; or the Universal College Application. Choose the application system that is right for you - we do not prefer one over the others. Do not submit an application through more than one system. Choose one application, and submit all required materials through that method. Please note that applicants to Blair must also complete a music resume and submit forms for two music teacher recommendations via the Blair DecisionDesk application.

*Because of Blair’s audition timeline, students applying through the QuestBridge National Match program may not select Blair as their first-choice school.
Finding the Best Application
“Please note that you should use ONLY the Common Application of any other options for application types your college accepts. For example, TCU allows applicants to use 3 different types of applications — the CA, ApplyTexas, and a TCU application. If ANY SCHOOL to which you apply accepts the CA, please DO NOT use any other application type.”

-- Houston Private School
“One of the teachers I asked for a recommendation left my high school and she couldn’t submit my rec through Naviance. I decided to use the Coalition App because it accommodated my teacher’s recommendation better than the Common App was able to.”

-- student at a public high school in MD
Presenting The Personal Statement

ACT I: Defining The Parameters

Text Entry

• Common Application (250-650 words)
• Some Coalition Applications (word length varies)
• Universal College Application (650 words)
• Cappex Application (600 words)

Upload

• Not available for the Common Application
• Most Coalition Applications (usually 500-550 words)
• Universal College Application (650 words or 1 MB)
• Cappex Application (600 words)
Presenting the Personal Statement

ACT II: Designing the Presentation

Text Entry

• Limited formatting: typographical emphasis (underline, bold, italics etc.); essays appear uniform

• No PDF: little control over “look” of essay

• Hard cut on words

• No ability to embed pictures, illustrations or live links

Upload

• Unlimited formatting: typographical emphasis, foreign characters (.tight), math and other symbols (лы), colors, different fonts etc.

• PDF: complete control over “look” of essay

• Limited by MB but no hard cut on words

• Ability to embed pictures (.), illustrations (.) and live links (www.collegeexplorations.com)
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Profile Elements/ Self-reported transcript</th>
<th>Application Questions (Text Box Responses)</th>
<th>Uploads</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegheny College</td>
<td>12/No</td>
<td>One short answer ZeeMee link</td>
<td>Coalition Essay (500-550 words recommended)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Essay: “Why Allegheny” or topic of your choice (200 to 600 words)</td>
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<td>American University</td>
<td>13/No</td>
<td>Optional supplement (650 words)</td>
<td>Coalition Essay (500-550 words recommended)</td>
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<td>Ambrose College</td>
<td>16/No</td>
<td>Description of scientific research (50-75 words)</td>
<td>Coalition Essay Writing Supplement: 4 prompts (500 words) OR graded paper</td>
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<td>Extracurricular essay (1750 characters)</td>
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<td>Babson College</td>
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<td>Will launch in 2018-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beloit College</td>
<td>16/No</td>
<td>ZeeMee link</td>
<td>Personal Essay: 2 prompts</td>
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<td>Binghamton U SUNY</td>
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<td>12/No</td>
<td>How did you first learn about Bowdoin (140 characters)</td>
<td>Coalition Essay (650 words)</td>
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<td>Optional reflection (250 words)</td>
<td>Optional additional upload [Note: Common App has the same option]</td>
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<td>Additional information</td>
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<td>Bucknell University</td>
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<td>Extracurricular Questions (50-500 words)</td>
<td>Optional Resume Upload</td>
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<td>Note: The Common App limits this question to 100 words</td>
<td>Bryn Mawr Writing Supplement</td>
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<td>Optional Additional Information (400 words)</td>
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<td>Personal Statement using Common App prompts and word limits (250-626)</td>
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<td>Cal Tech</td>
<td>10/No</td>
<td>3 experiences essay (200 words)</td>
<td>Coalition Essay (300-550 words each)</td>
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<td>5 books short answers (200 characters each)</td>
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<td>Essay (500 words)</td>
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<td>Coalition Essay</td>
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<td>3 additional “fun” questions (300 characters)</td>
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<td>Case Western Reserve U</td>
<td>16/No</td>
<td>2 Optional Pre-professional Scholars Program Essays (500 and 750 words)</td>
<td>Coalition Essay (500-550 words recommended)</td>
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<td>Coalition Essay (500-550 words recommended)</td>
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<td>Why CMC (150-200 words)</td>
<td>Why CMC (150-200 words)</td>
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<td>Optional Resume</td>
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<td>Optional Additional Information</td>
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<td>Clemson University</td>
<td>12/No</td>
<td>Candidate’s Comments (2000 characters)</td>
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<td>Colby College</td>
<td>14/Yes</td>
<td>Required Essay—4 of the 5 Coalition prompts to choose from (recommends no more than 600 words but provides space for 625)</td>
<td></td>
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And for 2018-19...

• 22,772 11th grade students have already created accounts
• New efficiencies for certain states: PA, SC, MI, GA, VA etc.
• Increased interest in self-reported transcripts
• Virginia Tech will be Coalition-exclusive
• Greater need to define differences among applications, especially when there are alternative requirements
Other examples of successful uses of digital media in applications?
Stay Current!
Sign-up for Counselor Newsletters

Common Application:
http://www.commonapp.org/counselors-recommenders

Coalition Application:
http://coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/mail-list.html
There are no perfect application platforms. They are all wonky. Sorry.

But it is our job to:

• Be responsive to our students’ needs
• Stay on the cutting-edge of technology
• Keep our biases out of our advice
• Help students represent themselves in the strongest way possible
THANK YOU for attending this session!

We’d love to hear from you!

Please submit a session evaluation via the conference mobile app or from www.pcacac.org.