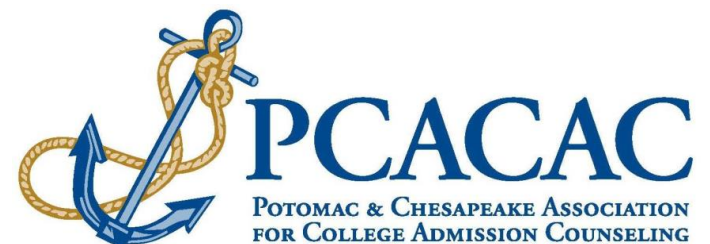


Welcome to the 21st Annual Summer Institute

Beyond Grammar and Spell Check: The College
Essay as the Student's Voice

C4

July 23, 2024



Presenter/Panelist

Emily Pilat/Assistant Director of Admissions
Roanoke College

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Presenter/Panelist

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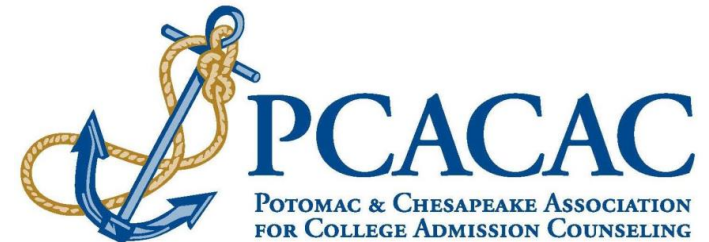


Presenter/Panelist

Alice Whitener/School Counselor
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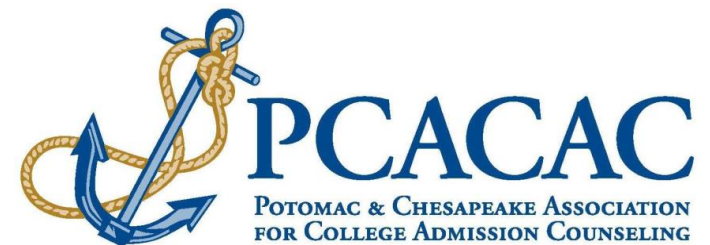


Learning Objectives

Objective 1: Discuss perspectives on the role of the college essay in the admission process.

Objective 2: Examine how admission professionals can support students' voice in the application process.

Objective 3: Review examples of effective and ineffective pieces of writing.

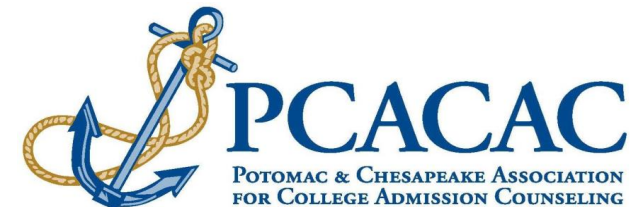


Perspectives

- Larger public high school
- Independent high school
- College perspective

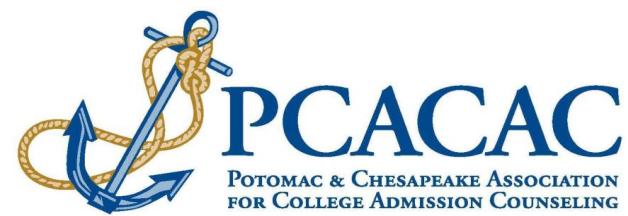
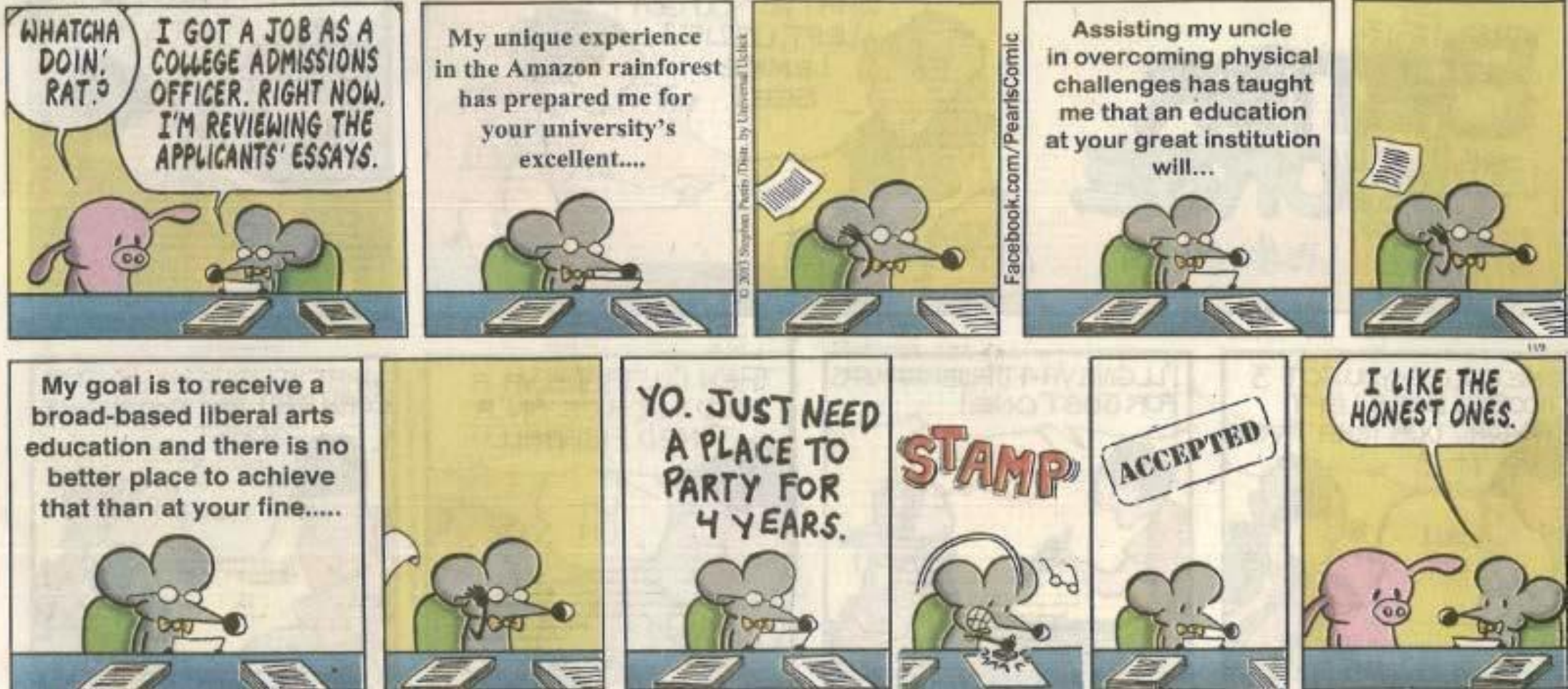


College Essay Guy
www.collegeessayguy.com



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

BY STEPHAN PASTIS



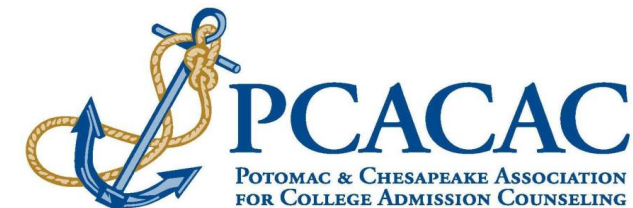
National Perspective

PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2023

	N	Considerable Importance	Moderate Importance	Limited Importance	No Importance
High school grades in college prep courses	185	76.8	15.1	4.9	3.2
Total high school grades (all courses)	185	74.1	18.9	5.4	1.6
Strength of high school curriculum	185	63.8	22.7	10.3	3.2
Positive character attributes	184	28.3	37.5	18.5	15.8
Essay or writing sample	185	18.9	37.3	26.5	17.3
Student's interest in attending	185	15.7	27.6	25.4	31.4
Counselor recommendation	185	11.9	40.0	27.6	20.5



State of College Admission Report



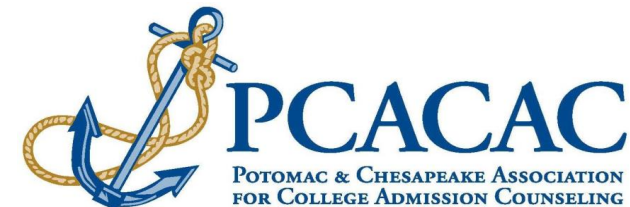
Trends

- Few changes in prompts over the years
 - COVID question evolves into ‘community disruption’
 - Supplements - creative, personalized
- Supreme Court Ends Affirmative Action
- Use of Artificial Intelligence
 - [Common App Fraud Policy](#)
- Return of SAT
- Students Struggle in Same Areas

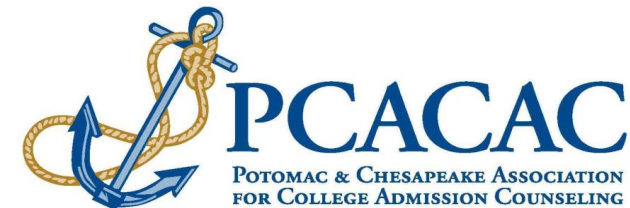
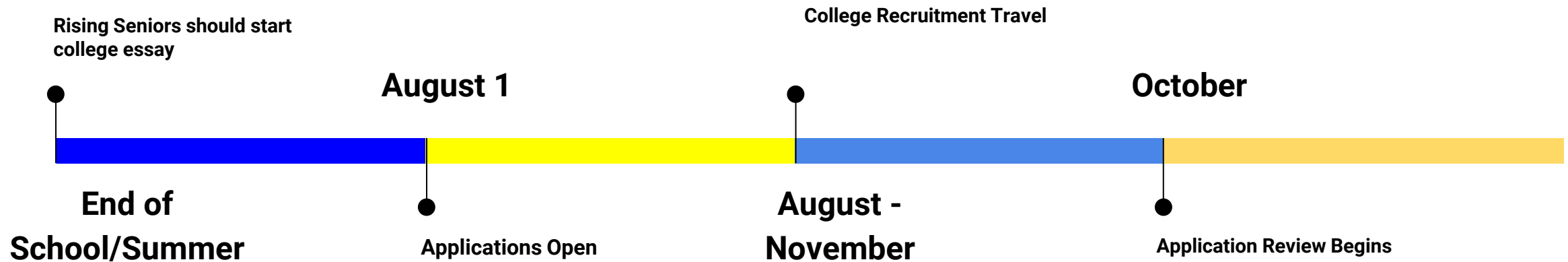


How to support students/families

- Larger public high school
 - Partner with junior English teachers
 - Junior Focus Day
 - [College Essay Guy](#)
 - App Lab in fall/winter of senior year
- Independent high school
 - Partner with junior English teachers
 - [College Essay Guy](#)
 - Summer Essay Workshops
 - Supplemental Essay Questions
 - Google doc
- College perspective



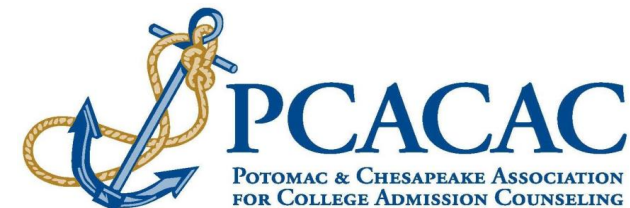
Timeline



Examples of the good, bad and the ugly

“My sister would try to help me but I’d just get upset, like I really just didn’t understand it and that was so frustrating so I just kept not wanting to do more but eventually I started to think “oh chemistry is at the foundation of everything that makes up our universe,” and isn’t that just fascinating? So then I decided to make a change and actually try to learn chemistry.”

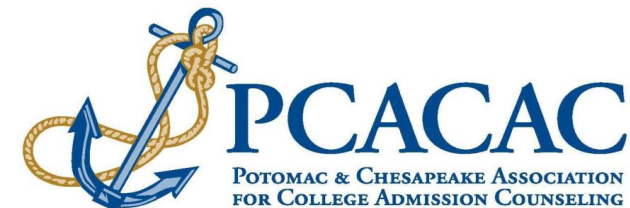
“Why should a girl be going to a Minecraft-themed bowling birthday party? Most girls aren't particularly interested in video games at eight, or at least I wasn't. I didn't even have my own iPad at that age, so I hardly knew about the internet. Growing up, I had strict parents. Having screen time, leaving devices in their room at night, having to be with an adult if I went anywhere with friends, and just the usual overprotective parenting. I didn't receive my first cell phone until Christmas of my 8th-grade year, so I was behind on how social media and people worked.”



The good...

Why My Favorite Word is *But*

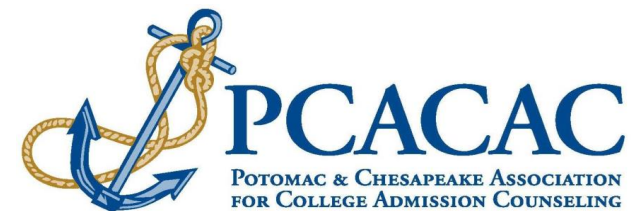
As I sat on top of a desk after school ended on a Tuesday afternoon, I lost myself while explaining why I love the word *but*. I have constantly thought about what my favorite word is, initially deciding on the adverb *very* because it can amplify the words around it. Later on, I believed that the conjunction *and* was more important to me because it can bridge the gap between two ideas and join them together. But after a long period of thought, I arrived at *but* — a word that has the power to turn a negative, motivation-draining statement into a driving force of determination: “I am competing with people whose accolades diminish mine, *but* this also gives me a chance to shine.” This word has the ability to connect two conflicting ideas together in disagreement: “Mint-chocolate chip ice cream is good, *but* cookies and cream is the best.” It can take any statement as a whole and introduce a completely opposite perspective: “Everyone around me is so smart, *but* this gives me a great opportunity to learn.” But the most important ability this word has is the ability to capture who I am.



Essay review

With a group, review an essay with the following questions in mind:

- 1) What did the student do well?
- 2) What does the student need to work on?
- 3) What else do you wish you knew about this student?
- 4) What feedback would you offer to the student?



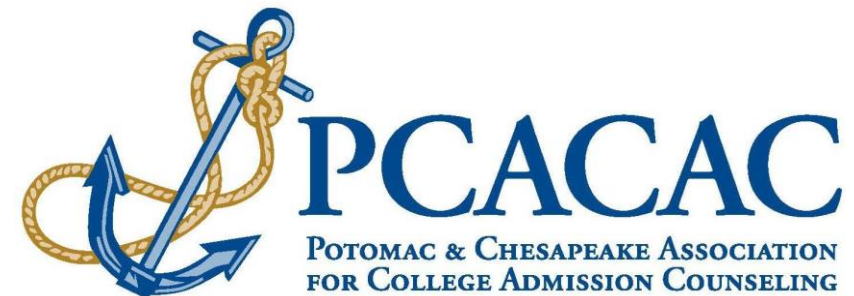
Audience feedback time (aka QUESTIONS)

Comments?

Insights?

Input?

Information gaps?



Please. . .

Complete the session evaluation before leaving the room today.

Thank you!

