

Honors Program Application Essay

The final step of the application process for new students is an essay. Choose one of the following Essay Prompts:

1. The Theory of the Butterfly Effect states that something as small as the flutter of a butterfly's wing can cause a typhoon halfway around the world. Choose something you have done in your life and create a story in which your small action changes the world.
2. Select a creative work—a novel, a film, a poem, a play, a musical piece, a painting or other work of art—or an academic piece or scholarly study that has influenced the way you view the world and the way you view yourself. Discuss the work and its effect on you.
3. If you founded your own college or university, what topic of study would you make mandatory for all students to explore and why? What would be the values and priorities of your institution and why?

**** This is a formal essay. The purpose of the essay is to help us determine if you possess the qualities we admire and seek to develop in Columbia College honors students. While numerical information from GPA's, class ranks, test scores, and similar credentials give us a good picture of your potential, we would like to assess your application not just on numbers but also based on character, motivation, creativity, and willingness to accept risks and challenges. We also place great weight on your writing skills and ability to communicate effectively, persuasively, and appropriately with a diverse, academic audience. *Write with care.*

We also want to offer you an opportunity to be creative with a less formal Creative Prompt:

1. Tell us something about you that is not captured in the rest of the application and formal essay in the form of a 140-character tweet, a haiku, a puzzle, a drawing, a video, song lyrics, or an acronym (with explanation). Have fun.

**** This is an informal piece. The purpose of this writing is to provide you with a creative way to express yourself on your application. Type as a separate document.

A visit to the Honors web site at www.columbiasc.edu/honors should help you get started. We are especially interested in how you include in your writing some of the most important, defining features of honors: risk, challenge, motivation, reflection, excellence. The Honors Committee appreciates a fully developed essay of at least two double-spaced typed pages or five paragraphs. We expect your writing to be well organized and polished. If you are submitting the essay electronically, please be sure to compose thoughtfully and edit rigorously in draft form before final submission. One impressive characteristic of the successful honors student is the strong ability to write clearly and effectively. Selection is often determined by the quality, tone, and appropriateness of the essay, written for a diverse academic audience.