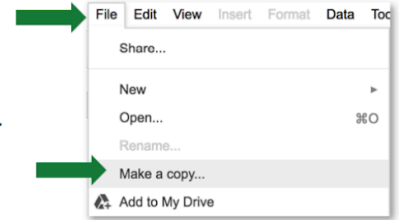


How to use this template:

This is a view-only file and cannot be edited.

Create your own copy of this template to edit.

In the menu, click **File > Make a copy...**



To make an editable copy of this Google Doc (Recommended): You'll need to be logged in to a Google Account to make a copy. Once you've logged in, go to **File > Make a copy** in the top left hand corner. You'll then be able to type directly into your own copy of this document, and you can share (top right hand corner) it with anyone you'd like.

To download this Google Doc as a Word Document on your computer: If you don't have a Google account, download this document on your computer and complete the exercises there. Click **File > Download > Microsoft Word**. To share it with someone, you'll need to email it as an attachment.

“Why us?” Essay Research Chart 2.0

Instructions: Complete the chart on the next page for each of the schools you'll be applying to that requires a “Why us?” essay.

Try to name specific examples of what you want from the school. Think of this as a menu of what you want in a college, focusing on academics, interests, identity, and values. The first two columns can be used for each school. Then find what the college offers in these areas, using the research tools below, to complete the next two columns. Finally, what value or values can you connect across the different parts of your “Why us?” essay? Take a look at the school's mission statement and see if it connects with your values.

First, check out the chart, then read “How to Fill Out the Chart” below.

SAMPLE (FOR PENN)			
WHAT I WANT FROM COLLEGE		WHAT THIS COLLEGE OFFERS	HOW I'LL CONTRIBUTE / ENGAGE
Generally	Niche		
Academics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Management • Entrepreneurship 	Majors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Management • Entrepreneurship Institutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penn College of Business Administration • Fred Kiesner Center for Entrepreneurship • M School Classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIMS 3770, BADM 4950/4970, FNCE 3410, INBA 3810, MGMT 3610, MRKT 3510 • ACCT 2110, 2120; AIMS 2710; BADM 1010, 1020, 1030, 1040; BLAW 2210; ECON 1050 or 1100 and 1200, 2300; MATH 112 • ACCT 2110, 2120; AIMS 2710; BADM 1010, 1020, 1030, 1040; BLAW 2210; ECON 1050 or 1100 and 1200, 2300; MATH 112 Internships Professors Research Projects Clubs Other	What I've done so far <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taken advanced math courses to get ahead • Joined DECA club to immerse myself into the world of marketing • How I'll continue doing it on campus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific resource on campus will help me do that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Something I hope to explore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Something new that I want to create on campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violin • Literary magazine editing 		Clubs Visiting Speakers Visiting Performers Newsworthy events on campus Summer programs Classes	

Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LGBTQ• Feminist• 1st generation student		Clubs Visiting Speakers Visiting Performers Newsworthy events on campus Summer programs Classes Affinity Groups	
Values <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Service• Meaningful work			

[University Name]			
WHAT I WANT FROM COLLEGE		WHAT THIS COLLEGE OFFERS	HOW I'LL CONTRIBUTE / ENGAGE
Generally	Niche		
<div>Academics</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>	<div>Majors</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Institutes</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Classes</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Internships</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Professors</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Research Projects</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Clubs</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Other</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>	<div>What I've done so far</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>How I'll continue doing it on campus:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>What specific resource on campus will help me do that</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Something I hope to explore</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Something new that I want to create on campus</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>
<div>Interests</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>		<div>Clubs</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Visiting Speakers</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Visiting Performers</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Newsworthy events on campus</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Summer programs</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div> <div>Classes</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>	
<div>Identity</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>			
<div>Values</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>			

How to Fill Out the Chart

Column One:

What are your general areas of interest?

Do you love biology? Community service? What identities do you embody? Are you a first generation college student? An immigrant? Multi-racial? LGBTQ+? A feminist? A libertarian?

Identify some broad areas of interest and identity that you hope to explore when you get to college.

Column Two:

What is your niche within those interests? What is your special interest, or unique take?

Love biology? Dig deeper! Maybe you love thinking about how modern agriculture affects the human digestive system.

Love Community service? What kind of communities? Local, or global? Do you love beautifying public spaces or supporting veterans? Maybe you love community service as a way to experience other cultures and share your own culture.

What more specific identities do you embody? Old-school feminist? Radical environmentalist? Hyper-local foodie?

What intersectional identities do you embody? Are you both male and a feminist? LGBTQ + and republican? White and an immigrant? Indian and American? Traditional and millennial?

For this column, it's all about getting specific and finding what unique interests, identities and perspectives YOU bring to a college (lucky them!).

Column Three:

Research time! Use the research tools and resources below to find the specific things a college offers that align with your interests. The research here should answer the question: How, specifically, is this college the perfect place for me to grow and develop my academics, interests, and identities?

Instead of identifying the college's strong bio program, find that one super cool class that you would be first in line to sign up for. Or find that one research project a professor is working on that would have you in their office hours peppering them with questions.

What speaker came to campus that you would have helped organize the event for? Or organize the protest?

What student activities, publications, or performance groups are exploring the various identities you inhabit?

Again, specificity is key!

Column Four:

Flip the script: How will YOU benefit the college you're applying to? How are you the perfect candidate to help grow their campus culture and push their work forward?

Almost there...

Finally, what value or values can you connect across the different parts of your "Why us?" essay? Take a look at the school's mission statement and see if it connects with your values.

Done filling it out?

Create your outline. If it's a longer essay (400-650 words), try this:

1. Intro/Thesis (say what you want to study and why)
2. Really specific academic offerings at the school that is in your intended major/concentration (this should connect to you in a really specific way)
3. A second really specific academic offering that is also in your intended major/concentration (and that also connects back to you)
4. Something academic that's *not* in your intended major/concentration (this keeps the focus on academics, but also brings in some variety)
5. Best/most important extracurricular offering (that connects to you in a really specific way)
6. Miscellaneous extracurriculars paragraph (2-3 things to demonstrate social/non-academic fit)
7. Closing (this can be short and, in shorter "Why us?" essays, is unnecessary)

If it's a shorter essay, you can cut #6 and try and accomplish each of the above in less space (perhaps 1-2 sentences for each number above). You can also cut #7, if needed.

Research Tools: Click [here](#) and check out the "How to Find All the Resources You Need to Learn about a Particular School" section on page 3.

How do you find these?

Google

University Website

Email a campus rep

Talk to a current student or alumnus