

### Personal Ethos Essay Information:

1. No handwriting should appear anywhere on this assignment. Type in the name of the college in the appropriate space on the cover sheet and provide a pseudonym. Do not reveal your actual name anywhere in or on the paper.
2. The paper must follow ALL theme requirements and run no fewer than three full pages and no longer than four full pages in length. (Use the default Google Docs settings but add double-spacing.)
3. The paper (A HARD COPY) must be turned in no later than 3:30 P.M. on Friday, September 27.
4. You should be able to justify everything you discuss in your paper as being a method of enhancing derived *ethos* and/or appealing to contemporary values of Americans.
5. Two of the key areas of the paper are the **introduction** and **conclusion**. They should be original, impressive, and **flawless**. Without being overly prescriptive, I'd suggest they be connected, too.
6. We will be looking at several samples in class. Use what you learn from them, but be careful not to borrow from or merely revise them. Make this your own work and story.
7. A difficult-to-achieve but important element in an effective paper is subtlety! Brag without being boastful; draw attention to yourself without shouting; be proud without being conceited...
8. Other concerns: don't be negative; don't be morose; don't be saccharine; don't be aloof; don't be arrogant; don't be overly cute; don't fall back on clichés; don't be hyperbolic.

### The Short List:

#### Weaknesses:

broad generalizations  
clichés  
repetition  
boring sentence structure  
disorganization  
grammar, spelling & punctuation errors

#### Strengths:

strong verbs  
specific details  
depth  
varied sentence structure  
organized flow of paragraphs  
unique voice

[more style concerns...](#)

## **The Cover Sheet:**

Copy and paste the statement below and use that sheet as a cover-page for your *ethos* essay. Type your pseudonym on the cover page as well.

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*Through selected events in your life, we would like to know you better as a person and to understand why you are seeking a college education and why you are applying to \_\_\_\_\_.* This careful summary of key periods and/or events in your life may include unusual experiences, happy and unhappy; your chief interests and hobbies; your summer experiences; unique things about your family life--those persons, events, and experiences that have made you the individual that you have become.

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### ***Introduction/Lead:***

- Don't summarize in advance.
- "Never begin with a grand pronouncement about the nature of man and the universe."
- Do create interest, mystery, and intrigue.

Standard: --who, what, when, where, why how

Creative: --unusual, catchy, humorous

Action: --in the middle of the story--then backtrack

Personal Revelation: --My whole life, I've wanted...

Quotation: --keep it unusual, short, something that can be developed

Dialogue: --gets the reader into things quickly

### ***Conclusion:***

#### **Do:**

- link conclusion subtly back to introduction and/or look to the bright future
- redefine self or term
- quote--same precautions as intro.
- pull from your personal story and apply it to the world, the future...
- end positively (in fact, make sure the overall tone is positive)

#### **Don't:**

- summarize or sermonize; we want a conclusion, not a summary
- use phrases such as "in conclusion," "to conclude," "we see here that"...
- overstate the theme; we want closure but this need not change the world or be absolute in its finality.

**Set the draft aside for at least a few days!**