



**CollegePrepExpress**  
The Fastest Route to Admissions  
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Specializing in Today's Top Three Admissions Criteria



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Grades



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# How to Write Your Best CommonApp

A New Zoominar for Summer 2024  
by Michael Youmans, Ph.D.  
aka Dr. Yo, author of



**CommonApp Handbook: A Harvard Ph.D.'s guide to getting into selective colleges in the age of dwindling admissions rates without lying, cheating, or bribing** Paperback – January 21, 2020

by [Dr. Michael J. Youmans](#) (Author), [William N. Burstein](#) (Illustrator), [Libby Phillips](#) (Contributor)

4.7 ★★★★★ 9 ratings

[See all formats and editions](#)

Ph.D. in Secondary Curriculum & Instruction and College admissions consultant of over 30 years, Michael J. Youmans, aka Dr. Yo, provides insider information about the college admissions process with an emphasis on completing the Common App. Used by students over the past seven years in Dr. Yo's Common App Boot Camps—100% of whom were admitted to at least one of their top three schools—this handbook will make students feel confident no matter where they're applying. It provides BOTH step-by-step instruction from Dr. Yo about how to fill out every question on the Common App AND form-by-form strategic packaging advice about how to get the most out of each section to cast you in the best possible light on your best possible day. The CommonApp Handbook also offers specific impressive language to use and examples of activities and essays that helped past students get into their top choices!

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# Tonite's Zoominar Has Grown out of 15 Years of Common App Boot Camps

**CommonApp Boot Camp At CPE**

Make Yours an **ACCEPTED** Year!

**ACCEPTED**

In West Hartford, CT, and ONLINE  
 Visit [CollegePrepExpress.com](http://CollegePrepExpress.com) and click Admissions

Get It Done in 5 Days during the SUMMER !!

I signed up mostly just to get my college apps done. What I got was a polished CommonApp I'm super proud of!"

Get Your CommonApp DONE in 5 Days over the Summer and Maximize Your Chances of ACCEPTANCE



SUMMER 2024 Dates and Registration

## CommonApp Boot Camp June 17-21, 2024

Participants: Maya, Dr. Yo, Reilly, Christian, Govind

CommonApp Boot Camp





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Three primary ways to apply  
to U.S. Colleges in 2024



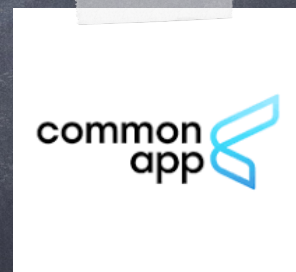
CommonApp



Universal App



Individual School Apps



<https://www.commonapp.org/>



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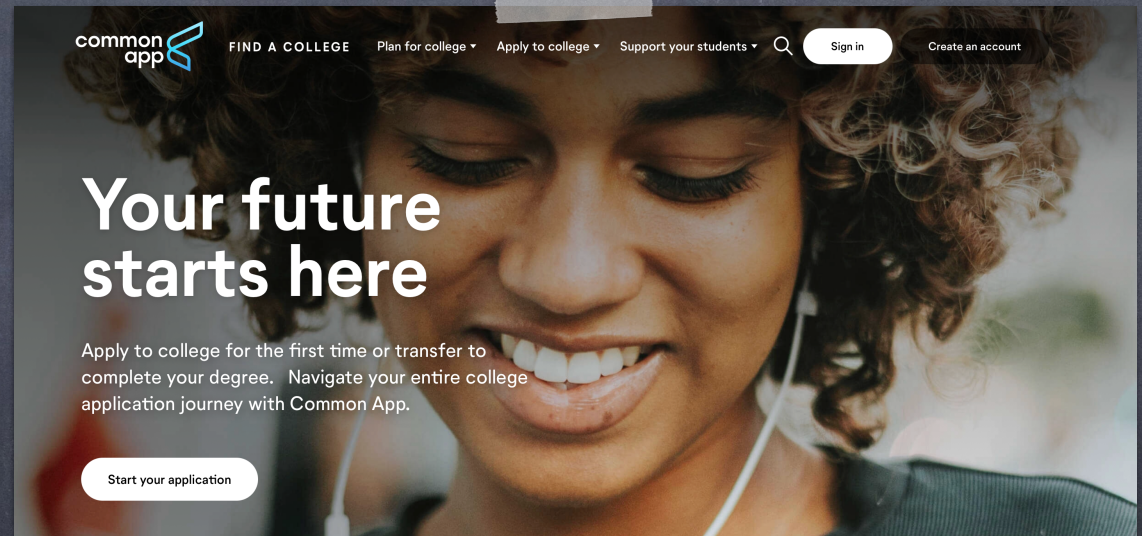
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# CommonApp Is King

 Popular

 Convenient

 Sensible



**common app** FIND A COLLEGE Plan for college Apply to college Support your students Sign in Create an account

## Your future starts here

Apply to college for the first time or transfer to complete your degree. Navigate your entire college application journey with Common App.

Start your application



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# Current Data Corroborate CA's Popularity

 “In 2023 836,679 distinct first-year applicants applied to 834 Common App colleges, representing an increase of **41%** over 2019–20 (592,390 applicants), the last school year when applications were not affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.”

 “Total application volume to returning Common App member schools through November 1, 2023 rose **65%** from 2019–20 (2,028,507) to 2023–24 (3,353,516).”

*Forbes* (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelnietzel/2023/11/27/applications-to-college-for-2024-show-strong-early-surge/>)



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# Two Main Themes / Application Writing Goals

Develop Two Parallel  
Narratives

1. Academic
2. Personal

Grades, Courses, Outside Reading Studies/Interests  
Standardized Tests, Research Projects, Big Essays

Academic Narrative →

Personal Narrative →

Schoolyear Activities, Athletics, Community Service/Volunteering,  
Values/Beliefs, Summer Activities, Jobs, Internships + wildcard OTHER



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# Virtual Tour of CommonApp

The screenshot shows the CommonApp dashboard with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Dashboard', 'My Colleges', 'Common App', 'College Search', and 'Financial Aid'. The main content area is titled 'Dashboard' and includes a sub-section 'Application Requirements'. Below this, there is a list of colleges with their logos and application status:

- Auburn University**: Add your term or admission plan, Application - In progress
- Boston College**: Add your term or admission plan, Application - In progress
- Cornell University**: Add your term or admission plan, Application - In progress, Writing Supplement - In progress
- Dartmouth College**: Add your term or admission plan, Application - In progress, Writing Supplement - In progress
- Fordham University**: Add your term or admission plan, Application - In progress

Strategies and tips  
for each major section

The screenshot shows the CommonApp profile page. The navigation bar includes 'Dashboard', 'My Colleges', 'Common App', 'College Search', and 'Financial Aid'. The main content area is titled 'Profile' and includes a sub-section 'Personal Information'. The fields shown are:

- Legal first/given name\*: Michael
- Would you like to share a different first name that people call you?  
 Yes  
 No  
Clear answer
- Middle name: |
- Last/family/surname\*: Youmans



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# Two Major, Separate Components

## 1. CommonApp Tab

- Goes to ALL Colleges
- What most people are referring to when they say "CommonApp"

## 2. Dashboard/My Colleges Tab aka Supplements:

1. Goes to Individual Colleges along with CommonApp Tab

common app

Welcome, Michael!  
CAID 14098511  
diy@collegepreprexpress.com [Sign Out](#)

[Dashboard](#) [My Colleges](#) [Common App](#) [College Search](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Common App

Profile [Preview](#) ?

**Personal Information**

Legal first/given name\*  
Michael

Would you like to share a different first name that people call you?  
 Yes  
 No  
[Clear answer](#)

Middle name  
|

Last/family/surname\*  
Youmans





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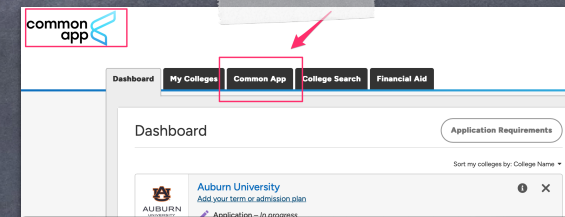


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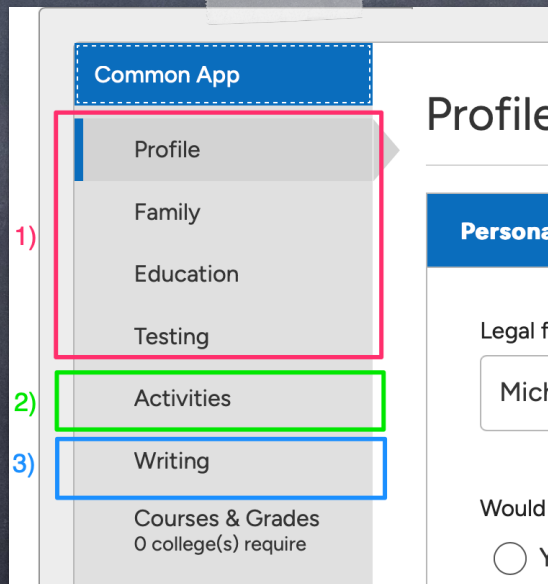
# CommonApp Tab 3 Major Sections



1. Simple Forms

2. Activities

3. Writing





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# Simple Forms

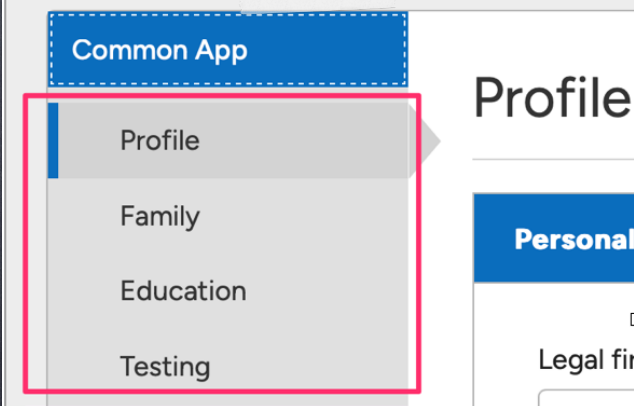
## How Distinguish Yourself

 Accurate

 Formal

 Logical

 Sequential to Best Suit Academic  
and Personal Narratives



Common App

- Profile
- Family
- Education
- Testing

Profile

Personal

Legal fir



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# Activities Tab: MOST IMPORTANT to Developing 3-D Self How Distinguish Yourself

- Robust (max out the Details (aim for 130-150 characters each),
- Focus on YOUR contributions not details about the club
- Well-ordered and strategically "Typified" to best suit your academic/personal narrative

## Activities Types/Categories



Activity type

Other Club/Activity

Academic

Art

Athletics: Club

Athletics: JV/Varsity

Career Oriented

Community Service (Volunteer)

Computer/Technology

Cultural

Dance

Debate/Speech

Environmental

Family Responsibilities

Foreign Exchange

Foreign Language

Foreign Language

Journalism/Publication

Junior R.O.T.C.

LGBT

Music: Instrumental

Music: Vocal

Religious

Hot Tip!

School Spirit

Science/Math

Student Govt./Politics



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# Writing Tab, Aka The Personal Essay

How Distinguish Yourself

*\*Make them fall in love with you\**

## 5 Key Elements

 Passionate

 Self-Reflective/Introspective

 Likable

 Detailed

 Anecdotal





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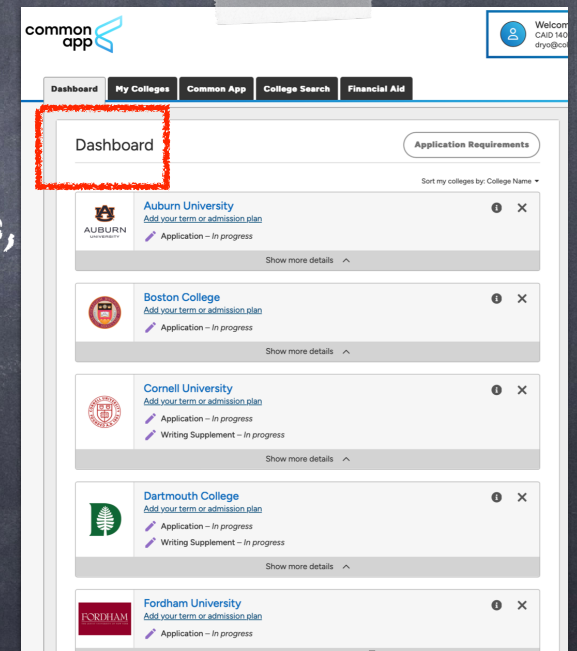
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# Dashboard/My Colleges Tabs aka Supplements

 Two kinds of Supplement App Items

1. Questions (e.g., early or regular admissions, intended areas of study, start date)
2. Essays

 Should make sense of the academic and personal narratives created in the CommonApp tab





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# Dashboard/My Colleges Tabs aka Supplements How Distinguish Yourself

-  Demonstrate Informed Interest about particular colleges
-  Focus on the specific reasons you want to attend each individual school
-  When asked, "Why do you want to go here?" Don't reply with why you want to go to college



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# More Info

 Download a copy of this Zoominar talk: CollegePrepExpress → Resources

 CommonApp Handbook available on Amazon

 CommonApp Boot Camps Summer 2024

**Dr. Yo's 30 years of counseling experience, strategies, and instructions packed into a single, affordable guide to help YOU stand out from the growing multitude of college applicants!**



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