Rubric for Evaluating Application Essays

Criteria	Not Grad Level--1 point	Acceptable—2 points	Exceptional—3 points
Content • Essential questions. • Supporting details and/or examples. • Clarity of purpose.	Questions are missed or inadequately addressed. Details and examples are either lacking or irrelevant. Student's expression of goals & purpose are unclear.	All questions are addressed adequately with appropriate details and examples. Student displays clarity of purpose and commitment to personal goals.	All questions are addressed thoroughly and creatively engage the reader. Details and examples are appropriate. Student displays clarity of purpose and commitment to personal goals.
Organization • Introduction and conclusion. • Clarity of major points. • Sequence of ideas.	Introduction and/or conclusion are missing or inadequate. Major points are unclear. Ideas are disorganized or in illogical order.	Introduction and conclusion are clear. Major points are stated clearly and organized in a logical sequence.	Introduction and conclusion are appropriate & engaging. Major points are stated clearly and organized in a logical sequence that contributes to the flow of ideas.
Style • Sentence structure. • Transitions between sentences and paragraphs. • Tone.	Sentences are poorly constructed, incomplete, and/or inconsistent. Transitions are missing or awkward. Tone is informal.	Sentences are complete, clear, concise and varied. Transitions are present. Tone is academic.	Sentences are complete, clear, concise, varied and interesting. Transitions are present, logical and provide seamless flow of ideas. Tone is academic.
Mechanics • Grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation. • Appropriate use of vocabulary.	There are numerous errors, which impede the reader's ability to comprehend the text. Vocabulary is limited or used incorrectly.	There are minor errors. Language is precise and appropriate.	No errors. Language is precise, appropriate, and sophisticated.