REVISION CHECKLIST – APPLICATION ESSAYS

*Do you answer the question?*

Find and color-code the key action verbs in the prompt. Now match your response to the prompt. Are you doing what is being asked?

*Is your information relevant?*

Identify information you’ve written about that is also provided elsewhere in the application. Is this information directly related to the prompt?

*Is your information effective?*

Using new colors, highlight parts of your writing where you talk about you vs. parts where you talk about a program/organization. Which is focused on more?

Find the sentences where you write about a situation or experience. How much do you describe the situation / experience vs. analyzing its takeaways?

*How do you come off to a reader?*

Ask someone to role-play a reviewer and give you a nickname based on your essay. Does it match the image you wanted to portray?

Identify sections where you believe you are taking a risk. Now imagine the worst possible application reviewer; how would they react to what you wrote?

*Worried about length?*

Identify any generalizations or clichés. Is this information obvious or unnecessary for potential reviewers?

Identify phrases like “due to the fact that” or “despite the fact that”. Can these be replaced by a single word, such as “because” or “although”?

*Worried about typos?*

Proofread for typos by reading your paper line by line, from the last sentence to the first sentence.

Take a break, then read your essay aloud to proofread again for typos.