

UPenn Transfer Essay

Please provide a statement (250 words minimum) that addresses your reasons for transferring and the objectives you hope to achieve.

My reasons for transferring are two-fold and equally important. Academics and campus life are arguably the most vital components of the college experience and these two areas at [current school] have been unsatisfying for me. My unhappiness at [current school] is rooted in the difference between my academic philosophy and [current school's]. Based on my experience in class I feel like the educational emphasis at [current school] is on knowing and not learning. An example of this comes from my philosophy class in which one of the teacher's most common responses to a question is, "Let's bracket that for now," when the inquiry is not about something printed on the syllabus for that day. To me this sort of teaching discourages curiosity and in a philosophy class, especially, a deeper discussion that strays from the lesson plan is what gives the class its significance and educational value. The process of learning is pared down to its most straightforward and austere so that the state of knowing can be achieved as soon as possible.

What I hope to get out of transferring is to find a school that fits my academic philosophy and believes that learning for the sake of learning is a vital to a healthy education. My favorite part about classes is taking a long, winding, side-note-packed path on the way to knowing, and if we never get there it doesn't matter because knowing isn't the point of learning—learning is the point of learning.

As for campus life, the prevailing campus social culture has been disappointing to me. No one ever seems to tire of doing the same thing week after week and the students admit that none of the events they attend would be fun without alcohol. I prefer an environment where the sober experiences trump the drunken ones. The ongoing joke about extra curricular life is that all of the clubs and organizations are "drinking club with debate" or "drinking club with community service" and so on in this manner. The students do their work so they can go out at night as opposed to doing their homework to learn something. The prevailing culture sets the tone for the whole school and creates an uninspired environment. I'd like to go to school where the spirit is less unimaginative and more intellectually ambitious.

Both my academic and cultural concerns center on differing philosophies. The academic approach at [current school] is too pragmatic, especially given that I am a Classics major, and the social life is too alcohol-centered for my liking. I'm aware that all college campuses have drinking and it is a part of college life, but I'm looking to transfer to a school where drinking is more a means to an end of socializing than an end in itself.