

English Transcript for *Importance of Self-Assessment*

[BLANK_AUDIO] This week of the course is all about you. The focus is on you and only you. Not what a university wants in a student, but what you want in a university and what you have to offer. So naturally I'll begin by talking about a cactus. I have a cactus in my office. Why? Because it's easy to take care of. It survives. If I forget to water it for a little while, it's okay. The cactus survives but it's never going to thrive in my office environment. It's limited by the size of the pot that it's in or by the environmental conditions. And what I mean by thrive is that it should be able to grow, large like a cactus in the wild. Why am I talking about a cactus? Well, because my cactus reminds me of students. The students come into my office and they say they want to apply to this university or that college, but they can't tell me why. When I point out to them that they may not be happy at that school, that it might not be a good fit, the response is, I can adapt. Or like the cactus, I'll survive. Here's the thing, college is not about adapting or surviving. You won't have the time or energy to, to adapt to a place that's not a good fit. Think about it. You're already adapting to a new country, a new educational system, new friends, new food, new expectations, and you're doing all of this without the support network that you're used to. You can't run home and have your mom's home cooking whenever you want. Furthermore, who's happy if they're only surviving? College is all about growing and thriving. University is going to be, at the same time, the most challenging experience of your life and the most exciting. To be able to face these challenges and embrace the excitement you need to find an environment where you can thrive, and finding the right place starts with the process of self-assessment. Now there are two big benefits to self-assessment. The first is helping you identify, i, identify universities that are a good fit for you. To do this there are three steps. First, you need to figure out what you need to thrive. Second, you need to learn which environments give you what you need to thrive. Finally, you need to identify the schools that offer those environments. The second big benefit of self-assessment is that it's going to make you a better applicant. Through self-assessment you're going to identify strengths. You can take those strengths and highlight them in your application. Highlighting your strengths is going to help you stand out when you're compared to other applicants. As important as it is to identify strengths, it's also important to identify weaknesses, because that's what admission officers are going to do when they evaluate your application. By identifying weaknesses you can address them in your application, not try to hide them. Self-assessment is the key to your application process. You're going to identify the best universities for you. Self-assessment is also going to help you submit your best application. This creates a best best combination. That combination leads to success in admission and to success in studies. And success is thriving, not surviving. [BLANK_AUDIO]