

English Transcript for *Purdue University: Part 4: Piece-by-Piece Evaluation*

We're speaking with Bryant Priester from Purdue University about how Purdue evaluates applications for admission. Bryant's just given us a great overview of the evaluation process. But now we'd like to speak with you about each piece of the application and how Purdue looks at those pieces. So for the quantitative parts of the application, I'll name a piece, and you tell me what Purdue looks at, and what Purdue looks for when reviewing that piece. >> Okay. >> Okay, so let's start with transcripts, or academic documents. Well, we, we, Purdue requires an original or an attested copy of the transcripts, and for students, they would have to submit a transcript for every school attended in high school. For example, because many students move back and forth from many schools, so we want to have all of the transcripts of the, of the individual high schools that they received. We also lot, we also prefer to receive the, either students who have done their GCSU, their IGCSC or A-level or, or advanced subsidiary level. We want those original certificates as well. Just not sort of them transposed on their transcripts. So, we want all of those official documents. >> our students in India we actually want, you know, the, the temp board results, examination. So we want all the internal marks, everything that a student has done to sort of prove what they've done in high school. Based on all that information that a student has sent, depending on the country that they're from, what we look for at Purdue. Is we, we look at the we need to make sure that students have done complete subject matter requirements. For example, at Purdue we require four years of English, four years of Math, three years of Science. And one year Chemistry in students studying engineering and, three years of Social Studies. We want to make sure students have done that before they've graduated from high school. >> So Bryant, for the quantitative pieces of an application, I'll name a piece. And if you could tell me what you look for. And what you look at when evaluating that piece. >> Absolutely. >> Okay. So let's start with transcripts and academic documents. >> Okay. While students can submit, you know, transcripts and academic documents through a common application, but if they submit them through us. Through other means, we require an original or tested copy, submitted to Purdue. At Purdue, students would need to submit these documents for every school attended in High School, because some students may attend multiple schools, so we would want the original transcript from all of the schools attended. In addition to students who've done either the GCE, or IGCSE, some students may have done A levels, or the Advanced Accidary levels. We would want those certificates as well documented you know, the scores that they've received. students, you know, for specific national exams, perhaps India or Malaysia, we would want those final certificates of what they've done in those examinations for Purdue as well. And the reason we ask for all of these materials is because at Purdue we want to make sure that students have met the basic subject matter requirements for Admission. For example, right before a student graduates high school they would have to demonstrate four years of English. Four years of math. three years of science, one year must be chemistry for students applying directly to the college of engineering, and three years of social studies and we will use all of those materials in order to make that determination. So, sometimes most students will generally send us everything and we don't have to ask, but sometimes we have to ask for these things because we can't determine that based on. You know, gaps, or they may, or they may not say that they've done, you know, the IGCSE, but there's no certificate that's with their documents. So that's why it's always important for students to always make sure that they kn-, they're aware of their admission status at times. So. >> When you're looking at an academic document, what is it that you look

for... Are you looking for certain classes? Obviously certain classes, >> Mm-hm. >> but certain grades, >> Mm-hm. >> certain trends, >> Mm-hm. >> certain, your strength of, of the class work, the, the coursework that they're taking. >> We want to make sure that our students, you know, are, have done well consistently. >> Mm-hm. >> Or if there's at least an upward mobility in terms of grades. I was, it's fair to say most of our students do very well their first two years of high school. That's generally not the [LAUGH] not an issue, you know, 90% of the time. >> Mm-hm. >> But how well they do from 11th grade onwards really is, that can be problematic because that's usually when, you know, students, you know, start IB or they may start with A-level, and, and so. Or, you know, students, you know, May move on to other curriculum within international curriculums. So, when there's sort of a drop between that, the, what we consider the third year, the Junior year of highschool, that's become more of a concern, I think, with, with, with some of our students. So, sort of putting all of that into context. I think is important. I think it's also fair to say for our students, specific who apply to Purdue, there's no one educational system that's advantageous over the other. Some students think I must do, you know, the British system or I must do the International Baccalaureate. We do not have a preference at Purdue. My, our only preference is, you do well in whatever course of study that's available or you decide to participate in at your particular high school. because many of our students, they just do, just the, their national curriculum, and that is completely okay with us in West Lafayette. At Purdue. >> I would say that, you know, generally our students, who we get very talented students and our students, you know, have, you know, especially for, you know, many of our courses, a B average and above. I think that's fair to say. The better a student does, obviously the more likely they are, you know, pre, prepared for admission. >> Let's move to the, to the testing side of things. >> Mm-hm. >> So S.A.T. or A.C.T.,. >> Mm-hm. >> What is it that Purdue is looking for? We do not require the S.A.T. or A.C.C.T. test for Admission at Purdue. The way it will work for this fall in terms of proficiency requirements students can take any test for Admission I.L.'s T.O.L.F.U.L.L. We will consider that the students get an A or B in English. An A or B or the Ages is C.G.C.S.D. That counts as English proficiency. Students can use the S.A.T. or A.C.T. test to demonstrate English proficiency if they choose to, but it's not a requirement for English proficiency. And the reason we decided upon that is because many students want to just take those two tests and that's fine. But if you do decide to take the SAT or ACT test,. The scores, students will have to achieve a, a, a, a fairly high score which we consider sort of the average of all freshman who are coming to Purdue. But if they can't, they should consider taking the toll for the iotes. That's specifically designed for the English professor's requirement. However, students who do submit the S.A.T. or A.C.T. test for admission, and when I stay students, I'm referring to our foreign citizens or non US permanent residents. They will be given priority in the application process, because we, we. Because we just, because we believe that, you know, students who are taking the S.A.T. or A.C.T. test, you know, they're doing, they're going beyond than just taking one English proficiency examination. However, no student will be disadvantaged if they decide not to do it. But we will give priority for those who do. >> And you already mentioned. >> T.O.L.F.U.L.L. and I.L.'s.. >> Uh-huh. >> Just now, and also earlier in the interview. >> Uh-huh. >> And you talked about how strict Purdue is with the T.O.L.F.U.L.L. and I.L.'s requirements. So what is it that Purdue is looking for when it comes to T.O.L.F.U.L.L. or I.L.'s?. >> You mean in terms of the specific score? >> Sure. >> Well for, for, for students who are applying to the college of engineering, the college of science and the Cranit school of management they would have to score a minimum of 88. For students who are applying for all of our other majors and programs, including exploratory studies which is, which students

would not select their major, they would have to score 79. All of our T.O.L.F.U.L.L. scores, regardless of whatever score that you get, students will have to meet minimum sub-score requirements as well. For I.L.'s students have to score a 6.5 overall, but we have a minimum, sectional score of 6.0. And as I mentioned before, the reason we're doing this at Purdue, in terms of english proficiency is. We do not have a, a English as a second language program for our students who are applying, who are, who come as a freshman. Students will receive English support in terms of classes, but not in the specific sort of E.S.L. sort of course work. So students have to be prepared when they come to Purdue. You know, I tell students, this is not a punishment to you. >> [LAUGH] >> This is designed so that you are ultimately successful. >> Mm-hm. >> Because I would not want to recruit a student to come to Purdue. Who's not able to communicate, who is not able to fully interact with the community, in general, over their course of study. >> Briant, you mentioned that Purdue is part of the common application, and the common application requires an essay. >> Yes. In your opinion, what makes a good essay? >> Over my course of study, I always tell, you know, students, parents, et cetera, what makes a good essay is an essay that really pinpoints a student's personal experience. And I always, I'm going to give this example that I borrowed from one of my other colleagues, you know. If you're in a class, if you are, as a student in a classroom and you dropped your essay, without your name on it, on the floor, would one of your classmates be able to pick that essay up and give it back to you? And if they're able to do that, in my opinion, that's an essay that's uniquely to you, that's. Based on your own personal interests and skills, or whatever it is. That, in my opinion, makes a good essay. I think students have to be careful about. Many students, they sort of fail to, when writing an essay, sort of explain the overall goals of an essay. It's one thing to sort of regurgitate your skills and interests. >> but it's another thing to be able to take all that, all that knowledge that you've learned or gained and then able to apply it to your interests, what you want to study in just, in life or what sort of meaning you've gotten behind it. And sometimes students forget to take that extra leap. >. When, when creating that essay. Those who do have the more successful essays, categorically. >> As part of the common application, Purdue also requires a supplemental piece of writing. >> Mm-hm. >> And the question that you pose is, what life goals will Purdue help you achieve. And how. And it's limited to only one hundred words. So what is it you're hoping to learn from this question and why so few words? >> Well brevity is, is a skill too [LAUGH]. And, and, and, and some, and some rush students can go on and on and on. And this is not meant to be a. Another essay. This is meant to, you know, very succinctly discern why you're interested in our institution, what can you gain from our institution, based on what you know. Obviously, many of our students are very far away. They don't know everything there is to know about Purdue, West Lafayette, our skills and programs. But this is a way to sort of for us, you know, as counselors as we're looking through things, you know, and then this becomes increasingly important in many aspects of the application, to sort of figure out well who really has sort of done their homework, you know, and I anticipate as you know for various reasons, our applications might grow because doing the common applications. Easier to apply to Purdue. And also for us as counselors, with that growth, we're not necessarily having a larger class in the future. I mean, we do not anticipate having a class of 2000 international students. Not because we don't want 2000 international students, it's because we don't have the facility and services to manage. 2000 international freshman per year. As counselors that is going to become a little more important as we really, as we really have to determine who really wants to study engineering or who really wants to study, really wants to study liberal arts and not sort of using

that to study engineering or other programs at Purdue. So that's the way I see. This sort of coming into play as we sort of move forward. >> So at Purdue, how important are these pieces of writing in the evaluation process? >> The pieces of writing well, are important in terms of, they give us an accurate view of a student's motivation. And I would say honestly, our international students are very honest about their intentions. And, you know, there are times, you know, a student will write an essay, and you know, we will contact them and say, well maybe you should look at this major or program, this is not what you should be applying for. So, we use that as a way to communicate with our students, and to help them figure out what they want to do. For those who also use it as a way to, you know, to, to understand who sort of, knows about Purdue. And who can sort of, you know, put into writing how well that they, how well that they, I guess understand their. Their desire to attend the university. And lastly, I would say that, you know, the writing, you know, gives us a chance to see, you know, how well a student's able to communicate in general, you know, especially where English is, is not the first language for our students, so. >> Now, to, to move on to a different piece. Purdue does not require letters of recommendation. >> We do. We, we know require at least a letter, a letter of recommendation via the common app or the counsellor form. So, one of the other is re, is a, is a required component of the application. >> Okay. Great. So, with a letter of recommendation. >> Mm-hm. what makes a good letter of recommendation? >> The most basic component is someone who has taught you recently, I mean, it does not make sense to have your kindergarten teacher write a letter of recommendation. And that's from previous experience. Someone who can, you know, I honestly say someone in the core major, you know, science. Math, English, who can really sort of speak about your abilities in your classroom. And, I think that for those who, you know everyone is not a straight A student. You know, and sometimes having a good, a great letter of recommendation that can sort of supplement, you know, maybe scores or grades is also very helpful and also gives us a little bit of extra insight as well. I think the letter of recommendation specifically pin point how well the person knows the student and how well you can sort of judge how the capacity a student to do. To do well in college >> Mm-hm. >> because, you know, I read many letters of recommendations. And the ones I've read, you know, they will say the student is very nice. Or the student, you know, has done well in the class. That, that's nothing for me as a professional. I want to know, specifically, why, what has the student done to you to make you think that they're nice? >> Mm-hm. >> You know, hath they, have they. Showing up to class every day on time. Do they do their home work? Do they do well on their homework, you know? Why do you think, you know, that they will be able to succeed in college? What indicators, specific indicators, that, that you have judged as being a teacher, of being taught them. That you think will be important. These are the things that we want. The more detail a teacher or recommendation or counselor is going to give. The better it will be for a student's application. And some students, you know, they don't take it as seriously. Or you know. Even at Purdue, even though we have, you know, a large application pool. You know, it still could be important depending on many different factors that we sort of just mentioned in the application process, so. >> So again, as part of the common application,. Mm-hm. >> Students are going to be prompted to submit school forms >> Right. >> through the application. How do you use the school forms in, during the review process? >> We don't use the profile as heavily, in general. And honestly, I mean, many of the students who are applying, they're generally. Very well, were very good students. You know, and we feel like they are either at the top of the class. I don't think it bears that much relevance in terms of us looking at the students grade per file. You know, especially when you have so many applications.

And you know, there are certain profiles, you know, if a student is taking, let's say, A.P. something, and, you know, of the three people who took it, you know, all three got C's, you know. That, you know, those things are, those things are helpful, but in terms of, you know, I don't, I don't think what will have like an overall. We're not going to look at that particular profile, you know, in comparison to all the other students, you know. And, in order, as we make a decision. >> You've mentioned a couple times, a school counselor, right. At. For many students who are attending national schools in their home countries, they might not have someone who has the title of school counselor or someone to direct these forms to or get the letter from. Do you have any advice for. Students who don't have a quote-unquote school counsellor. >> Well, I mean, that's one of the reasons why we don't require the counsellor form. It's either teacher or counsellor, so students can submit one or the other. It's up to, to make their decision. I tell student, you know, that's the, that's. A reason if you have questions talk to me. Or talk to our office. We talk to students a lot about the application process. Even though we have many applications, you know, many people are surprised that we pick up our on phones or answer email. I tell students, that's my job to do that, and it's not a bother, that's what I'm being paid to do. That's why I travel to talk to people. and, you, you might be surprised, I might be in a city near you, you know, it depends on when you, when you send me an inquiry. So, that's what I want students to know, about that, you know, about. You know, don't be intimidated by the process. You know, my job is to help you through the application process, you know. And hopefully, you know, it works out that you are successful at Purdue if that's where, you know, you determine, you know, after looking at everything, that's where you want to. You know, spend four years. So. >> We get a lot of questions about activities. >> Mm-hm. >> And, and extracurriculars. >> Mm-hm. >> So, do your expectations for activities, outside interests, extracurricular involvement. do, do those expectations differ for international students than for domestic students? >> I don't think they differ. I think that there's a myth. >> Mm-hm. >> Or there's this sort of expectation, you need to do something. >> Mm-hm. >> And it's sort of multiplied- >> Mm-hm. As students sort of thinking about applying to US universities. In general, we've never denied a student, at least, I haven't, if a student has done nothing. But, you know, it's really not about what you do, it's about how you sort of put it all together in the grand scheme of things. Because our students who do participate in activities. You know they're able to put it in their essay or purpose statement that sort of gives you know another dimension or insight about who they are as a student and why they're interested in their own particular goals. Students who do nothing in general can't do that and that sort of makes them uncompetitive. For admission on other levels, rather than just not doing a specific activity. So you gotta sort of look at it in the whole grand scheme of, you know, why are you doing this, you know, I don't want a student to do an activity because he feel obligated to do it. Because I mean it comes across in your application. You know you put down twenty things and you know you can't even remember if you did them all, or when you did' em, or how you did' em. That's not what we want. You know if you do one thing well or one thing that adds passion and you know dimension your life, that's great and being able to talk about it you know, beyond of you know I was President you know and I told these people what to do. Not talking along those longs, but talking along, along the lines of being a part of this club for these past few years, has given me this much insight in my life. It is, you know, it is without a doubt demonstrated that I should be a part of this career path. That's what we want to see in any College University as we're reviewing applications. So that's how I, sort of, put things. Frame things when I talk to students. >> You brought up a term earlier in the interview, demonstrated interest. Does

Purdue consider demonstrated interest as part of the evaluation process, and why or why not? We don't, we're, we don't do as much for our international students in terms of demonstratives/? because we have a very large and competitive application pool. So that's not sort of calculated into the evaluation process. Other universities do, you know. But we, we don't use that, in terms of determining whether or not a student is admissible or not. Because, as, as I mentioned, our student comes from a wide variety of, of different situations. And many students may not have access to, you know, internet or e-mail or, or whatever it is, you know. That's, that, you know that because sort of being calculated in terms of demonstrated interest. >> We're going to take another quick break, and we'll be back shortly to finish up our conversation with Bryant.