

Kilka słów od Redakcji...

Drodzy Czytelnicy,

*Z wielką przyjemnością oddajemy
Wam do rąk kolejny numer
szkolnej gazety.*

*Tym razem, wszystkie
zamieszczone w nim teksty zostały
przygotowane w języku angielskim.*

*Pierwszy z nich dotyczy programu
CAS. Jest on napisany z osobistej
perspektywy. Można w nim będzie
przeczytać o tym, co wyróżnia
Creativity, Activity, Service, czyniąc
go wartościowym, choć
obowiązkowym, pomysłem na
wykorzystanie wolnego czasu.*

*Drugi tekst opisuje jeden z
najbardziej znanych i cenionych
amerykańskich colleges – Williams
College. Jego celem jest
przybliżeniem Czytelnikom nie
tylko informacji i faktów
dotyczących samej uczelni, ale też
ukazanie czym jest amerykański
college i jakie możliwości oferuje
uczącym się tam studentom.*



*Ostatni artykuł dotyczy personal essay. Czytelnicy
znajdą w nim porady i wskazówki czego należy
unikać przygotowując i pisząc eseje wysyłane potem
do zagranicznych, zwłaszcza amerykańskich, szkół.*

*Redakcja serdecznie zaprasza Nauczycieli i Uczniów
do zaznajomienia się z zawartością biuletynu, życząc
przyjemnej lektury wszystkich zamieszczonych w nim
artykułów.*

WHY CAS IS NEEDED

What is behind the mysterious acronym CAS? It stands for Creativity, Activity, and Service. It is a kind of "super-subject," the equivalent of which cannot be found in the curriculum of a Polish school. Together with TOK and Extended Essay, CAS is what makes the IB DP International Baccalaureate original.

This article about CAS is written from a personal, subjective perspective. In it, I would like to share with you my thoughts and reflections that I feel after completing this program. I will focus on six aspects.

The first of these is the nature and impact of Service activities. In my case, I did not have any problem with the choice of action because I have continued, since I started high school, my involvement as a volunteer in a child care center and an elderly care home. I think the fact that this type of community engagement has been continuing for almost four years has been highly beneficial to me. I have realized how important and meaningful this service is for me during this time. The time spent there has not only allowed me to get to know the people I met there better, but, more importantly, it has given me the opportunity to better and more deeply understand the problems these people are struggling with. I also continue to find this experience a source of knowledge about life, as well as emotional involvement and satisfaction from the mere fact that I can help someone. However, I must emphasize that the benefit is mutual, reciprocal. I think this is an integral part of volunteering. The volunteer's work and time spent pay back in the form of opportunities for personal development, a more extended maturation, and a perception of the world around them.



runner

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The second is the importance of CAS from the point of view of ethics, honesty, and integrity. These values appear and develop in each person over time. CAS does not cause them. Nevertheless, participating in the program encourages reflection on them and their practical application. Even helping others involves adhering to ethical principles. Students should not be encouraged to cheat in tests instead of studying diligently, nor should they be encouraged to solve assignments for them. One should not strive to achieve a set goal, to complete some task to the detriment of others. Even sports require adherence to fair play principles instead of trying to win at all costs. I must admit that the ethical principles preached by CAS and incorporated throughout the IB DP program have more than once caused me to adjust my conduct strategy and contributed to a different perspective on a particular problem or phenomenon.

The third is cooperation and leadership, and their impact on one's personality. I am convinced that a person on their own is not able to do much in the world. It does not mean their actions and efforts will not count. On the contrary, without our determination, strong will, and genuine desire, our environment will not be able to help us much. However, cooperation is essential. I experienced this when editing the school magazine, preparing and recording material for the school's YouTube channel, initiating and leading the "School of Democracy" project, or preparing mountain trips. Moreover, even seemingly individual activities, such as volunteering, require interaction with others through sharing knowledge, experience, and insights. There is room for mutual support, substituting for the other person. Cooperation also teaches one to be open-minded, listen carefully to others, and respectfully accept different views and visions. By working together, we can achieve more and do better than acting alone. Finally, it makes one realize that leadership is not just "commanding" and managing what is to be done. First, it is a sense of responsibility for the entire project, careful planning and dividing tasks, making rational decisions, and skillful problem-solving, often consulting with others.

The fourth is self-reflection, becoming aware of our strengths and weaknesses. It is undoubtedly an important point related to the implementation of CAS. After all, we do not always have time for reflection, which may even sometimes seem unnecessary to us in the face of actual and incredibly timely tasks and challenges. CAS does not give us a choice here.



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The fifth is to develop one's talents, hobbies, and passions and take on new challenges. CAS gives room to continue existing activities, to further develop and improve them, and to explore and discover completely fresh interests. I think this is a good solution. You do not give up any passions and get new, equally inspiring activities. The continuation concerned my passion for photography, which has fascinated me since elementary school. A similar situation applies to writing. I have loved writing for many years now. In high school, I participated in more than a dozen literary contests (essays, short stories, a play), and I wrote articles for the school newspaper. I also continued running year-round. For most of the year, I rode a bicycle and swam (since the 2nd grade of elementary school, I went to swimming school regularly for almost eight years). However, I have also tried other activities in the past two years. I was strongly drawn to making coloring books, which has become a rewarding and mentally relaxing interest. On the side of active sports activities was table tennis, which I played indoors and outdoors.

The sixth and final aspect is the importance of CAS for a balanced life. This cannot be underestimated, and I believe it is even crucial. To achieve personal well-being, you must leave room and time for intellectual and physical effort, and to pursue your passions and interests. Regular rest is also essential. The right balance is not a simple or quick thing to achieve. It is easy to disrupt it and go astray, and even become lost. Undoubtedly, the skill of proper time management is vital and valuable here. I always try to improve and correct it. It is not given once and for all. Changing conditions and circumstances require us to adapt quickly. The IB program is demanding, and one must ensure not to fall behind

with a backlog that is difficult to catch up with later. I think I managed to reconcile good grades with non-academic activities, although I must admit that it was not easy. However, it can certainly be done.

Of course, the above aspects of CAS are not all that should be said about this program. There are other added values that CAS brings. For example, one could point to perseverance, planning, responsibility, courage, openness to taking risks, and showing initiative. In addition, it is essential to find issues of global significance. For me, such an example was realizing, during service, the true cost of war when I worked during vacations at the St. Agata Care Center. Children from Ukraine who had fled the war with their mothers ended up there. I also understood more fully the diversity in society and that people from dysfunctional family backgrounds need material and psychological support. In addition, I understood that older adults are often lonely, forgotten, and abandoned by their families and need attention, warmth, and a smile.

In my opinion, CAS is a valuable program that fits well with the whole philosophy of the IB. CAS is helpful, encouraging action and activity and prompting reflection and self-analysis. I feel that the skills and experiences I gained from CAS will be beneficial in my future life. This program does not feel like a project that ends with writing a final report. Instead, CAS has influenced the further development of my personality. It has allowed me to become a better and even more sensitive person. It gave me greater self-confidence but instilled the need to see my own mistakes and imperfections and eliminate them. CAS made me more reflective and strengthened my drive to achieve the goals I set for myself preceded by planning and assessing my capabilities. Finally, CAS has contributed to the fact that I have tried to productively fill my time not spent on schooling for the benefit of myself and others.



volunteer

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WILLIAMS COLLEGE - CLIMBING HIGH AND FAR

"It would be no small advantage if every college were thus located at the base of a mountain." These words were written by the famous American naturalist, essayist, poet, and philosopher Henry David Thoreau about Williams College in 1844. They seem to have lost none of their relevance after almost 180 years. The College is located in the charming town of Williamstown, with less than 8,000 people, 135 miles from Boston and 165 miles from New York City, in the northwest corner of Massachusetts in the United States. The town is in the Berkshires, the southern continuation of the Green Mountains of Vermont. The region enjoys a vibrant tourism industry based on music, arts, and recreation.

It was established as a men's College in 1793 and is Massachusetts's second-oldest institution of higher education, having opened its doors on October 9th of that year with an undergraduate enrollment of 20 students. The building incorporated a kitchen, dining room, chapel, library, recitation rooms, and dormitory. The first president was Ebenezer Fitch, an American Calvinist clergyman and educator.

A significant figure in the history of the College is Ephraim Williams, Jr. He was an influential colonial settler family member holding critical positions in the Massachusetts Bay Colony's military, church, and judiciary. The French and Indian War erupted in the mid-18th century, and Ephraim Jr was appointed Colonel in March 1755. Comprehending the seriousness of the campaign ahead of him, he completed a will in July of that year. In his will, he left the remainder of his estate to establish and maintain a free school in the township west of Fort Massachusetts, the future Williamstown. Unfortunately, he died the same year in an ambush, killed in battle by Indians and French, as commander of a detachment of a thousand soldiers.

Today Williams College occupies a 450-acre campus with more than 100 academic, athletic, and residential buildings. It has been a coeducational college since 1970. The College is a private, residential, and liberal arts institution with graduate art history and development economics programs. Three academic divisions encompass 25 departments, 36 majors, and several concentrations and special programs. These divisions are languages and the arts, social sciences, and science and mathematics. The undergraduate

enrollment is approximately 2,000 students. The most popular major is Economics, followed by Mathematics, Biology, and Political Science.

Williams has its colors, purple and gold, with purple as the primary school color. Accordingly, the Purple Cow named Ephelia became the school's mascot. The official school songs are "The Mountains" and "Echo of Williams." The former has a rich history at Williams, dating back to its composition by Washington Gladden in the 1850s. The latter is a new song that won the 2015-2016 song competition.

To understand what kind of school Williams is, one need only read the College Mission, which was approved by the college authorities in June 2017. This six-page document outlines what the school is guided by and what principles and values underlie its operations. A realistic representation of these ambitions, and what makes Williams unique, is the atmosphere of mutual help and understanding between members of this relatively small community of open-minded people.

A significant value at Williams College is the relationship between professors and students. It is derived from the spirit of partnership that prevails there. Faculty members invite students to become partners in the process of intellectual discovery. Professors strive to know not only what the student thinks but also how the student thinks and who the student is. Such close personal and intellectual relationships are fostered by the small class sizes, and the student-faculty ratio is 7:1.

One representative example that confirms this reciprocal relationship is the tutorials. They are





adapted from the Oxford University style of education. There is an in-depth conversation fueled by intellectual curiosity and the spirit of debate. It takes place over an entire semester between just two students and one professor. Williams College, unlike other schools offering tutorials, makes them available even to first-year students. They are used by more than half of the students studying at the College, who have a choice of 60 to 70 tutorials each year in various academic fields.

Another exciting proposition the College offers its students is the opportunity to participate in the Williams-Exeter Program (WEPO). It is a year-long program of study at Oxford University in collaboration with Exeter College, founded in 1314. As visiting students on the program, Williams students are full undergraduate members of the university. As a result, they are eligible for access to almost all of its facilities and resources, including libraries and various extra-curricular activities. It is a unique opportunity for students who qualify for WEPO to enrich their experience while at one of the world's most renowned universities.

In addition to the many opportunities for academic and intellectual development, students have more than 170 diverse clubs at their disposal, where virtually everyone can find something for themselves. Sport also plays an essential role at the College. The Athletics Department offers many opportunities for recreation, including intramurals, excursions, and club sports. Approximately 35% of all students participate in intercollegiate sports. The largest club is the Williams Outing Club, founded in 1915. It has over 750 members and offers a wide variety of events, trips, and activities throughout the year. The school also provides ample opportunities for volunteer activities for those willing to participate.

An adaptive system has been created for first-year students. It is called the Williams Entry, and it aims to build a first-year community. There are groups of approximately 40 first-year students and 3 to 4 Junior Advisors who are junior students. They live in the first-year dorms and offer advice to their younger classmates, enabling them to have fun, feel included, and be safe during their first year at Williams. These groups are constructed in this way to provide diversity. They call it a "microcosm." It helps bring people together from all over the world, from different academic backgrounds and interests.

It is noteworthy that Williams seeks to financially support talented applicants and students who have been accepted to the College by means of the nation's first all-grant financial program. It means there are no loans, or work study or summer earnings contributions in the financial package. The financial aid provided meets 100% of the demonstrated needs for all students, covering the purchase of textbooks, lab supplies, and health insurance. As many as 53% of students receive need-based financial aid.

Williams College is an academic elite. Tradition, excellent infrastructure, great professors, a wealth of choices of majors and courses, and a remarkably varied student life ensure that the College allows every student to realize and develop their potential. Of course, it is a rigorous and challenging environment in many ways. Indeed, every student must find the right balance between different activities and skillfully manage their time. However, Williams is undoubtedly a suitable place for those who want to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the College, want to create prospects for their future, and want to serve society responsibly.



PERSONAL ESSAY – IS IT REALLY IMPORTANT? (Part 2)

An excellent essay will help you stand out from the other applicants, so taking the time to do a good job is worth considering. Here are fourteen points to help you avoid harmful mistakes that almost guarantee your essay will fail.

1. Trying to be someone else. Many students think they need to be who the admissions officers want them to be. But in reality the admissions officers want you to be yourself. They are not looking for the perfect student committed to every subject area. Instead, they want to learn about the real you. So, it is a good idea to present yourself honestly; as a result, it will be much easier to write an essay about your genuine thoughts and feelings.

2. Not sharing something about yourself. The primary purpose of the admissions essays is to impart something about yourself that is not included in the application. Many students forget this, especially when writing about a topic, such as someone they would like to meet. You should always ask yourself if you are letting the admissions officers know something about yourself through your essay.

3. Tackling too much of your life. An essay does not allow you to write about all your greatest accomplishments since birth or everything you did during a three-week summer program. Instead of trying to share your whole life, share what is called a slice of your life. Doing so will give your essay focus, and you will have the space to cover the topic in greater depth.

4. Having a boring introduction. Students sometimes start their essays by repeating the question or even stating their name. It does little to grab the attention of the admissions officers. An introduction will not make or break your essay, but it can start you off in the right direction.

5. Writing the essay the night before it is due. It is not a good idea to wait until the last minute to write a paper or do a project. Sometimes it comes out all right, but sometimes not. Even if you are able to write an essay the night before it is due, it is still better not to. The best essays marinate. Their authors write,

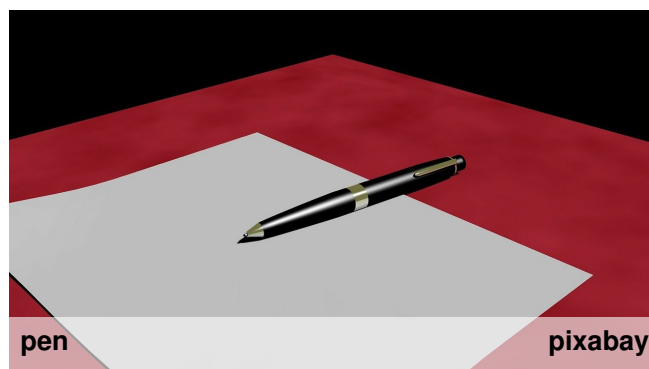
take some time away from it, and then return to it with a fresh mind.

6. Forgetting to proofread. Many students have spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors. While these types of errors are usually not entirely detrimental, they can be distracting at best, and at worst they can show the admissions officers that you are careless and not serious about your college. You can avoid this by asking someone else to help proofread your essay.

7. Not getting any feedback or getting too much feedback. Writing should not be an isolated experience. You may know precisely what you want to convey in your mind, but when you put it on paper, it may not come out as clearly as you hope. So, ask teachers or friends to read and comment on your essay. However, having too many editors dilutes your work because everyone has a different opinion, in which case, your essay will no longer sound like you.

8. Trying to make too many points. It is better to have a single, well-thought-out message in your essay than many incomplete ones. Focusing allows you to investigate a specific topic and make a strong case for your position. Again, it would help to write persuasively and use examples to illustrate your point.

9. Forgetting who your readers are. Regarding the essay, some applicants address the admissions officers with an overly friendly high-five instead of a handshake. In other words, being yourself in the essay is crucial, but you should remember that the admissions officers are adults, not peers. Therefore, the essay should be in a relaxed style but not too informal.



10. Not thinking before writing. It is best to spend as much time thinking about what you will write as you spend putting the words onto paper. It will help you weed out the topics that do not go anywhere, determine which topic has the most significant pull for you, and figure out exactly what you want to say.

11. Writing a resume. You should not include information that is found elsewhere in the application. Your essay will sound like an autobiography, travelogue, or laundry list. In other words, the essay is the best opportunity that you have to either delve into something you wrote in the application form or expound on something new that does not fit on the application form.

12. Crossing the line. Some students take to heart the advice to share something about themselves, but they share too much. They think they must be so revealing that they use their essay to admit to something they would never have confessed otherwise.

As a result, some students have written about sexual experiences, getting drunk, feeling suicidal, and using recreational drugs or other illegal substances. In admission offices, these are known as “too much information” essays.

13. Complaining, excusing, or telling a lie. Do not whine or complain about your life, parents, teachers, coach, or anything else. Do not attempt to explain away shortcomings such as a bad SAT score or grade in a class – there is a place for that, but your essay is not it. Do not lie. It has been tried before but it does not work, and you will not like the consequences.

14. Showing bad taste. Pass up any topic that calls attention to deep personal biases, disrespect for your parents, arrogance, contempt for groups of people, sexism, negative stereotypes, racial slurs, or profanity —also, avoid bathroom humor or vulgarity. You should also eliminate silly jokes, gimmicky attempts to be clever, inappropriate language, and slang.



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