



ZAYTUNA COLLEGE
ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

For admissions purposes, you must write essays on at least two of the following topic prompts. **All applicants must respond to the first prompt. Thereafter, you must respond to at least one of the remaining prompts.** Three of the topics have two parts each.

These prompts offer a range of opportunities to find your voice. Good essays will be thoughtful, candid, and respectful. Depending on how you respond to a prompt, your essay may be as long as 1000 or as short as 600 words; however, regardless of length, your task is to produce your best writing.

In addition to what you say about yourself and your topics of discourse, committee readers will be profoundly aware of the mechanics of your writing, especially grammar and syntax, the logical organization of your thoughts, and whether your style of communication is well calibrated to what you have to express.

Lastly, the essay prompts are designed to stimulate in the best applicants a genuine spirit of reflection about what the Zaytuna College curriculum may offer them. In that light, I hope you enjoy writing these essays as much as we look forward to reading them. All the best to you.

Sincerely,
Faisal Hamid
Director of Admissions
Zaytuna College

Essay 1

Why do you wish to attend Zaytuna College? What aspects of the College most appeal to you, and why? The Admissions Committee is particularly interested in your understanding of the academic program of the College, especially the fully integrated, non-elective character of the curriculum. Comment as well on your willingness and ability to participate in classroom discussions.

Essay 2

Respond to both parts of this topic.

PART I: Zaytuna College is a Muslim institution. How do you understand the relationship between the curriculum and the Islamic character of the College? You should consult the catalog.

PART II: Every college has rules governing campus life. Many standards of conduct at Zaytuna College were once common everywhere, but they are typically no longer found at other colleges and universities. How do you think such regulations are related to wisdom and the life of learning?



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Comment on your willingness to abide by these regulations. Again, you should consult the catalog, especially the Honor Code.

Essay 3

Respond to both parts of this topic.

PART I: Describe your reading habits and your experience with books.

PART II: Choose a book you consider to be excellent and write about an important aspect of it. Don't write a book report; your essay should be neither a summary nor a mere description of your reaction to the book. You should not, for example, simply declare that *To Kill a Mockingbird* changed your perspective on race relations or *Beloved* taught you to loathe slavery. Rather, if you choose a work of fiction, your essay should deal in an intelligent way with an important literary element or with the arc of a character's development. If you choose a work of nonfiction, comment on the author's argumentation and style.

Essay 4

Zaytuna College's program of character formation has a significant service learning component. Evaluate your previous community service experience and write about a significant service learning experience. What about that experience was formative for your character and what was not?

Essay 5

Describe life within your family. What challenges or obstacles have you faced in your life and how have you dealt with them? Do you have a job? If so, describe your work experience. Have you discussed your thoughts about Zaytuna College with your family? If so, what do they think?

Essay 6 (For post-baccalaureate and nontraditional applicants only)

Respond to both parts of this topic.

PART I: Describe how you cultivate your intellectual life. What major works have you read and engaged with significantly? Be specific and offer either an assessment of the impact of these works on your thinking or a critique of the arguments advanced in these works. How does your intellectual life interface with the Zaytuna curriculum?



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PART II: Read the section on ADAB in the Zaytuna catalog and discuss a relevant dimension or formative experience in your life.

Essay 7 (for nontraditional applicants only)

If you have work experience, describe it in detail. How were you supervised or whom did you supervise? What was the scope and impact of your job, and did your project or department have a budget? Cohort-based education shares some similarities with team-responsive employment. Do you work better alone or in groups? Describe your relationship with colleagues, supervisors, and subordinates at work by giving examples of your leadership style, your conflict resolution skills, your methods of addressing concerns within a team, personnel evaluation (of both yourself and others), meeting deadlines, and staying within a budget.