

# NISOD Student Essay Contest - Self-Assessment Checklist

*Before you submit your essay, take a few minutes to review it using the following checklist. Be honest with yourself. This will help you submit your strongest work!*

## 1. Did I stay focused on the essay prompt?

- ☐ I clearly describe how a faculty or staff member made a difference in my life.
- ☐ My story connects directly to the prompt without going off-topic.

## 2. Is my story powerful and meaningful?

- ☐ I shared a specific example or personal story that shows the impact this person had on me.
- ☐ My story feels personal, heartfelt, and genuine.

## 3. Is my essay clear, organized, and easy to read?

- ☐ My ideas are in a logical order and easy to follow.
- ☐ I checked grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes.
  - Pro Tip: Use AI to provide feedback and catch grammar and punctuation mistakes. **DO NOT** use AI to write your essay. **It must be your own work.**

## 4. Does my voice come through?

- ☐ The essay sounds like *me*—my own words and feelings.
- ☐ I shared my thoughts honestly and respectfully.

## 5. Did I bring something original or creative to my writing?

- ☐ My essay reflects a unique perspective or story.
- ☐ I used interesting details or descriptions to bring it to life.

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## Final Check:

- ☐ I've read my essay out loud to catch any awkward or confusing sentences.
- ☐ I asked someone I trust to read it and give feedback.
  - Pro Tip:** Take it to your college's writing center for feedback.
- ☐ I feel proud of what I've written!