**Name:**

**College Admissions Essay Topic:**

**Specific Directions/Requirements**:

**Pre-Conference**

1. What is ONE feature of your essay that you would like me to look at? Be specific.
2. What are the strengths of this second draft?
3. What are the weaknesses?

**Independent Revision of Second Draft**

Complete the following revision activities DIRECTLY on your draft.

1. Sentence Variety
2. How many sentences are there in each paragraph? Are they of equal, even length? If not, revise for balance.
3. **Label each sentence**:
   * + S for sentences under 10 words
     + M for sentences between 10-20 words
     + L for sentences longer than 21 words
     + Note your patterns. A good paragraph should have variety, such as MSMLMS; a dry paragraph might look like SSSMMMLLL.
     + Try varying sentence structure. It need not be a perfect pattern, but it should be varied. Number sentences or use arrows to re-order.
4. Look at the beginning of your sentences. Do you see a pattern? If so, re-arrange the sentences to maximize cadence.
5. Clichés
6. **Cross out** the following:
   * + vocabulary that sounds like you used a thesaurus.
     + Deadwood: I believe, I think, I hope, I realize, I learned, in other words, the fact is, the reason why, this means that, really, very, surely, truly, somewhat, absolutely, definitely, in conclusion, in summary – **FIND OTHER PHRASES AND WRITE THEM OVER THE HACKEYED ORGINALS.**
7. Count the number of sentences that begin with “I.” **Revise structure so 10% less of your essay begins with “I.”**
8. Verbs
9. **Highlight** verbs in a one color
10. Note how many forms of the verb “to be.” If it feels redundant, eliminate the verb and rewrite the sentence with a *specific* verb.
11. Note any verbs in the passive voice. Ditch them whenever possible!
12. Look again at your verbs…is there anything you could enliven?
13. Transitions
14. **Highlight** your transitions in **another color**, or draw red arrows to repeated or key words that connect sentences.
15. Have someone else listen to your essay simply for *coherence* and *unity.*
16. Revise as necessary!
17. Literary Techniques
18. **Highlight** in a **third color**, any similes or metaphors or other literary techniques you employed. Do they create a memorable image? Does it flow with your paragraph? If you do not have any, look to see where you can add one or two for creative effect. Revise on the draft.
19. Look at your use of adjectives. Are they plentiful and vivid? Try adding double adjectives to some of your sentences to enhance description. Revise on the draft.
20. What organizational pattern did you use? Do you think it worked for the piece? Why or why not?
21. Feedback
22. In your own words, paraphrase what guidance I gave you on this draft.
23. After completing this first revision, list two specific goals you have for your final draft.