

Dear Applicants,

Writing is a critical component of graduate-level academic work. As you know, writing is not just about written communication, but it involves thinking in systematic ways, determining which questions to ask, expressing ideas in the form of hypotheses, gathering and using data, and conducting analyses of that data to confirm or disconfirm hypotheses.

In order to support our assessment as to whether you have the potential to conduct graduate-level critical-thinking, research, analysis, and writing, we ask that you write an analytical essay to be submitted with your application materials.

The essay should be 3-4 pages in length and should use at least five published sources to support your arguments (these can be books, journal articles, official government documents, or reputable news sources). Citations can be in any format.

The topic of this essay is: defining Homeland Security. As there is no accepted definition of Homeland Security, your task is to create a definition based on your analysis of which topics fit within homeland security. You should reference government definitions, strategy documents, and scholarly works to support your definition for what constitutes Homeland Security and why. Your essay should have a structure in which you lay out what will be covered and divide the discussion into sections (each with its own heading). Most importantly, any definition you provide as to what constitutes Homeland Security should be supported with evidence in the form of external sources of information/analysis.

We look forward to reading your essays and assessing your potential for research, analysis, and writing at the graduate level.