

Dear [REDACTED]

It's good to be working with you again. In our revision of this short essay I think we should focus on three main things:

### **Organization**

As you wrote it, your essay begins with the technical details of the University competition and then, only in the second paragraph, goes on to say a little about the details of your study. In this case, though, your study is what's exciting – it was innovative and a perfect demonstration of your leadership capability. You'll see in my revision that I've shortened the preliminary remarks so as to get to the story of your study sooner.

### **Specificity**

The tone of your essay tends to be rather vague, and I actually found myself more interested by your supplementary information than by the essay itself! I recommend including more detail, such as what you recommended the city do about the growing African community, and what journals your paper was published in.

### **Concision**

One double-spaced page is almost no space to work with, so we want to cram as much impressive detail as possible into these confines. In order to do this, I've removed most of the signposting and summarizing you did – techniques which don't really fit in an essay this short. I think my revision could be cut down even further, if you think of other details you'd like to fit into your essay, such as more about what qualities allowed you to succeed in this study.

-Nicholas

## INITIAL DRAFT with specific comments

Describe a major academic or professional accomplishment in your career and the factors that contributed to your success. Limit your essay within one, double spaced page.

In 2007, as the team organizer and first author, I conducted a research project on the trading mechanism of African community in Guangzhou, together with three other classmates. This project was the only one of Lingnan College in 2007 that was sponsored by the Undergraduate Scientific Research Program of Sun Yat-Sen University. Our research mainly focused on the special trade mechanism of African businessmen in Guangzhou. After one year of effort, our data and analysis basing on surveys and interviews provided predictions to the development of the trade-related African Community and suggestions to the administration.

With further revision, the research paper, directed by associate professor Guan Zhisheng, was awarded Outstanding Undergraduate Research Paper and was published in core economic journals in 2009. Though it is not as perfect as I expected to be and still needs improvements, there is no doubt that our research had reached a high level in academics as an outcome from undergraduates. This success could be attributed to three factors, insights and creativity, leadership, and research skills. The originality to find the interesting phenomenon of African assembling in Guangzhou with yearly increasing trade scale and supporting facilities ensured the novelty of our study topic. Though I was a little confused about what to do with such unique phenomenon at first, I did sense some great value in conducting this research. Besides, my strong curiosity in academic research and experienced research skills practiced by previous experiences as well as leadership and teamwork spirits also contribute to my success in that.

**Comment [w1]:** I don't think this sentence does justice to the uniqueness and excitement of your research product! I think those qualities should be highlighted in this first paragraph.

**Comment [w2]:** It might be more impressive to name your specific predictions.

**Comment [w3]:** This kind of impressive "payoff" information is probably better suited for your conclusion.

**Comment [w4]:** Specificity is always more impressive – let's name the journals.

**Comment [w5]:** This is very honest of you and no doubt true, but when you only have 250 words to work with, why devote space to it?

**Comment [w6]:** It would probably be good to refer specifically to what effect it has had there.

**Comment [w7]:** This kind of signposting is probably unnecessary in an essay this short.

**Comment [w8]:** This is the kind of information which would work well to grab your reader's attention at the beginning of the essay.

**Comment [w9]:** Again, this would make a great beginning.

**Comment [w10]:** Again, given the tiny space constraints of this essay, a summary like this is probably superfluous.

## EDITOR'S FIRST REVISION

Every year, through its Undergraduate Science Research Program, Sun Yat-Sen University accepts research proposals from undergraduates, awarding the most promising projects the funding and facilities necessary for them to make real contributions to their academic fields. In 2007 I organized a four-person team that was awarded the only USRP grant in my college. The topic of our study was an unusual but fascinating one: we decided to examine the growing African community in the city of Guangzhou.

At the time, facts like the burgeoning number of African restaurants and specialty clothing stores in a geographically small area of the city made the phenomenon obvious, but it remained unstudied and left city officials nonplussed. The effect of the neighborhood's growth on the city's economy, and whether the city should encourage it, were unanswered questions. My team set itself the task of determining the economic reason for the growing African assembly and its effects on the economy, and to recommend a course of action to city officials.

Through extensive research, analysis, and interviews, we eventually determined that XXX. The USRP committee was so impressed with our study that they said it provided a new angle from which to view the question of China's foreign trade, and had the potential to make significant theoretical contributions to international economics. Because of our creative insights and research skill, our paper was named Outstanding Undergraduate Research Paper by XXX and published in XXX. As the group leader, I was in charge of identifying a promising subject, harnessing the capabilities of my team, and directing them toward a profitable study and analysis. I am proud to say that the result has been influential, both in the academy and in the real-world sphere of everyday Guangzhou economics.

**Comment [w11]:** A one-sentence summary of your recommendations.

**Comment [w12]:** Who gave the award

**Comment [w13]:** What journals your finding was published in.