Dear Applicant,

The Admissions Committee has carefully considered your application and we regret to inform you that we will not be able to offer you admission in the entering class, or a position on one of our alternate lists. The applicant pool this year was particularly strong, and by that I mean the Admissions Committee once again sent candidates like you multiple enticing pamphlets encouraging you to apply, knowing full well we had no intention of accepting you.

However, you will be pleased to know that you have contributed to our declining admissions rate, which has helped our university appear exclusive. This allows us to attract our real candidates: upper-class kids and certified geniuses who will glean no new information from our courses or faculty, whose parents can incentivize us with a new swimming pool or lacrosse stadium.

As a reminder, we don’t aspire to be a socially exclusive learning environment. In fact, we have chosen to actively pursue a more diverse campus and welcome all minorities. But our admissions program is quite unique; we combat past discrimination by discriminating in the present. It is one of the many techniques that our Nobel, Peabody, and Oscar award-winning faculty has helped to develop.

While we consider applicants from all backgrounds who excel both in and out of the classroom, we really want student savants who relentlessly pursue a single instrument, sport, or other activity. Unless you have written a *New York Times* bestseller, won first place in the Intel Science Fair, or cured type 1 diabetes using only solar power and a tampon string, we’ll put you at the bottom of the pool.

You may be wondering how a near-perfect SAT and ACT, a dozen perfect AP scores, and your presidency of four clubs did not distinguish you from the pack. Please know that we take many other factors into account as well, including socio-political-monetary context, Asian-ness of name, BMI, and modified-Rorschach (in which one of our assistants holds your application from across the room and we try to discern the outline of your profile).

You should also know that our committee did not fall for your attempts to look “humble” or “well-rounded.” Volunteering in developing countries is nice, but truly generous individuals volunteer to improve their local communities, while truly wealthy families buy a third-world country for their child to gentrify. We also realize that your extensive study of how “Novel cyclic di-GMP effectors of the YajQ protein family control bacterial virulence” was not influenced by your passion for “volunteering with the elderly,” nor was it anything but a résumé inflator. Most importantly, we know that your minimum-wage job did not teach you “patience, teamwork and leadership.” No one learns anything from minimum-wage jobs except how much they hate people and that they shouldn’t have majored in political science.

The reality is that we are no longer looking for students who are remarkable candidates for college; we are looking for people who have already made a difference, so that we can grow our list of impressive alumni. Your value to our college depends solely on your ability to attract future applicants. Since you are no Emma Watson or James Franco, we urge you to consider your acceptance letters from state universities and equally expensive second-tier schools, and commence nursing an inferiority complex for the rest of your life.

We sincerely hope that you find it in your heart to forgive us for not “seeing” your “full potential.” Please remember that we will need your tiger-parent instincts in approximately three decades when you push your own children to the brink of death, and once again help us boost our *US News & World Report* ranking.

Best,  
Dean of Admissions