From Overwhelmed to Optimized: AI for Application Evaluation

David Kirschner — Associate Dean of Admissions, Financial Aid, Innovation, USC Gould School of Law
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Speakers

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As the associate dean of admissions, financial aid, and innovation at the University of Southern California, Gould School of Law, Kirschner is responsible for the setting and implementation of strategic goals and targets for each admission cycle. Throughout his career, Kirschner has been at the forefront of using technology and data to refine enrollment management practices and craft more effective recruitment and outreach strategies. Currently, Kirschner chairs LSAC's New Admission Professionals Workshop and led a re-imagining of the program (2023-2025). Previously, Kirschner served as chair of the American Association of Law Schools (AALS) Section on PreLegal Education and Admission to Law School and has been a member of American Bar Association (ABA) Accreditation site visit teams.

SoHye Park — AVP, Applied AI, Product Owner of RNL Answers, Insights, and Project Lead of RNL Evaluate

Park is a product manager specializing in AI/ML with a strong foundation in data science, natural language processing, and applied linguistics. She currently leads strategy and development for three AI-driven products at RNL: RNL Answers, Insights, and Compass. With an academic background in statistics and applied linguistics, SoHye blends technical expertise with product leadership to deliver measurable impact.

Thoughts on AI

1

What is AI?

Defining Key Terms

Artificial Intelligence encompasses technologies that enable computers to perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence.

Artificial Intelligence

Computer systems that can perform tasks requiring human-like intelligence and reasoning.

Large Language Models (LLMs)

AI systems trained on vast text data to understand and generate human language.

AI Agents

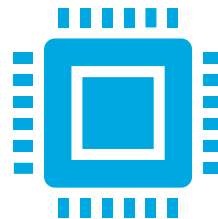Autonomous systems that observe, decide and act to achieve specific goals.

Generative AI vs. Traditional AI

Generative AI vs. *Traditional AI*

Creates new content like text, images, and audio from patterns in training data

Examples include ChatGPT, Midjourney, and Claude AI.

Focuses on specific tasks like classification, prediction, and optimization

Examples include recommendation systems and fraud detection.

The Problem We're Solving

2

Use Case Description

Evaluating a large batch of application essays using RNL Answers

This use case involves summarizing a significant volume of applicants' written submissions (e.g., Personal Statement) using the RNL Answers API, aligned with the acceptance criteria set by USC Gould School of Law. This process promises enhanced efficiency in handling and processing written submissions.

The short-term goal is to enable Answers' batch processing capability to support USC Law admission staff in reviewing applicants' essays during their busy season.

The long-term goal is to develop a product that automates the ingestion of application components—such as essays—from a client's CRM, processes these documents based on the client's criteria, and integrates the results back into their CRM.

Use Case Description

Significance

Advanced capability of Answers: Marks the first implementation of Answers' batch processing capabilities through API calls, showcasing a use case where Answers can significantly enhance work efficiency for university staff.

Foundation for future use cases (e.g., transcript evaluation): Summarization is generally simpler than evaluation, making a suitable starting point. This establishes a foundation for progressing to more complex batch processing tasks, such as transcript evaluation and transfer credit evaluation in the future.

Data Security and Privacy: Demonstrates Answers' exceptional commitment to data security and privacy, setting a high standard in the management of sensitive information.

Enhancing Market Appeal: Makes RNL Answers more attractive to educational institutions that are unfamiliar with leveraging API calls to commercial large language models (LLMs) for batch processing, as well as those looking for more comprehensive solutions.

RNL Evaluate

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Overview of the Process

Steps for Building the Prototype

1

Step 1: Data Preparation (Extracting the personal statement from each application PDF file.)

2

Step 2: Prompt engineering (Crafting a prompt that instructs the AI model how to evaluate the personal statement.)
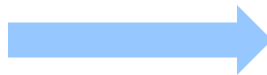
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Step 3: Processing through Answers API (Creating a loop that passes each personal statement to the prompt written in Step 2.)
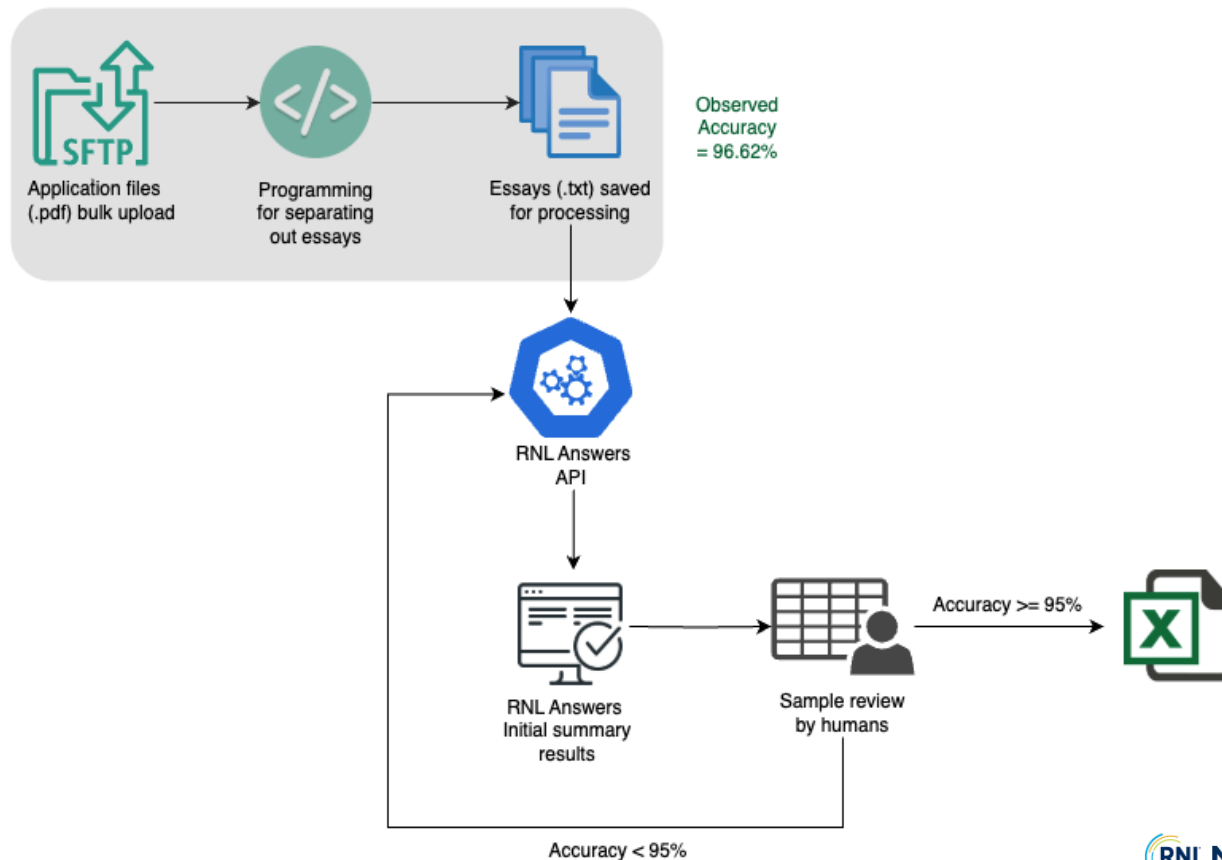
Data Preparation

Data received from USC Gould School of Law

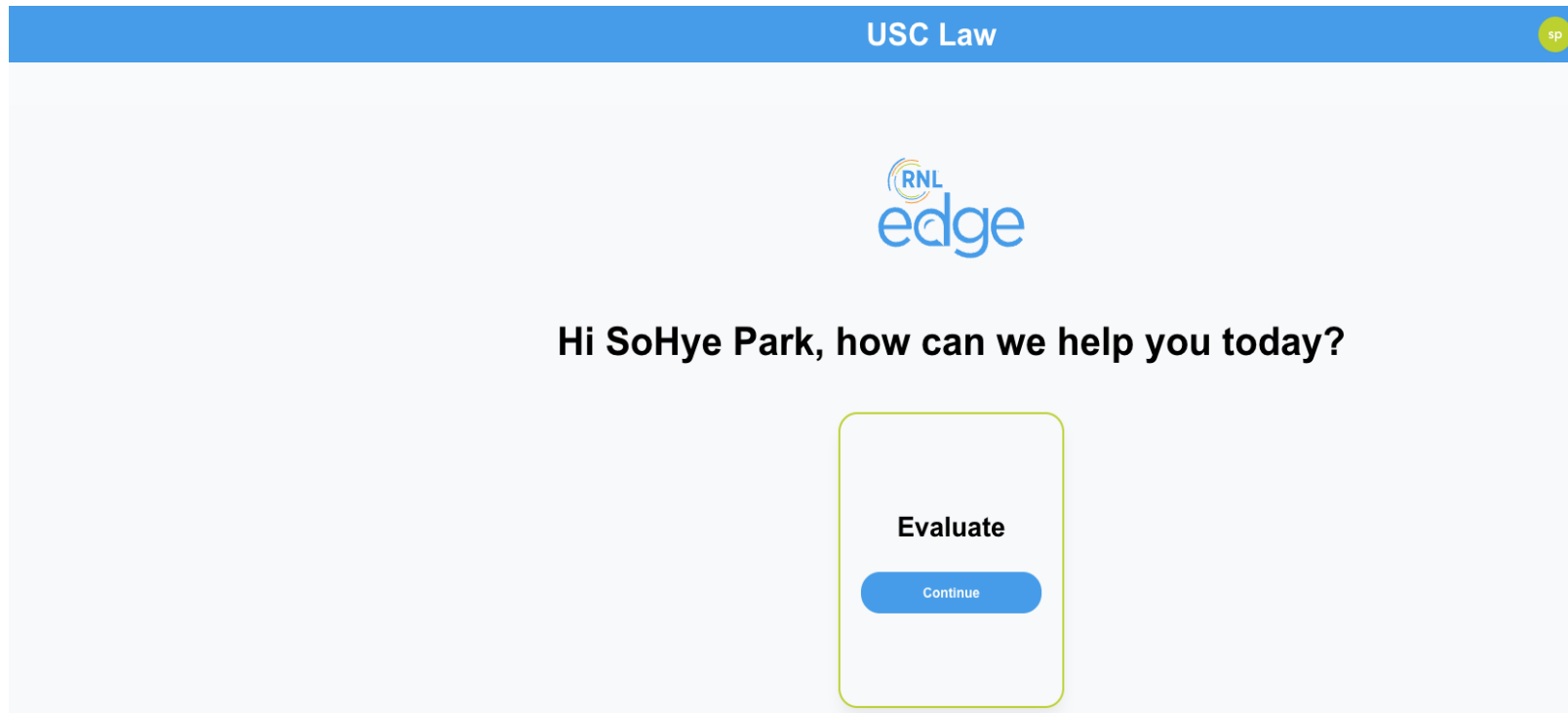About 3,578 application files (.PDF) received from USC Gould School of Law through RNL SFTP.

Only the **_Personal Statement_** were identified and extracted from each application for summarization.
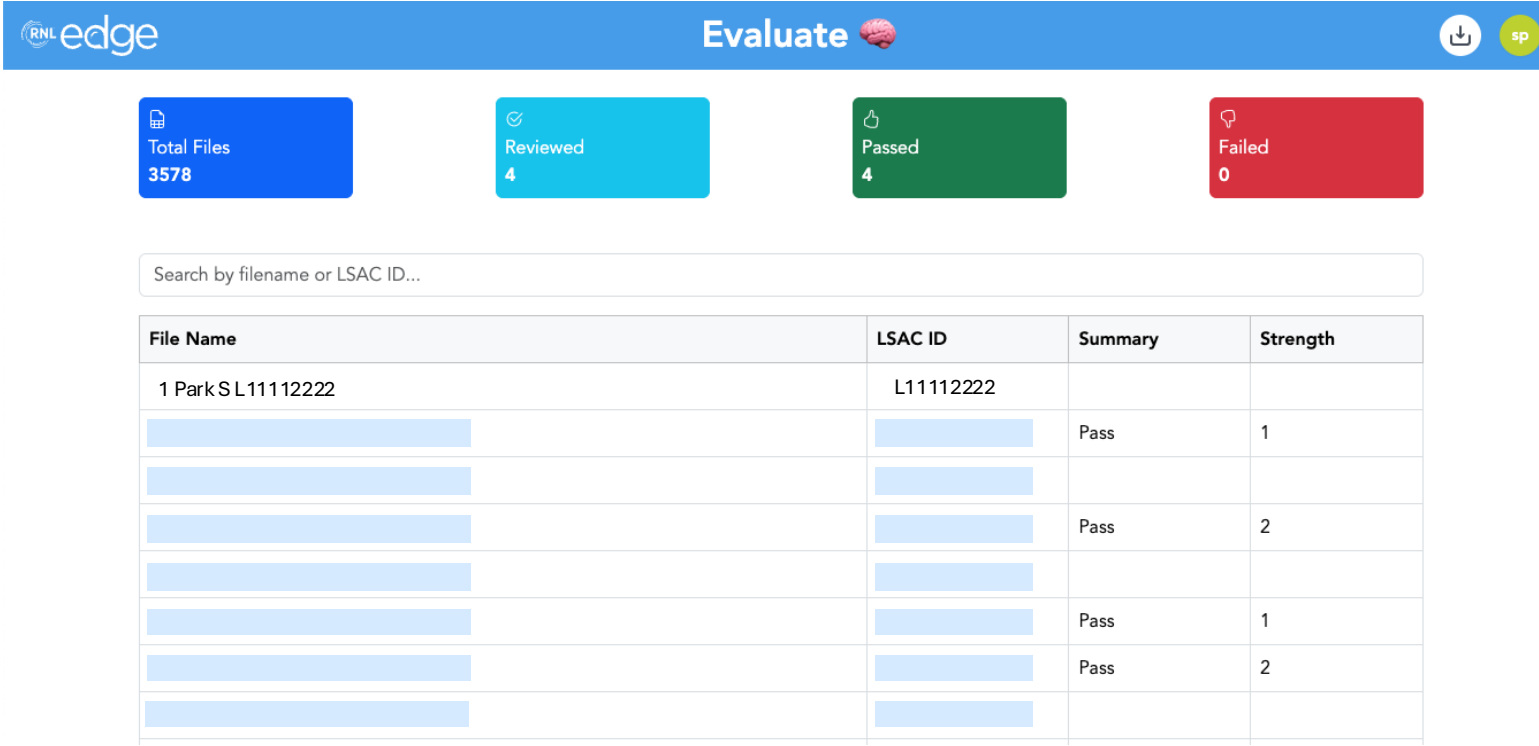
Overview of the Process: From PDFs to Summaries

Application files (.pdf) bulk upload → Programming for separating out essays → Essays (.txt) saved for processing

Observed Accuracy = 96.62%

RNL Answers API

RNL Answers Initial summary results → Sample review by humans → Accuracy >= 95%

Accuracy < 95%

The Prototype

Access through RNL Edge

The Prototype

Main User Interface

Total Files	Reviewed	Passed	Failed
3578	4	4	0

Search by filename or LSAC ID...

File Name	LSAC ID	Summary	Strength
1 Park S L11112222	L11112222		
		Pass	1
		Pass	2
		Pass	1
		Pass	2

The Prototype

Main User Interface
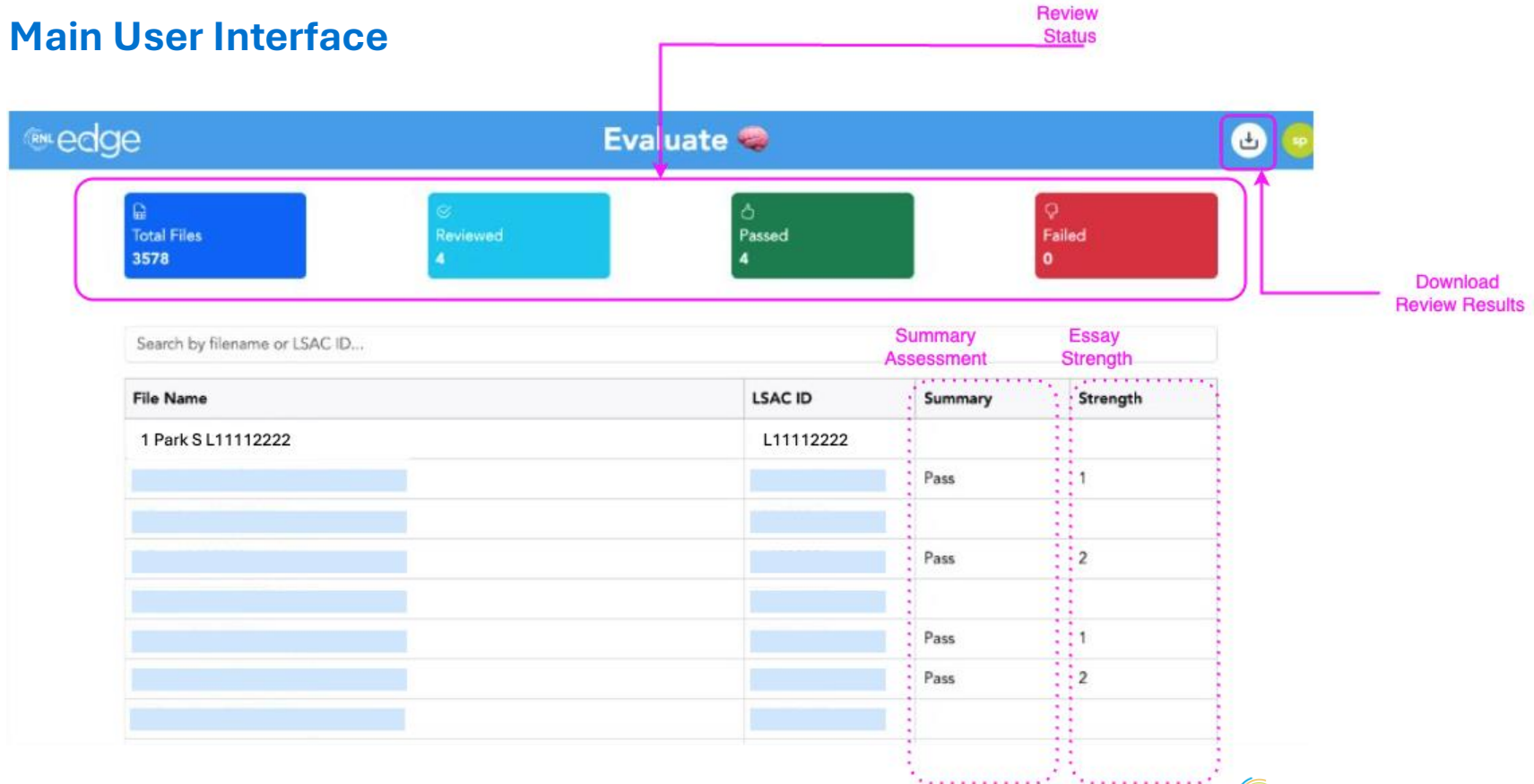
The Prototype
Main User Interface

← Back (0/3578)   Applicant LSAC ID: **L11112222**   Next → (2/3578)

Original Text

My 24-year-old cat spends his days eating, sleeping, and basking in the sun. Despite his age, he
still reigns over the house with quiet authority, listens for the faintest sounds, and is ever ready to
pounce on whatever new surprises life might offer. In many ways, my life mirrors my beloved
cat's. While content with going to bed on time and living simply, I have always remained eager to
learn and open to new ideas. Furthermore, I stay ready to adapt, recognizing that neither my cat
nor I live in isolation; the world is ever more interconnected. As I explored the world around me,
my curiosity led me to try many directions. In the end, each experience gradually led me to the
realization that I wanted to pursue a career in law.

In the past few years, I have assisted people with disabilities in their legal battles and interned at a
district-level People's Procuratorate in Beijing. Through these experiences, I came to understand
that life is full of twists and turns, where moments of both justice and injustice frequently
intersect. My first exposure to legal work was at a private law firm, Junge, where I assisted with
civil litigation in legal aid cases. During this time, I primarily helped disadvantaged

Summary

The applicant's most relevant experience sparking interest in law is assisting people with disabilities in legal battles and interning at a district-level People's Procuratorate in Beijing, where they gained a nuanced understanding of the complexities of justice and the importance of compassion. They wish to pursue a career in law, specifically focusing on human-centered and holistic approaches to address gaps in the system, as exemplified by a case where a man was sentenced to 12 years in prison for a relatively minor crime, highlighting the need for more discerning and adaptive legal frameworks. Through these experiences and others, including internships at Junge Law Firm and the People's Procuratorate, the applicant has sharpened their understanding of the law and its consequences, and is now committed to applying to a world-class law school to refine their skills and knowledge to better serve underserved groups.

Is this a good summary?

○ Yes 👍   ○ No 👎

Please rate the overall strength of the personal statement

○ 1   ○ 2   ○ 3   ○ 4   ○ 5

(1 = Weakest, 5 = Strongest)

Reviewer comments

Type your comments here...

User Insights

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Roadmap

5

Future Improvements

Additional Evaluative Component

- Essay content + stylistic scoring
- More diverse input (e.g., resume, other writing pieces)

Desired Outcome Format

- A set of scores corresponding to evaluative component(s)
- Summaries of everything Answers evaluates
- Direct CRM or review platform data transfer

Integration with Other Products/Services

- **SS&E** or **Predict**: Connecting the comprehensive candidate evaluation with yield projection
- **Financial Aid**: Targeted, individualized discounts given the totality of application

Questions

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Thank you for your time!

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