

PERSONAL STATEMENT GUIDE

A personal statement is your opportunity to introduce yourself to a university's graduate or professional school's admissions committee. It should demonstrate your personality and intellect while briefly describing your academic background and interest in pursuing an advanced degree.



5 questions to ask yourself when beginning your personal statement:

Canvas

1. Why is this program my first choice?

2. What specific interests within my field of study align with the program for which I am applying for?

3. What experiences demonstrate my determination to complete this graduate program and set me apart from other candidates? (i.e. previous/personal work experience, academic or professional competitions)

4. If a graduate committee were to take away only one thing from my personal statement, I would want it to be:

5. Why select me? _____



5 tips as you draft your personal statement:

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- 1. Use an active voice:** This means put "I" in the subject position of your sentences and avoiding terms like 'allowed' and 'gave' with you as the receiver rather than the initiator of the action. For example, instead of "This course gave me a new understanding of..." use "Through this course, I gained a new understanding of..."
- 2. Avoid clichés or generalizations:** Share your unique journey and avoid using, "I want to help people" or "I would be a great doctor because I have an excellent work ethic".
- 3. Adapt to each application:** Be sure if you are applying to several schools, change your personal statement to match the program's objective and requirements.
- 4. Share your career goals:** Committees like to get a sense of how you see their program supporting your goals to ensure you have realistic expectations.
- 5. Proofread!** Have your letter reviewed by multiple eyes and be open-minded about the advice and feedback you may receive. The Writing Center and the University Career Center can assist!

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