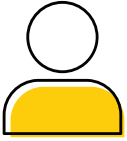


PERSONAL STATEMENT GUIDE



5 questions to ask yourself when beginning your personal statement:

1. Why this field of study?

Share in depth how pursuing this field aligns with your personal and professional goals.

2. How do you know this is the right path?

Identify specific experiences or examples that have been impactful for you and how they have shaped you into a person who wants to pursue this field.

3. What's your story?

Use the application process as an opportunity to share your unique journey and what you have learned, why this career and graduate program is the right fit for you, and how you hope to make a difference in your field or community.

4. What motivates you?

Pay attention to what you pay attention to. What brings you joy and drives your passion for this discipline? Consider what will sustain your commitment and momentum throughout your graduate studies and beyond.

5. Why you?

Highlight experiences that demonstrate your skills, qualities, and readiness for graduate school, such as being a problem solver, a collaborator, or someone committed to personal and professional growth within this field.



5 considerations as you draft your personal statement:

1. Length

- Follow the specific guidelines for your program. Word or character limits vary, so check the requirements carefully
- Keep it concise—typically around one to two pages, single-spaced.

2. Timing

- Give yourself plenty of time to draft, revise, and seek feedback.
- Step away from your draft for fresh perspective before finalizing.

3. Feeling stuck?

- Start in the middle! The introduction and conclusion can be a challenging place to start, so begin with a key experience.
- Focus on a meaningful moment, then build the rest around it.

4. Organization

- Balance storytelling with clear, evidence-based examples.
- Be purposeful with your words and proofread carefully to avoid errors.

5. Connect with your audience

- The admissions committee may only get to know you through your writing.
- Use descriptive language to show—not just tell—why you're passionate about your field.

WHY THIS FIELD?

List 5 reasons why you want to pursue this field. Write in complete sentences with detailed thoughts that explain your motivations and goals.

1

2

3

4

5

What common themes do you notice in the reasons you listed above?

Looking back at these 5 reasons and the common themes that you noticed, describe why you want to be a _____ in 1-2 sentences. This can help with really driving home a clear reason for the "Why This Field?" question the committee is looking for.

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

List 3 moments when you felt reassured/certain that you wanted to become a _____ – write a paragraph about that experience – what did you experience, how did it feel, why was it so impactful, what did you learn/take away from that moment?

Ex: Could be from shadowing, working with individuals/communities, volunteering, etc.

1

2

3

WHY YOU?

What qualities do you want to have as a _____? Can you connect those qualities to any of your answers above?

Take a moment to reflect on your responses above – think about what has kept you curious, motivated, and encouraged to become a _____. Looking at all of this information, think about why you want to be a _____ and what moments/experiences have led you to that conclusion. Start writing – do not get caught up on exact wording – just get your thoughts on paper – then you can enter the editing phase.