

Writing a Personal Statement

A personal statement is your opportunity to address the admissions committee directly. It is a reflective statement and should give the reader a vivid and compelling picture of you. A personal statement should let the committee know more about you as an individual, in a way that statistics cannot. It should include your achievements, your obstacles, your goals and your values.

Here are some tips...

- * The introductory paragraph should provide your essay's controlling or main theme.
- * The next 2-4 paragraphs develop your theme through examples and detailed experiences and build upon each other. The final body paragraph will contain your most poignant information.
- *The conclusion should "widen the lens" and wrap up your essay without summarizing or repeating what has already been written.
- * Make sure you word-process your statement in an easy to read font, and always check your spelling and grammar.
- * The preferred length is one page, with two pages being the maximum. Write concisely while still being detailed.
- * Revisions allow an essay to grow. Sometimes you need to delete parts that simply don't work with your primary theme. Feedback from others can help you identify those parts of the essay that work well, and those that don't.

Some topics you might want to include are...

- *What major(s) you are interested in, and what has prompted this interest? Also address your experience in this area, such as if you'd had a part-time job in this field, have taken a career trek or have done some job shadowing.
- *Mention any state or national recognition you may have received for your talents, leadership, or academic achievements.
- *Discuss an ethnic or cultural background that would add diversity to the campus.
- *Address any extenuating circumstances from your life that have significantly affected an otherwise strong academic record.
- * Mention if you have a sibling(s) on campus – but don't get carried away with listing everyone you know that has gone there! Do mention if your parents are alumni.
- *If this is your first choice college – say so! Also include information about your visit to the school in your personal statement, and why this is a perfect fit.