

## WRITING THE PERSONAL STATEMENT

### Why a Personal Statement

*For you:*

- This is the component of your application that provides you the opportunity to let the admissions committee know who you are.
- This provides the commentary to the facts and figures and data that comprises all the other components of your application.

*For the admissions committee:*

- Gives them the opportunity to analyze your interests in this specific discipline.
- Allows them to gauge how serious and/or thoughtful you are about your future goals.

### Determine the Parameters

- Follow the rules on word, character and/or page limits.
- Respond to specific prompts.
- If there are no prompts, generally the personal statement should be 2 to 3 pages long.

### Your Writing

- Show your best writing – capture interest and maintain it.
- Avoid clichés and generalities – use specific language.
- Use examples and anecdotes to describe – show rather than tell.
- Proofread – make sure there are no typos and that your grammar and syntax are correct.

### Points to Make

Use a framework that structures your personal statement. This is often a story that relates to how you became interested in the discipline or a theme that can be used to illustrate your points.

- Why/how you became interested in this particular discipline.
- Your ideas about this discipline.
- Your career goals.
- Why this program is the right one for you.
- Why you are a good candidate for this program.

### Applying to More than One Program

- Start with the basic essay – the theme/structure.
- Write whatever point(s) that seems universal for each of the programs.
- Then modify as necessary for each program.