

Personal Statement

Your personal statement should be exactly that — personal. This is your opportunity to tell us about yourself — your hopes, ambitions, life experiences and inspirations. Be open. Be reflective. Find your individual voice and express it honestly.

Personal statement prompt:

- Tell us about any personal qualities, talents, accomplishments, contributions, or experience that are important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are?

Tips and techniques

Start early.

Give yourself plenty of time for preparation, careful composition and revisions.

Brainstorm topics.

When you're composing your personal statement, think about including:

- Personal triumphs or challenges: Tell us about your achievements in light of the opportunities available to you. If you choose to write about challenges you've faced, how did you overcome or strive to overcome them?
- Leadership opportunities: Define your leadership role, your accomplishments, and what you learned from the experience. Remember, a leader can mean more than being elected to a position. Consider describing a time when you had to be a leader in your family or community.
- Experiences outside the classroom: Consider experiences that have made an impact on your life (e.g., your family, youth groups, work, church, or travels).
- Culture: Describe the influence culture has had on you. Don't define the culture. Instead explain what you have learned because of that culture.

Once you've narrowed down your topics, start thinking about what you learned from your experiences and how they shaped other aspects of your life.

Write persuasively.

Making a list of accomplishments, activities, awards or work will lessen the impact of your words. Expand on a topic by using specific, concrete examples to support the points you want to make.

Use "I" statements.

Talk about yourself so that we can get to know your personality, talents, accomplishments and potential for success on campus. Use "I" and "my" statements in your response.

Proofread and edit.

Although you will not be evaluated on grammar, spelling or sentence structure, you should proofread your work and make sure your writing is clear. Grammatical and spelling errors can be distracting to the reader and get in the way of what you're trying to communicate.

Solicit feedback.

Your personal statement should reflect your own ideas and be written by you alone, but others — family, teachers and friends — can offer valuable suggestions. Ask advice of whomever you like, but do not plagiarize from sources in print or online and do not use anyone's published words but your own.

Things to consider before responding to the prompt:

- What do you consider one of your strengths?
- What activities, awards or honors do you wish to discuss?
 - Make a list of four things that describe you (e.g. a leader, first in my family to go to college, athletic, started a club, own my own business, etc.)

1.

2.

3.

4.

Now ask a friend or family member to do the same thing:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Did anything overlap? Can you see areas where you want to share more information? If so, consider using this topic to respond to the prompt.