CRAFTING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

Graduate directors for both master’s and doctoral degrees agree that the personal or professional statement is an important aspect of a prospective graduate student’s application. Reviewers use personal statements to assess applicant communication skills, work ethic, research interests, and interpersonal skills, in order to gain some insights into who the applicant is as an individual. Here are some common do’s and don’ts as told by GSU College of Arts & Sciences faculty by

DO SHOW YOUR PERSONALITY

DON’T send a generic statement, using vague, simplistic language
DO specify why GSU
DON’T focus on storytelling what prompted you to apply
DO list your research interests
DON’T send a generic statement, using vague, simplistic language
DO explain any anomalies in your application
DO edit your personal statement

Instead, display your command of industry specific vernacular.

DO SHINE YOUR PERSONALITY

Share your motivations and passions, sell your skills, and give the reviewer a chance to get to know the authentic you.

DO SPECIFY WHY GSU

Specify why you want to study at GSU and in the department to which you are applying.

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Instead, your statement as an opportunity to explore why you are passionate about the program to which you are applying.

DO CRAFTING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

Highlight how previous academic successes and research or job experiences have prepared you to succeed in graduate school. Link your previous education and work-related experiences to your learning goals.

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Share specific moments in your life that contributed to your decision to apply. For example, describe a course, professor, or text that sparked a research interest. This will show maturity of thought about your decision to apply, your love of learning, and drive to learn new things. It will pave the way for a description of your proposed specialization or research interest within the degree.

DO LIST YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS

Give examples of research skills you’ve gained in previous educational or professional settings, using specific and clear descriptions.

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Although master’s applicants aren’t required to articulate a research project, the ability to do so is an asset and will set you apart from others.

For doctoral applicants, decisions are made, in part, based on the department’s ability to support research interests.

Success is often based on your ability to write with clarity and present information in a logical, well-supported manner.

Demonstrating a level of sophistication while sharing your research interests and academic background give graduate directors confidence in your ability to succeed in a graduate program.

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CHECK FOR PROPER USE OF GRAMMAR AND SPELLING.

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QUESTIONS ABOUT APPLYING? Contact the Office of Graduate Services.