

Tips for Writing Your Health Profession/Graduate School Personal Statement

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Each application service has room for a personal statement, and each has its own instructions. The following are excerpts from the application instructions for various programs:

- Allopathic Medical School (AMCAS) - "This is your opportunity to provide personal information that is otherwise not included on your application. Consider and construct your comments carefully; many admissions committees place significant weight on this section."
- Osteopathic Medical School (AACOMAS) - "We encourage you to provide your motivation for applying to the field of osteopathic medicine in this section."
- Dental School (AADSAS) - "Your *Applicant Essay* provides an opportunity to explain why you desire to pursue a dental education."
- Veterinary Medical School (VMCAS) - "Your personal statement should help the admission committee(s) learn something about you as a person, about the development of your interest in veterinary medicine, and about your career goals."
- Podiatry School (ACPMAS) - "State below why you are interested in becoming a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine. Provide any additional significant information to your application, e.g., secondary majors or degrees, experience in a health care delivery setting, pertinent research, publications, etc."
- Interdisciplinary Program (graduate school) in the College of Medicine - "In the sixty lines of text area provided, write a brief personal statement describing past research experience (if any), your career goals, and your motivation to enter graduate school."

This is your opportunity to expound upon experiences that you have had that did not go anywhere else on the application, or which you did not get a chance to describe in enough detail. You volunteered a lot of hours (or did a lot of research), but what kind of experiences did you gain from it? How did your experiences motivate you even further to pursue this career? What unique qualities/experiences do you/have you had that you would like the committee to know about? The following suggestions will be helpful:

- Proofread your essay before typing it onto the application!
- Quality, not quantity!!!
- Make sure the essay is legible. Do not squeeze the lines together to make a long essay fit – shorten the essay!
- Give specific examples of your experiences.
- Have others read your essay. Ask them to comment not only on grammatical errors, but on what kind of person the essay makes you sound like. Do you sound sincere?
- If explaining anything negative on your application (such as a bad semester, conduct probation, etc.), be open and honest. Mention the facts and move on. Explain your side of the story, but do not make excuses.
- Write a "good essay" (introduction, thesis, specific examples, conclusion, etc.), not just a laundry list of your experiences.
- Creativity and quality are important, but you are not expected to write a masterpiece. It should be apparent that you can express yourself well, but do not try to "woo" the admissions committee with big words and elaborate descriptions. You should sound like a real person!!!
- Do not write what you THINK they want to hear. This essay should come from you, not from rumors of what you have heard they are looking for. Be honest about your intentions (example; don't say you intend to go into primary care just because you HEARD that's what they are looking for.....you heard wrong!).
- If you are reapplying, write a new personal statement! Show that you are willing to put some effort into your new application.