



The Personal Statement: FALL 2010

Purpose of the Personal Statement

Purpose of the Personal Statement

- Part of UC's comprehensive review process
- Opportunity to provide information that supports and augments the review process
- Enables applicant to make the **best case possible** for admission

Purpose of the Personal Statement

- Adds clarity, depth and meaning to information collected in other parts of the UC application
- Completes the application for admission
- An admission decision will never be based on the content of a personal statement alone

The Instructions

- Two questions (prompts)
 - Each prompt consists of two parts. Students must answer both.
- Word limits
 - Respond to both Prompts using a maximum of 1,000 words total.
 - You may allocate the word count as you wish. A response should be no less than 250 words

Prompt #1

Question:

- Describe the world you come from – for example, your family, community or school (P1) and tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations.(P2)

Prompt 1 (prep questions)

- What goes on in your world?
- Who or what inhibits you?
- What influences do they have on you and what you do?
- What are your dreams and aspirations and the relevance of them to the next phase of your life?
- What is the relationship between your world and your dreams?

Prompt #2

Question:

- Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience that is important to you.(P1)
What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are.(P2)

Prompt 2 (prep questions)

- What is important to you?
- What are some things you have accomplished that you are proud of?

Preparing Students to Write

Personal Statement: Writing for College

College

- **Unknown audience:** Students write for a community of scholars.
- **Writer-determined topics:** Students choose the topics.
- **Dig deep:** Analysis and reflection are key.

Personal Statement

- Unknown audience
- Writer-determined topics
- Analytical and reflective response

Steps to an Effective Personal Statement

Draft, Get Feedback, Revise

Develop Topic and Thesis

Read Critically

Gather Information

Students Need To...

- Understand the role of the personal statement in the admissions process
- Recognize the relationship between reader and writer (think like an admission evaluator)
- Understand the reading and writing tasks of the personal statement
- Obtain appropriate feedback

Reader/Writer Pact

- All readers have expectations of writers, revealed in readers' questions, observations and interpretations of the application
- Writers can anticipate these expectations by critically reading their applications prior to writing a personal statement
- Writers fulfill readers' expectations by addressing these questions, observations and interpretations in the personal statement

From Prompt to Topic to Thesis

Prompt

**General
Instructive**

Topic

**Specific
Concrete
Responsive**

Thesis

**Point of View
Decisive**

Special Circumstances

- Students are encouraged to write about special circumstances that have influenced their educational experience
 - Small or alternative learning environments
 - Learning and/or physical challenges

Writing Process

- Brainstorm using levels of questions
- Draft
- Get feedback — give readers at least a week to respond
- Revise for organization, clarity & meaning
- Proofread

How to Get Feedback

- Give the application and the personal statement, not just the statement
- provide a list of questions you would like answered
- Ask the reader to Comment on ideas and the level of persuasiveness, not grammar
- Find readers who resemble your target audience

Last Minute Tips.....

- No Clichés
- This is Formal writing. Stay away from using the “gots”, and “Ain’ts”
- Be decisive leave “ I think”, “ I try” at home.
- Do not overuse words
- Think of this as your college “interview”
- Start YESTERDAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!