

Your Grad School Personal Statement

WHAT IS IT?

Different from your undergraduate college application essay, your grad school personal statement is about your professional interests and motivation for pursuing an advanced degree in your chosen field. A good personal statement tells the story of you through this lens, from beginning interest through college experiences that advanced your curiosity, and culminating with a long term goal and how each specific program will help you achieve that goal. This statement is about your motivation to attend grad school and how your experiences contributed to that, not about your qualifications to attend- your other documents already provide that to the admission committee!

WHAT TO INCLUDE

1. **What made you interested in this field of study?** Examples:
 - “From the moment I got my first gaming console, I became obsessed with figuring out how it worked.”
 - “Competing on my FIRST Robotics team in high school furthered my interest and lead me to apply to the mechanical engineering program at BU.”
 - Your initial interest
 - A hook to compel the reader to continue
2. **What experiences furthered your interest, and how?** Examples:
 - “Working in Dr. X’s lab exposed me to the intricacies of nanotechnology applications in neurobiology.”
 - “My internship at X Bio taught me about the challenges with machine learning in medical imaging.”
 - How research/internship/project experiences increased your understanding and interest
3. **What do you hope to do with this degree?** Examples:
 - “I hope to combine my technical expertise and passion for food access to contribute to sustainable farming efforts.”
 - Long term goals, but not *too* specific
4. **Why do you want to attend this university, and which professors do you want to work with?** Examples:
 - “The BU Biomedical Engineering Department’s reputation as a leader in Neurobiological research deepens my desire to participate in the cutting edge research done by so many of the faculty there.”
 - “Dr. X’s research in computer vision is fascinating, and I would be honored to work with them to improve the semantic understanding of object interaction.”

WHO SHOULD YOU ASK TO REVIEW IT?

- Faculty (especially those on the Admissions committee!)
- Advisors
- The BU Writing Lab