

PREPARING FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL

WRITING THE PERSONAL STATEMENT

Most graduate school application processes require a personal statement or statement of purpose. Individual schools determine the format. Some require the applicant to address specific information while others give the applicant freedom to address a chosen topic. Your statement should include the following information:

- Your eligibility and preparedness for graduate study
- Your purpose for graduate study
- How you plan to use your graduate study
- Your research interests
- Previous experience and academic work

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Follow the format determined by the school
- Begin with an outline to help with flow
- Provide good transitions between paragraphs
- Research the university and provide examples of your knowledge of the program
- Narrow your focus to one or two ideas or experiences
- Visit the ACU Writing Center for proofreading and writing assistance

COMMON MISTAKES

- Spelling and grammatical errors
- Telling too much of your life story (Focus on your interests and goals)
- Discussing finances as motivation
- Dwelling on negative situations or giving excuses
- Using an unprofessional format

**Sample Statements at
Purdue OWL**