



ANDERSON UNIVERSITY

Center for Career and Calling

Writing a Personal Statement -- Sample Outline

Opening Paragraph:

State your general reasons for pursuing graduate study and introduce yourself to the selection committee in a compelling manner. Make it interesting; the committee members will read many applications, so be sure yours gives them a sense of your particular talents and individuality.

Background:

Describe your community and family background and tell how your interest in, and knowledge of your chosen field developed. Describe any personal attributes and qualities that would help you complete graduate study successfully, such as determination in achieving your goals, initiative and ability in developing ideas, and capacity for working through problems independently.

Qualifications:

Explain those experiences that will serve as a foundation for your forthcoming graduate work. Discuss (1) your expertise and accomplishments in your major field, (2) your undergraduate studies in general and how they relate to what you intend to do in graduate school, (3) specific learning experiences that demonstrate your motivation and inspiration for continued study, and (4) other relevant experiences such as jobs for community activities, including names of organizations and concrete detail.

Specific Goals:

Express the specific training and background that you would like to acquire while in your graduate program. Your specific goals should be consistent with the goals and training objectives of the department to which you are seeking admission.

Closing Paragraph:

Leave the reader with a strong sense that you are qualified and will be successful in graduate or professional school. Here, as throughout your Statement of Purpose, try to be as brief but as informative as possible.