

Tips for Writing your Law School Personal Statement

- Treat it as your interview (What do you want admissions readers to get to know about you?). This is your chance to go beyond the numbers (GPA and LSAT)
- Get personal (what's your story?). What is going to be your theme?
- What can your story reveal about you: character, values, goals, interests, achievements, and inspirations? If you write about overcoming adversity, emphasize the overcoming and not the adversity
- How can you show admission readers your COMMITMENT, PREPAREDNESS, and SKILLS for law school?
- Try to write a wholesome story that ties in all important aspects of yourself, why their law school, and why you want to become a lawyer

Example: Story about experiencing DV, how that impacted student, why they want to become a lawyer due to this experience, and why this law school because they offer a DV clinic in their program
- Write several versions. If you have several ideas, write them out!
- Prompts can vary (pay attention). Follow word/page limits and directions
- **PROOFREAD & EDIT! YOUR WRITING SKILLS MATTER!**

Personal Statement **Do's**

- Do start with a great opening and closing paragraph
(How are you going to catch the adcomm reader's attention? How are they going to remember you?)
- Do reveal things about yourself that adcomm readers would not know from the other parts of your application
- Do have good grammar, tone, spelling, and style (no run on sentences). Write clearly and concisely.
- Do tailor your statement to each particular law school (if applicable or asked to)
- Do have multiple people review your statement (best if this is someone who doesn't know you that well)

Personal Statement **Dont's**

- This is NOT a cover letter. Avoid chronological recitation of major events in your life or what's on your resume
- Do not use this space as your addendum or to repeat other supplemental questions
- Do not be vague or leave the adcomm reader wondering "why?"
- Do not use the "I want to save the world" or use "Savior" language (check you privilege)
- Do not discuss legal concepts or issues and stay as neutral as possible
- Do not talk about other people or their experiences in length (it's about YOU)
- Do not use/avoid inspirational quotes, rhetorical questions, and/or humor
- Do not try to cover too many things, pick your theme/story and stick with it!
- Do not try to be someone that you're not



Additional Tips:

Personal Statement Document

A collection of personal and diversity statements written by pre-law UW students

https://www.washington.edu/uua/advising/site/assets/files/1062/personal_statement_law.pdf



On Campus Resources:

- Make an appointment with a Pre-Law Career Coach through Handshake to look over your materials
- Odegaard Writing and Research Center @ Odegaard Library
<http://www.lib.washington.edu/ougl/owrc>
- CLUE Writing Center @ Mary Gates Hall
<https://webster.uaa.washington.edu/asp/website/get-help/clue/writing-center/>
- Instructional Center @ Instructional Center (must be affiliated with OMA&D)
<https://depts.washington.edu/ic/content/writing.php?style=graphics>
- UW Law School
(admissions office & career services)
- Phi Alpha Delta Pre-Law Fraternity
(pre-law student group on campus)
- Your advisors
(departmental advisors, UAA or OMA&D)



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