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 your: 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 Don't'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


**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  

- CLUE Writing Center @ Mary Gates Hall  

- Instructional Center @ Instructional Center (must be affiliated with OMA&D)  
  [https://depts.washington.edu/ic/content/writing.php?style=graphics](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)