

# PERSONAL STATEMENT



SCHOOL OF  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Office of Career Services

## Telling your story.

### TYPES OF PERSONAL STATEMENTS

There are two types of personal statements: those requiring applicants to answer a prompt and those providing fewer directives. If not specified, your personal statement should be approximately 1.5-2 pages in length. Before starting your personal statement, review the graduate program website or Centralized Application Service (PTCAS, OTCAS, SOPHAS, CASPA, ATCAS) for specific directives.

#### SPECIFIC PROMPT

EXAMPLE: Current PTCAS prompt “Every person has a story that has led them to a career. Since there are a variety of health professions that “help” others, please go beyond your initial interaction or experience with physical therapy and share the deeper story that has confirmed your decision to specifically pursue physical therapy as your career.”

- Follow the prompt!
- Select an impactful touchpoint or story involving physical therapy.
- Identify how the experience solidified your decision to choose physical therapy.
- Share how you align with the profession and their code of ethics.
- Write a cohesive statement including introductory and concluding paragraphs.

#### NON-SPECIFIC PROMPT

EXAMPLE: Current CASPA directive “Write a brief statement expressing why you are interested in being a Physician Assistant.”

- Follow character count, word, or length guidelines!
- Share what prompted interest in this career path (past).
- Discuss recent experiences that further affirm interest and fit with the profession (present).
- Discuss how this program will help you achieve future career goals (future).
- Write a cohesive statement including introductory and concluding paragraphs.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

#### IDENTIFY SPECIFIC SKILLS

Once you identify specific skills developed through your experiences, you have the outline for your supporting paragraphs.

#### INTEGRATE ANECDOTES AND STORIES

Share your personal story and use anecdotes from your experiences to illustrate your points. This highlights your unique experiences and demonstrates competencies.

#### USE INDUSTRY TERMS AND PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE

Your ability to write professionally and concisely will be assessed. Avoid clichés, controversial topics, and generic reasoning (love helping people). Use terms used in profession.

#### SHARE YOUR CAREER GOALS

Identify your career goals and articulate how this advanced degree/program will allow you to pursue those goals.

#### UTILIZE CAMPUS RESOURCES

Utilize the SPH Office of Career Services, Health Professions and Prelaw Center (HPPLC), and Writing Tutorial Services to create a competitive personal statement.

# WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

## Brainstorm your personal statement.

### OUTLINE YOUR CORRESPONDENCE

Writing a well-written personal statement requires thoughtful consideration to be a competitive applicant. Guide the graduate school admissions toward your most relevant skills and experiences and demonstrate ability in important competency areas.

**Use the following worksheet to brainstorm your ideas, identify your relevant skills and experiences, and outline a cohesive written document.**

<b>INITIAL IDEAS</b> <u>Personal Statement</u> Meaningful experience? What prompted interest in field?	<b>BRAINSTORMING IDEAS</b>		
<b>SKILLS TO HIGHLIGHT</b> <u>Personal Statement</u> What are 2-3 skills you learned from your meaningful experience?	<b>SKILL #1</b>	<b>SKILL #2</b>	<b>SKILL #3</b>
<b>ANECDOTES TO ALIGN</b> <u>Personal Statement</u> What anecdotes will you use to illustrate your ability/ understanding in these key areas? How will they enable you to be success in job/career as PT/OT/ PA etc.	<b>ANECDOTE #1</b>	<b>ANECDOTE #2</b>	<b>ANECDOTE #3</b>
<b>CONCLUDING THOUGHTS</b> <u>Personal Statement</u> What are future goals? How will this program enable you to reach these goals?	<b>CLOSING IDEAS</b>		