

Applying to Graduate School in Psychology:

Personal Statement Workshop

October 8, 2024



UW PSYCHOLOGY
UNDERGRADUATE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Overview

01

TOP 6 THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Before you start writing
- During the writing process

02

QUESTIONS

Before you begin...

DO YOUR RESEARCH

- Identify faculty you would be interested in working with
- Be able to answer the question *“Why do I want to join this program and work with this person?”*

READ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

- Schools can differ in what they’re looking for in a personal statement
- Always double-check the application instructions!

BRAINSTORM & MAKE AN OUTLINE

- This will help you organize your thoughts in a logical way
- Can help prevent repetition and rambling
- Ask yourself: What is my story?

While you're writing...

“Your CV provides us a list of *what you've done*. The statement should show us *how you think*.”

Dr. Jamil Zaki, Stanford University

IDENTIFY YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS AND GOALS

PROVIDE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

- Provide specific examples that highlight your research experience and interests
- Highlight relevant work and volunteer experience that would be an asset to the program
- Connect these experiences to your overall narrative

WHY ARE YOU THE RIGHT FIT?

- Specifically discuss what makes you the right fit for a particular faculty member(s)
 - *How do your research interests align?*

Additional Resources

- Visit the **Lift Mentorship Program** [resources page](#) for additional resources and examples of Personal Statements
- [UCSD Tips for Writing Personal Statements](#)
- [NYU Video Tips](#) (note that some information is only relevant to NYU admissions)
- [Tips for writing outstanding statement](#)
- [Guide to Graduate Admissions \(with great recommendations for statements\)](#)
- Appleby, D. C., & Appleby, K. M. (2006). Kisses of death in the graduate school application process. *Teaching of Psychology, 33*(1), 19-24.

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

- Your first draft **does not need to be perfect (in fact, it *will not* be!)**
- Your personal statement will go through numerous drafts
- Get feedback from people you know and trust

Send us your personal statements!

If you want high-level feedback on your statement from this group, send us a draft by October 28th [or earlier] and we will provide feedback by November 18th. Send
(2024) drafts to senglish@uwaterloo.ca. (2024)

LINKS

Lift Mentorship Resources Page: <https://uwaterloo.ca/lift-psychology-undergraduate-mentorship-program/resources>

UCSD Tips: <https://psychology.ucsd.edu/undergraduate-program/undergraduate-resources/graduate-career-resources/applying-grad-school/application-essays.html>

NYU Video Tips: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNhiPUvD5J8>

Tips for Writing Outstanding Statement:

https://vanbavellab.hosting.nyu.edu/documents/NYU_research_statement_tips.pdf

Guide to Graduate Admissions:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/jq8rzfsgrcxmhlq/zaki_gradApp_guide.pdf?dl=0