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# DEMYSTIFYING THE PERSONAL AND DIVERSITY STATEMENTS IN GRADUATE SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

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**Office for Graduate Student Development and Diversity**

**Yale** Graduate School of  
Arts and Sciences



# What We Will Cover Today

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Components of the Graduate School Application

Letters of Recommendation

The Personal Statement

The Diversity Statement

Future Webinars

Questions



# Components of the Graduate School Application

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# Components of the PhD Application

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The Online Application: Demographic and Institutional Information

Personal Statement

Transcript(s)

Diversity Statement

Letters of Recommendation

GRE score(s)

CV/Resume

Special Requirements: writing sample, book review, etc.

# LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Recommenders submit their letters of recommendation for you online. Once you identify a recommender they will receive an email providing instructions and access information.



- **Categories**
  - Academic performance
  - Intellectual potential
  - Motivation for proposed area of study
- **Possible Rankings**
  - Lowest 50%
  - Top 50%
  - Top 25%
  - Top 5%
  - Truly Exceptional

# PERSONAL STATEMENT

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- **Emphasize**
  - Past work
  - Preparation for intended field of study
  - Relevant background and interests
  - Academic plans
  - Career objectives

# PERSONAL STATEMENT

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- Formulate a **thoughtful, compelling** and **persuasive** presentation of your own personal story
- It should be a response to specific questions or requested information
- **It should hold the reader's interest**

# PERSONAL STATEMENT

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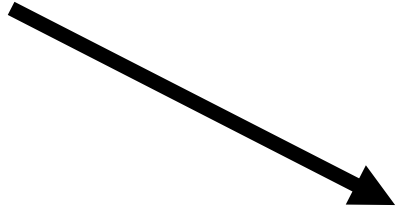
- **How to begin**
  - a. Imagine that you have 5 minutes with someone from the Admissions Committee
  - b. How would you go about making the best case for yourself while holding the listener's interest?
  - c. What would you include and omit in your story?



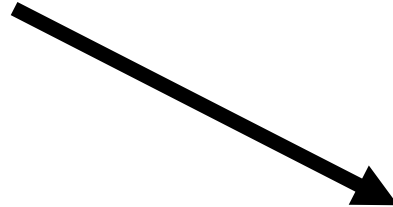
# PERSONAL STATEMENT

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**You**



**Your Experiences**



**Your Goals**

# PERSONAL STATEMENT

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- Why am I choosing to attend Graduate School?
- Why am I interested in *(specific field)*?
- Why did I choose to apply to this particular Graduate School?
- What are my specific qualifications?
- What is special, unique, or impressive about my life story?

# PERSONAL STATEMENT

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- **Tips**
  - Avoid clichés and unfamiliar acronyms.
  - Do not plagiarize.
  - Organize your thoughts.
  - Have a strong and original introduction, and ending.
  - Do not repeat at length information in a CV or resume.
  - *Stay upbeat.*

# The Personal Statement

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What should the Personal Statement cover?

- ❖ Background Information: Keep it brief and relevant
- ❖ Your motivation for pursuing a PhD
- ❖ Academic/Research Experience: highlight and explain the significance of your qualifications. Don't replicate the CV
- ❖ Your broader goals and motivations
- ❖ Other areas or issues arising from your CV
- ❖ *Create base template; customize for each school/program*

# The Diversity Statement

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How would your prior experience(s) aid in, and contribute to, the diverse learning community at Institution X?

- ❖ Experiences or events that help(ed) shape your understanding of diversity and inclusion
- ❖ How have you incorporated elements of diversity/equity/inclusion in your research or co-curricular activities?
- ❖ How your understanding of these issues impact your future research and involvement in the community you are seeking to join?
- ❖ How do elements of your identity inform your outlook?

# Upcoming Webinars

**October 8, 2018**

3:00PM EST

*Chemistry @ Yale*

**October 30, 2018**

3:00PM EST

*Graduate Admissions at Yale*

**November 1, 2018**

5:00PM EST

*Geology/Geophysics @ Yale*

**November 7, 2018**

3:00PM EST

*Yale Combined Program in the Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BBS)*

**November 28, 2018**

3:00PM EST

*SURF and the Value of Summer Research*

**December 10, 2018**

3:00PM EST

*PREP and Considering Post-Baccalaureate Programs*

# gsas.yale.edu/diversity

## Diversity



[Admissions](#) [Academics](#) [Funding & Aid](#) [Academic & Professional Development](#) **[Diversity](#)** [Life at Yale](#) [About GSAS](#)

### DIVERSITY

Office for Graduate Student Development & Diversity [+](#)

#### Recruitment

[Meet Us On The Road](#)

**[Virtual Information Sessions](#)**

[Preview Days 2018](#)

[Programs](#) [+](#)

[Edward A. Bouchet Conference](#) [+](#)

### VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSIONS



Hosted by the Office for Graduate Student Development and Diversity, we are committed to



# Questions?

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