

Questions to ask yourself before writing your personal statement:

What's special, unique, distinctive, and/or impressive about you or your life story?

What details of your life (personal or family problems, history, people or events that have shaped you or influenced your goals) might help the admission committee better understand you or help set you apart from other applicants?

When did you become interested in this program and what have you learned about it (and about yourself) that has further stimulated your interest and reinforced your conviction that you are well suited for admission to this university.

If you have worked or volunteered during high school, what have you learned (leadership skills, for example), and how has that work contributed to your growth?

What are your education/career goals?

Are there any gaps or discrepancies in your academic record that you should explain (great grades but mediocre test scores, or a distinct upward pattern to your GPA)?

Have you had to overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships (for example, economic, familial, or physical) in your life?

What personal characteristics (for example, integrity, compassion, and/or persistence) do you possess that would improve your prospects for success? Is there a way to demonstrate or document that you have these characteristics?

What skills (for example, leadership, communicative, analytical) do you possess?

What are the most compelling reasons you can give for the admissions committee to be interested in you?