WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

RESEARCH AND PREPARATION:

About the university...
• Check application deadlines
• Read the questions and prompts carefully
• Research the university’s mission, programs in field of interest

About you...
• Allow plenty of time to reflect, write, revise, and edit
• Reflect about yourself as an individual and your story
• Think about what makes you a good match for this university

BEGINNING TO WRITE:

The university is looking for…
• What your personal statement shows beyond your transcripts and application details
• How you are unique among the many applicants to their university each year
• Your preparation for college as seen in your ability to reflect on yourself and to show depth of thought
• Your preparation for college level work and writing, especially as transfer students with some college

You show that you are a strong applicant when you…
• Write in your own voice, taking the opportunity to tell your story as narrative in 1st person
• Open with a strong paragraph which captures the reader’s interest yet is authentic and unique to you
• Go deeper by explaining the impact your experiences have had on you and by being specific and concise
• Use academic language, write clearly and naturally, and avoid overuse of thesaurus (or pocket translators)

REVISION:

The university is looking for…
• Your commitment as reflected in the care and the attention you put into your essay
• College level writing especially from transfer students—admissions staff have attended college
• Applicants who value education—your readers are academics themselves

You show that you are a strong applicant when you…
• Recheck that you have answered all questions and followed length and formatting instructions
• Revise for grammar and mechanics, getting help if needed
• Address academic and professional goals rather than describing education as a means to a good paying job
ADDITIONAL HELPFUL RESOURCES ABOUT WRITING PERSONAL STATEMENTS FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

Tips for Writing Your College Application Essay (ACM):

Writing the Personal Statement (OWL at Purdue):
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/642/01/

College Admission Essay: How to Write It (Santa Ana College):
http://www.sac.edu/students/library/nealley/pathfinders/meb_essay.htm

Writing Your Essay: Personal Statement for College (Stanford University):
http://smysp.stanford.edu/family/essay_writing.html