PERSONAL STATEMENT
WORKSHOP PREPARATION
WHAT PURPOSE DOES THE PERSONAL STATEMENT SERVE?

• Serves as a "first interview"

• Should make the reader want to meet you/get to know you better

• Should convey your personality

• Should demonstrate motivation, maturity, understanding of the field
DEFINITION OF A STATEMENT: THE DO’S & DON’TS

DO:

• Create a picture.
• Create an invitation for the reader.
• Write a story, or more precisely, your story.
• Indicate your priorities and judgment.

DON’T:

• Write an academic paper with you as the subject.
• Write a journal entry.
• Write a resume in narrative form.
STEP 1: REFLECT

- **Motivation** – Why are you pursuing this profession?
- **Fit** – How do your values align with the values of this profession?
- **Capacity** – What are your most defining experiences?
- **Vision** – What impact do you want to have?
QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

• Who are the most influential people in your life? What did they do for you?

• What have been the pivotal moments in your life? Looking back, what can you recall having changed you? How were you affected?

• Do you feel a passion for medicine? What is the source of that passion?
Consider how you have changed or matured

- Lessons learned
- Insights gained
- Demonstrate growth
- Remember the "so what?"
- You don’t want to simply have a resume of experiences.
  - Do not duplicate application experiences.
CONSIDER AUDIENCE

• Often health professionals or associated with programs
• May be professors/researchers
• May not all be in health professions
STEP 2: BRAINSTORM

• Explain your clinical experience.

• Describe a unique experience and how it shaped you.

• Think about your volunteering experiences.

• Think about leadership roles you have played.
GETTING STARTED...

• Make a list of some of your most defining experiences
  • Extracurricular, specific class, volunteer work, research, hobbies, etc.

• Try to select an experience that demonstrates a personal trait that will show how you will be a good health care provider

• Now write about that experience
STEP 3: EXECUTION

• Introduction – What is your motivation/inspiration?
• Body – Actions/experiences, changes, insights
• Conclusion – Future goals, What impacts do you want to have?
THE BASICS

• Answer the questions that are asked (see prompts)
• Tell a story
• Be specific
• Find an angle
• Concentrate on your opening paragraph
• Tell what you know
• Don’t include some subjects
• Avoid Clichés
• Don’t focus heavily on someone other than yourself – Focus on yourself
Your Paragraph Should Include:

P E E L

Point
Make your point

Evidence
Back it up: Support your point with evidence & examples

Explanation
Explain how the evidence supports your point

Link
Link this point to the next point in the following paragraph or back to the main question
STAR METHOD

• **Situation**—Describe vividly the environmental condition; ie. department, organization, timeframe

• **Task or Obstacle**—Concisely describe what was expected or asked of you in terms of responsibilities OR what challenges or obstacles did you have to overcome?

• **Action**—Detail the specific action steps that you took to handle the tasks or address the obstacle

• **Result**—What impact did you have on the situation? No matter how big or small, the listener/reader wants to hear the outcome.
STEP 4: TAKE A BREAK AND
STEP 5: EDITING AND PROOFREADING

• Who are you intending to have review your essay?
• Put your draft away for a few days
• Expect to write multiple drafts

*** For the workshop – please bring 3 hardcopies of a draft. ***
A WORD OF CAUTION

• Don’t use someone else’s personal statement as an outline to follow
  • Your voice/personality will not be reflected

• Don’t put off the personal statement until just before applying
SECONDARY APPLICATION/ADDITIONAL ESSAYS

• Write a unique essay/answer for each school
• Review the mission of the institution
• Be specific!
RESOURCES

• University of Minnesota: https://www.healthcareers.umn.edu/events/online-workshops/personal-statements-health-program

• Dental & Pharmacy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsixQfYCYE&feature=youtu.be