

# *Admissions*

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[College Catalog](#) | [Enhanced Academic Opportunities](#) | [Scholarship Opportunities](#)  
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## Personal Statement Dos and Don'ts

### DEFINITE DOS

- Proofread
- Make every word count - communicate an impression and take an innovative approach
- Brainstorm for ideas
- Revise and rework your initial essay and all secondary essays
- Type (rather than handwrite) your personal statements
- Always consider the tone of the essay - you want to highlight your positive attributes
- Mention your clinical exposure and personal experiences and how they have directly influenced your decision to be a physician - most importantly, share your feelings
- Use active language, complex sentences, simple sentences, and correct terminology
- Know your audience and have an understanding of the institution to which you are applying
- Be proud of your accomplishments
- Convey your research, leadership, service, and life experiences
- Demonstrate your integrity, common sense, and your ability to inspire confidence in your colleagues
- Demonstrate compassion for human beings, overall commitment, and enthusiasm for your future medical pursuits
- Contextualize your accomplishments
- Relate your professional goals and your personal goals
- Talk from your heart

### DEFINITE DON'TS

- Don't speak in generalities - always answer the how and the why and use evidence to support your statements
- Don't cut and paste your first statement for use in your secondary application
- Don't use bad grammar, incorrect punctuation, or make spelling errors - proofread instead!
- Don't ramble on
- Don't make excuses or beg for an interview
- Don't harp on the less than stellar qualities of your application - explain any apparent contradictions and move on
- Don't forget to do the essay - incompleteness is undesirable
- Don't list qualities - illustrate and elucidate specific aspects
- Don't swear
- Don't employ gimmicks, try to create a great literary piece, or be overly flamboyant - be yourself
- Don't restate the scores already listed elsewhere in your application, such as GPA or MCAT results
- Don't speak of actions only - speak of feelings too as they are unique to you
- Don't overlook the power of the introduction and conclusion
- Don't take a non-stop approach to the statement - step away once in a while and come back
- Don't forget to have others read your statement and provide you with feedback
- Don't blame others or put down other professions