What is a Personal Statement?

A personal, yet **professional** statement

A way of thinking about **how you approach the world**

Drawn from a **personal moment** and how it has shaped other pursuits (academic or otherwise)

Looking at your personal **growth and development** as a professional or academic
Personal Statement vs. Grant Statement

You as an individual/citizen of the world
Defining moment
Experiences
Future plans

*Life focused

You as an academic
Defining issue/objective
Specific qualifications
Goals and specific actions that you will take to get there

*Resume (ish) focused
Handout
General Structure

1. **Defining Moment**
   - Impactful moment
   - Personal and professional

2. **What did you learn?**
   - How does it fit into your current path/goals?

3. **How have you applied this in your experiences?**
   - Academic
   - Travel
   - Extracurricular
   - Personal projects

4. **How will this program help develop your skills?**
   - Why this program?
   - Demonstrate familiarity

5. **What are your future plans?**
   - Thinking about after the program
   - Career goals—but don’t stress!
Fulbright

- ETA and Open Study/Research
- Very specific
- Adaptability and flexibility

**Important**: They want to know who you are outside the application and the Statement of Grant Purpose. Here’s an opportunity to create a narrative or talk about something that does not “fit” elsewhere on the application.

“Portrait of an Individual”

- Who am I?
  - Personal, academic, work backgrounds
- How have these experiences shaped me?
- Interests and Goals
Fulbright Personal Statement Prompt

“The statement should be a 1 page narrative that provides a picture of yourself as an individual. It should deal with your personal history, family background, influences on your intellectual development, the educational, professional, and cultural opportunities (or lack of them) to which you have been exposed, and the ways in which these experiences have affected you. Also include your special interests and abilities, career plans, and life goals, etc. It should not be a recording of facts already listed on the application or an elaboration of your Statement of Grant Purpose. It is more of a biography, but specifically related to you and your aspirations relative to the specific Fulbright Program to which you have applied.”
Sample #1

Fulbright Personal Statement
Grad School

- A combination of a Grant Statement and Personal Statement
- Programs might not always ask for both (like Fulbright)
- Vary by program and/or school
- Specific questions within the statement
- Personal and professional goals

“Please discuss your writing style, literary influences, and goals as a writer; how the College and its program will support these goals; and what you believe you will contribute to the program. 300-500 words.” (MFA)

“A two-page statement of educational goals and interest in a graduate program in English.” (MA)

“A statement of personal goals to be achieved by the applicant during his/her time in the program.” (MS)

“The cover letter is not dead, although a quick Google search may share otherwise. Use this opportunity to write a well-crafted, quick review of your background, why you plan to pursue an MBA at the College, and your career goals post-graduation. There is no word limit.” (MBA)
Sample #2

Graduate School
Questions?

Pop-up Office Hours
NCA Office
6 Green Way
12-2pm

nationalawards@cofc.edu

Website