

## College of Education

### Instructions for Professional Statement of Purpose

#### INTRODUCTION

##### Department of Counseling & Educational Leadership

504 College Drive,  
Office

Albany, GA  
Billy C. Black Building

Telephone: (229) 430-2793

31705

Room 244L

Fax: (229) 903-1930

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Each applicant must submit a professional statement of purpose. The statement of purpose is your opportunity to help reviewers better understand your academic objectives and determine if you are a good match for the counseling profession.

#### LENGTH AND FORMAT

The statement should be one or two double-spaced pages. Include your full name and the proposed counseling specialization at the top of each page. Please use a 12 point Times New Roman font for ease of reading.

#### TOPIC:

THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE SHOULD INCLUDE YOUR REASONS FOR UNDERTAKING GRADUATE WORK AND AN EXPLANATION OF YOUR ACADEMIC INTERESTS, INCLUDING THEIR RELATION TO YOUR UNDERGRADUATE STUDY AND PROFESSIONAL GOALS. IN ADDITION, PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN YOUR STATEMENT:

- WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU POSSESS THAT WILL MAKE YOU AN OUTSTANDING COUNSELOR?
- WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING THE COUNSELING PROFESSION IN YOUR LIFETIME?.

#### ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL STATEMENT

1. A "HOOK" THAT DEMONSTRATES YOUR PASSION FOR THE FIELD
2. Segué to your background in the field
3. Description of your academic background in the field
  - a. Specific classes you have taken, by name
  - b. Specific professors you have had, especially if well-known in that field
4. Extracurricular activities in the field
5. Publications, conference presentations, or other professional accomplishments in counseling
6. Explanations about problems in your background (if needed)
7. Explanation of why you have chosen the specific grad school
  - a. Mention one or two ASU counselor educators and what you appreciate about their work
  - b. Mention specific features of the graduate program which attract you

## Instructions for Professional Statement of Purpose

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The statement of purpose should convince the selection committee that you show promise for your success in graduate study. Think of the statement of purpose as a composition with four different parts.

**PART 1: INTRODUCE YOURSELF, YOUR INTERESTS AND MOTIVATIONS?**

Tell them what you're interested in, and perhaps, what sparked your desire for graduate study.

This should be short and to the point; don't spend a great deal of time on autobiography.

**PART 2: SUMMARIZE YOUR UNDERGRADUATE AND PREVIOUS GRADUATE CAREER**

- a. Research you conducted. Indicate with whom, the title of the project, what your responsibilities were, and the outcome. Write technically, using the APA style. Professors are the people who read these statements.
- b. Important paper or thesis project you completed, as well as anything scholarly beyond your curricular requirements.
- c. Work experience, especially if you had any responsibility for testing, designing, researching or interning in counseling or a related area.

**PART 3: DISCUSS THE RELEVANCE OF YOUR RECENT AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

If you have worked prior to returning to school, describe: the company, organization or non-profit, your team or unit, responsibilities, what you learned. You can also tell how this helped you focus your career goals.

**PART 4: ELABORATE ON YOUR ACADEMIC INTERESTS**

Explain what you would like to study in graduate school in enough detail to convince the faculty that you understand the scope of research in their discipline, and are engaged with current research themes.

- a. Indicate the area of your interest and explain what you would like to study. You may choose to pose a question, define a problem, or indicate a theme that you would like to address.
- b. Look on the web for information about the program faculty and their research. Are there professors whose research interests parallel yours? If so, indicate this.
- c. End your statement in a positive manner, indicating your excitement and readiness for the challenges ahead of you.

**ESSENTIALS**

1. What the admissions committee will read between the lines: self-motivation, competence, potential as a graduate student.
2. Emphasize everything from a positive perspective and write in an active, not a passive voice.
3. Demonstrate everything by example; don't say directly that you're a persistent person, show it.
4. If there is something important that happened to you that affected your grades or career, such as poverty, illness, or excessive work, state it. Write it affirmatively, showing your perseverance despite obstacles. You can elaborate more in your personal statement.
5. Make sure everything is linked with continuity and focus.
6. Be concise. Approximately 500 to 1000 well-selected words (1-2 double-spaced pages in 12 point font) is better than more words with less clarity and poor organization.