



Writing Your Graduate School Application

"On a separate sheet, please write a narrative of approximately 500 words about your professional plans for your further graduate studies and career."

Purpose of the Narrative

Graduate school admissions committees use these narratives...

- To learn more about you in a somewhat different manner than your other materials can reveal.
- To assess your ability to write professionally for an academic audience.
- To look for positive ways that you stand out from other candidates.
- To evaluate how well your goals correspond to the program you're applying for.

So here are some questions to get you started on your narrative:

1. What do you want the committee to learn about you that your application and transcript don't say?
2. What can you show them about your ability to write in such a short piece?
3. What makes you different from other candidates? What strengths do you have that others don't?
4. What are your goals? What seem to be the goals of the program to which you are applying? How do these goals overlap?

Tips

- TYPE your narrative! NEVER handwrite it.
- Consider addressing it as a letter to the admissions committee. Design a personal letterhead that will make your letter stand out from others.
- Remember that the committee will be composed of the professors you will be working with in the program you're applying to. Write to them as if they were your future colleagues, but be mindful of the fact that you're still a "newbie" and need to be extremely respectful.
- Use "you" language: In other words, don't talk about all the things you hope to **get** from the program, talk about the things you hope to **give** to the program.
- PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD!
- Visit the UCA Writing Center for a fresh pair of eyes.