

Tips for Writing Your Personal, Diversity, and Explanation Statement in VMCAS

Applying to veterinary school is an exciting process, and requires careful thought and preparation. The written components of the application may be the best opportunities for you to make yourself stand out from the crowd and be recognized as a potential candidate for the upcoming veterinary class.

Here are some tips to help you make your essays the best possible representation of you as a qualified applicant to the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine:

- **Start writing early.** Give yourself time to think about what you want to write. Spend a few days away from it and read it again. Allow yourself the opportunity to think of the most important points to highlight about yourself and your experiences.
- **Proofread, Proofread, Proofread.** Have someone else proofread your paper (a professor, academic advisor, friend, classmate, or family member). Then find someone else to proofread it again. An essay with spelling or grammatical errors is distracting to read, and demonstrates carelessness. Strive for the best possible writing piece!
- **Make it personal.** The written portions of your application are the best way for the Admissions Committee members to differentiate you from the other applicants. By painting a clear picture of who you are as a person and who you hope to be as a veterinarian, the admissions committee may feel a stronger connection to you and want to learn more. Don't be afraid to be yourself!

Diversity Statement

The diversity statement is part of the UFCVM supplemental application, and will be seen **only** by UFCVM Admissions.

The purpose of this piece is to describe what unique and diverse qualities, attributes, insights, and experiences you have to contribute as a veterinary student and a eventually as a veterinarian. Veterinary medicine is a community, and we want to know what you have to contribute to that community!

Personal Statement

The personal statement is part of the VMCAS application, and will be seen by **all** of the veterinary schools to which you apply.

Three prompts are given:

1. There are many career choices within the veterinary profession. What are your future career goals and why?
2. In what ways do veterinarians contribute to society and what do you hope to contribute?
3. Considering the breadth of society we serve as veterinarians today; what attributes do you believe are essential to be successful within the veterinary profession? Of these attributes, which do you possess and how have you demonstrated these in the past?

Explanation Statement

The explanation statement is part of the VMCAS application, and will be seen by **all** of the veterinary schools to which you apply.

The purpose of this piece is to describe any portion of your application (withdraws, repeat courses, gaps in education) that you feel the admissions committee should know about. This is a "reason" not an "excuse" for a situation that you feel warrants explanation. *(This is not required.)*

For more information, please visit:
<http://education.vetmed.ufl.edu/>

Do's and Don'ts

- **Do:** Write in “I” terms. General statements sound naïve and out-of-touch. For example, “You rarely meet a pre-vet student who loves psychology.” You have never met all of the pre-vet students and do not know where their interests lie! Rather, “I strive to employ my passion for veterinary medicine and psychology to better understand myself as well as the clients in my practice.” This statement puts the focus back on you and your interests.
- **Don't:** Be someone you are not. Be yourself, let your unique qualities and characteristics shine through!
- **Do:** Use online and campus resources to hone your writing skills and produce the most successful piece possible!
- **Don't:** Focus on your childhood. While many students birthed their love for veterinary medicine through their interactions with their own pets and watching Animal Planet, this sentiment is overused and immature. Instead, focus on your professional development in adulthood.
- **Do:** Show rather than tell about your goals and experiences. Do not list everything you have done in your undergraduate career. Emphasize one or two aspects that you are proud of, in order to highlight your distinct experiences. *Remember, you should still log your hours in the experiences section, even if an experience is mentioned in your essay.* For example: if your diversity essay focuses on your time spent in Marching Band, you still need to list Marching Band under extracurricular activities and the amount of hours you spent with the band.
- **Don't:** Forget that this is one step closer to achieving your dreams. Enjoy the experience!