

Statement of Purpose - Statement of Research Interests and Career Goals

Write a brief (1000 -2000 word) statement addressing the following two questions:

- What are your reasons for undertaking graduate study at the University of Maryland, College Park? Indicate any specific areas of research interest. You may wish to discuss past work in your intended field or allied fields, your plans for a professional career, or how you developed your interest in or knowledge of your chosen subject.
 - As the ANSC program does not require a separate statement on research interests and experience, be sure to expand upon these in your Statement of Purpose.
 - What were your past research experiences? If you faced a challenge in your research, what was your approach toward addressing it?
 - What current research being done by faculty members in the Department of ANSC are you excited by and why?
- What life experiences have prepared you to pursue a graduate degree at a large and diverse institution such as the University of Maryland? Among the items you might care to include would be your financial, community and family background, or whether you are the first person in your family to pursue higher education or any other factors that you believe would contribute to the diversity of our academic community. You may also wish to give the graduate admissions committee some examples of your determination to pursue your goals, your initiative and ability to develop ideas, and/or your capacity for working through problems independently (particularly as they apply to research – see above).

How to write a Statement of Purpose:

Your statement of purpose should be clearly written and informative. It should reflect you, your character, your interests and why you want to go to graduate school – and not be a general review of a particular field of research. It should answer the questions: why animal sciences and why graduate school, what fascinates you about the particular focus area (<http://ansc.umd.edu/research>), and what you want to learn and accomplish.

If you have research experience, provide a brief, coherent description of your research project (undergraduate or Masters): what you did, why you did it, and what you learned (mention any abstracts, presentations, publications and awards).

Identify at least one faculty with whom you would like to work (two or three is fine, but don't list the whole department). Explain why these professors and their areas of research match your interests.

A well-written statement indicates your level of involvement in and understanding of your undergraduate or MS research project. It also indicates your seriousness and preparedness to undertake graduate studies in the program to which you are applying.

Listed below are links that provide helpful suggestions for writing a statement of purpose. Be sure to note that these may be for other programs of study and all suggestions may not be appropriate for the ANSC graduate program. You can also search the web for other examples.

Science Magazine - Sell Yourself: Guidance for Developing Your Personal Statement for Graduate School Applications
<http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2006/01/sell-yourself-guidance-developing-your-personal-statement-graduate-school-applications>

University of California – Los Angeles - Steps to Success: Writing a Winning Statement of Purpose
<https://grad.ucla.edu/asis/agep/advsoptem.pdf>

Carnegie Mellon University College of Engineering: <http://users.ece.cmu.edu/~mabdelm/statement-of-purpose-tips.html>