



How to Write a Successful Statement of Interest

Here are some guidelines for writing the most successful statement you can:

1. Know the testing situation. At Clark Howell, applicants will be given a cover sheet and two lined pieces of paper. If you type your statement on the computer, you'll have the same space via a screen template. You'll fill in basic information on the cover sheet, then you will have 90 minutes to develop your points and draft and review your statement. You don't have to use the full 90 minutes or fill both pages. However you choose to use it, you will have space and time to write a thoughtful, clear, and persuasive message.

2. Incubate and prepare. Most of you have been doing this and you already have good strategies for developing content relative to a goal. Take a look at the statement instructions at www.testing.uga.edu or on the "Requirements" page at www.grady.uga.edu. We've copied them for you here:

"Statement of interest: Please use the space provided to write a statement of your interests, ambitions and/or experiences relevant to study at Grady College and a career in journalism and mass communication. You may focus on a specific major or on an issue in journalism and mass communication that interests you. The important thing is to showcase your passion, your promise and your credibility. Your statement should be distinctive and compelling. It should also be readable! The sky is the limit on how you develop your statement. Use it to represent you at your best. You may write up to two pages. Best of luck!"

3. Start thinking from this idea: The goal of the statement is to distinctively and effectively communicate your interests, goals, or work experiences relevant to study and work in journalism and mass communication at Grady. You may focus on the major you are aiming for or on an idea in journalism and mass communication that engages you and allows you to showcase what you've done, your special skills, or your goals. The sky is the limit on how you develop your statement!

4. Try a few versions to see kind of message you like best. Make them distinctive, compelling, and readable. Let your statement highlight your passion, promise, and credibility in a powerful way. Let it represent you, your ambitions, and your experiences. To get started, you might try making a list of points and then drafting the statement on 2 pages of lined paper.

5. Brainstorm to find a message. Here are some questions to help inspire and feed your own personal statement:

- ∞ Why DO you want to study at Grady?
- ∞ Why would anyone say “Yes! -- That student is a great candidate!”
- ∞ What have you done or what are you doing professionally?
- ∞ What's important or interesting about your abilities or experiences, and how are they important to what you want to study or do?
- ∞ What insight or idea has been meaningful from your courses, reading, or professional experiences?
- ∞ What excites or challenges you about your major or field?
- ∞ Who are your communication heroes? What’s your favorite ad campaign or public relations success? What’s interesting about the television programming, new media, films, books, magazines or newspapers that engage you? Who are the writers you like to read? What’s the media content that grabs your attention? What would you like to produce? What do you read or watch? How is it relevant to your major, and what can writing about it say about you?
- ∞ What makes your heart beat fast about your major, your dream career, or what you would learn at Grady?
- ∞ What is it about your major—or any issue in journalism and mass communication—that engages you most deeply? How can you communicate that interest in a way that connects with someone else who respects the field of journalism and mass communication?
- ∞ What do you know about Grady and what it offers?
- ∞ What’s the cool question or approach that would make your statement stand out?

6. Consider making your statement a “verbal portfolio.”

Some students may want to use some or all of their statement space as a kind of “verbal portfolio.” They may want to use it to focus on professional experiences in internships, in jobs, or with special projects. This will entail being selective and highlighting what’s interesting or important about what you’ve done in terms of your statement and Grady goals. Professional experience can add significantly to the content power and credibility of your statement. Your challenge is how to communicate it!

7. Know the score. Your statement will be evaluated for content and credibility. These two terms are not separate. If a statement is hard to read, that can comprise credibility to some degree. Your statement can earn up to 25 points for how successfully it addresses statement goals and honors the spirit of effective communication, which is Grady's lead core value.

A few more tips:

1. Before it's time for the real thing, PRACTICE! You should make a list of key points and practice writing drafts that fall within the two-page limit and the 90-minute time limit.
2. If you have relevant and significant professional experience, telescope it into two pages that tell a compelling story about who you are and what you've done.
3. Use writing your statement as a professional opportunity to inventory your skills and goals and to introduce yourself in a way that sells.
4. Get feedback on your statement ideas.
5. For maximum interest and persuasiveness, be specific and concrete and use examples rather than making generalizations or vague statements.
6. Don't be afraid to take an intellectual risk. Your statement could use humor, for example, or it might take an uncommon approach. But gauge the risk in terms of your goal, and think strategically about it.

Good luck on your Grady goals!
Grady's Undergraduate Services Team