

# ***4<sup>th</sup> Year Planning: Preparing Personal Statements***

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# *What do I need to do now?*

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- Prepare the CV (curriculum vitae)
- Draft personal statement
- Consider timing of Step 2 CK and CS
- Consider potential letter writers for LoRs

# ***Your Personal Statement***

This is an opportunity to share more information.

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BUT THIS IS NOT ABOUT BEING A GREAT WRITER.



# Consider what they want to know

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- ❖ Why are you interested in this specialty?
- ❖ How does this specialty fit your career goals?
- ❖ What are you looking for in a residency program?

# What else should be shared?

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## Stories that make the “point”

“I can distinctly remember my introduction to internal medicine. A family friend who was an attending at a local hospital invited me to observe rounds on his internal medicine teaching service during my ninth grade year. I recall feeling a sense of excitement as I watched how his team of residents interacted to manage critically ill patients. Everything that morning was foreign to me. I knew nothing of what it meant to be an internist. However, this introduction did have a profound impact on me and I believe it is where my interest in internal medicine began.”

# What else should be shared?

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## Stories that illustrate your skills

- “problem solving”
- “intervening”
- “completing”
- What convinces them of this?

“My research experience proved particularly helpful during my acting internship when my new patient, an elderly mother of four, was in cardiac arrest in the ER. While at home following a hospitalization for acute renal failure, she had become profoundly hypokalemic. Her family was frightened and angry - what had gone wrong? Thanks to the experience and knowledge I gained through my research on acute renal failure, I was able to explain what had happened in a way they understood, calming the family and diffusing their anger.”

# What else should be shared?

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## Explanations of risk points

- Low academic or exam performance
- Course or exam failures
- Leaves of absence

“There are few people who can say that contracting *Giardia lamblia* was the best thing that ever happened to them. My struggles began with Anatomy in the fall and did not end until being sick with *Giardia* in the spring. I was devastated with having to repeat my first year. While doing pediatric research during my time off, I realized that working with children was just what I wanted to do with my life. I started the new school year with a newly found determination to reach my goal. Fighting my way back from failure was the hardest thing I have ever done and I now know that I have the strength to succeed not only in medicine but also to tackle life’s trials and tribulations.”

# Personal Statement Checklist

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- Check for grammar and spelling
- Don't focus on being creative—focus on interesting or unique factors
- Link your statement to the specialty
- Don't rehash your CV
- LIMIT to 1 page in 12 font



# Personal statements examples

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- Note the central theme—what's the story?
- What 1-2 factors stand out?
- What could be improved?

# Reminders--

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- Ask for input on your CV and personal statement from your career advisor and the MSS advisors
- Give your CV and personal statement to your letter writers
- Bring your CV and personal statement to your MSPE appointment

# More information...

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## Careers in Medicine

- Prepare for Residency, Residency Application, Applying
  - “Writing Your Personal Statement”

## “Strolling Through the Match”

- [www.aafp.org](http://www.aafp.org)>Medical School and Residency
  - “How to Write a Personal Statement”

# *Scheduling Step 2 CK*

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Information at [www.usmle.org](http://www.usmle.org) and [www.nbme.org/students](http://www.nbme.org/students)

- Consider:
  - Specialty career choice
  - Step 1 score
  - How programs view Step 2 score (need it before interview?)
  - Advice from Career Advisor, MSS Advisors and Program Directors
  - “Study time”
- **Schedule early!**
  - You will select a three month “window”
  - Once you register, NBME confirms eligibility with UAB-SOM Records
  - Will receive scheduling permit
  - Fee is \$630 for 2019

# *Scheduling Step 2 CS*

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- Must register separately for CK and CS
- SCHEDULE EARLY!!!
  - Only five test sites
  - They fill up quickly!
- Fee is \$1290 for 2019

# *Choosing your letter writers for LoRs*

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The Ideal Letter Writer has:

- A national reputation in your chosen field
- Good personal experience with you
- The opinion that you are a star
- Training from your place of interest
- A sense of urgency about getting the job done

# Questions/discussion

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