Welcome

cunySciencePhD

CityofScience

@GC_ChemistryPhD
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@CUNYChemistryPhD

How do I get into a program? Write a good Personal Statement Essay

Main purpose: Tell the admissions committee *why you want a Ph. D.*

- “so I can be rich!”
- “I hope to do research for the rest of my life”
  - “I want to teach at the college level”
  - “so I can later get a job in patent law”
- “because I didn’t get into med school but I still love biomedical science”

- “so people will call me Doctor!”
So you want to be called “doctor”…?

"Certainly. A party of four at seven-thirty in the name of Dr. Jennings. May I ask whether that is an actual medical degree or merely a Ph.D.?”

The Personal Statement

Tell the admissions committee why you want a Ph. D. from The Graduate Center CUNY

- why are you choosing the CUNY Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Physics program?

-state concrete reasons: preferred areas of research, location, friends, great faculty, array of mentor choices, history, reputation
The Personal Statement

Tell the admissions committee *why and how you qualify for admission*

Define your past experiences leading you here-

• academics, laboratory research, inspiration from a TV show (Big Bang Theory; NCIS; NOVA; SpongeBob Squarepants?)

• explain **how** you are currently qualified for research

• identify the research area you think you want to pursue—
  all the PhD programs have sub-disciplines
The Personal Statement

Tell the admissions committee *why and how you qualify for admission*

If you have research experience:
• acknowledge your mentor(s).
• identify the “big picture” research topic.
• define your role in the project
• explain the results from your own contributions.
• demonstrate your ability to analyze data.
• include citations to conference presentations, publications and grant awards

Tailor your essay after doing some homework:
• identify specific campuses and professors you know or may consider working with
• Explain WHY
The Personal Statement

Tell the admissions committee why and how you qualify for admission.

If you have little or no research experience:

• explain how a particular science course got you interested in laboratory research-
  -you enjoyed doing titrations in analytical lab
  -or you want to look into a microscope (telescope, kaleidoscope?) every day

BE honest and believable
The Personal Statement

Tell the admissions committee why there are gaps in your path or a semester during which you did poorly

-or if you are changing programs, explain why

Being honest does not hurt

Remember that the same person reading your essay will be reading your recommendation letters
Opening sentences. Good or bad?

Be believable and real!

• “I knew ever since I played with my Chemistry Set and blew up the garage that I would become a chemist..”

• “Albert Einstein is my hero.... but CUNY has physics professors who will also be good mentors....”

• “I plan on winning a Nobel Prize after my PhD..... in the field of Astrology”

• “The flora and fauna of the Galapagos Islands always intrigued me especially after I spent a summer there tagging turtles....OR: especially after I spent a week at the Hyatt Resort and Spa on a beach there”

• “My grandmother recently caught a bad flu despite having been vaccinated and I want to understand why the latest flu vaccine sometimes doesn’t provide immunity....”

• I don’t expect to win a Nobel Prize but I might win the “Dance Your PhD Contest” and have 15 minutes of fame
On-line help?

Don’t copy or plagiarize!

https://www.studential.com/personal-statement-examples/chemistry-personal-statements

Get help editing if your are not a native English speaker
Use Professional Society resources


https://www.aps.org/careers/guidance/development/index.cfm

http://substrate.asbmb.org/
Future plans: Enter the “Dance Your PhD” contest

http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2016/06/science-launches-2016-dance-your-phd-contest

Biochem https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51IY5XhdJR8
Chem https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJ1B9TpayUc
Biology https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LMa3Nh2SuQ
Physics: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPN4m0d6PvI

- How to enter:
- Turn your Ph.D. thesis into a dance.
- Post the video on YouTube.
- Send us the link by 29 September 2017 at 11:59 EST.
- THE JUDGING IS NOW UNDERWAY!
- The prizes:
- A cash prize goes to the best Ph.D. dance in each category:
  - PHYSICS — $500
  - CHEMISTRY — $500
  - BIOLOGY — $500
  - SOCIAL SCIENCES — $500
- The rules:
  1. You must have a Ph.D., or be working on one as a Ph.D. student.
  2. Your Ph.D. must be in a science-related field (see FAQ).
  3. You must be part of the dance (see FAQ).
- Submission deadline: *** 29 September 2017 at 11:59 EST ***
Thank you and Good luck