UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PERSONAL STATEMENT

INSTRUCTIONS AND PROMPTS FOR FALL 2010

• Respond to both prompts, using a maximum of 1,000 words total.
• You may allocate the word count as you wish. If you choose to respond to one prompt at greater length, we suggest your shorter answer be no less than 250 words.
• Stay within the word limit as closely as you can. A little over – 1,012 words, for example – is fine.

Prompt #1 (transfer applicants)
What is your intended major? Discuss how your interest in the subject developed and describe any experience you have had in the field – such as volunteer work, internships and employment, participation in student organizations and activities – and what you have gained from your involvement.

Prompt #2 (all applicants)
Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are?

TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

Start Early.
Allow time for reflection, thoughtful preparation, and revision.

Choose A Topic For Each Essay.
Look critically at the information in your application: your grades, awards, activities and work experience, family and income. Anticipate questions an admissions evaluator will have after reading your application. The personal statement is your opportunity to answer those questions.

Compose Your Personal Statement In A Word-Processing Program.
Don't type it directly into the application. This way, you will have the opportunity to print copies for review.

Write In A Natural Style.
Present your information and ideas in a focused, thoughtful and meaningful manner. Support your ideas with specific examples. A personal statement that is simply a list of qualities or accomplishments is usually not persuasive. Show, don’t tell. Explain, don’t whine!

Don’t Try To Be Wildly Funny!
**Proofread And Edit.**
In addition to checking your spelling, be sure your grammar is correct and your essays read smoothly. Treat this as a “personal manifesto” you would be proud to have published in *The New York Times*.

**Avoid Clichés And Trite Statements**
“I want to be a doctor so I can help people.” or “Going to college was a struggle for me.” are trite statements. Your desire to “help people” can be described in terms of a personal experience where you helped people. Your “struggle” can be described by the balancing act you have between work family obligations and/or health issues.

**Solicit Feedback.**
Your personal statement should reflect your own ideas and be written by you alone, but others--family and teachers--can offer valuable suggestions.

**Copy And Paste.**
Once you are satisfied with your essays, save them in plain text (ASCII) and paste them into the space provided in the application. Proofread once more to make sure no odd characters or line breaks have appeared. (If you submit a paper application, attach a copy of your personal statements. In the upper right corner of each page, write your name and date of birth, and the words "Personal Statement.")

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR VETERANS**
Because the University is interested in knowing about your military service, you may wish to use the personal statement to communicate the following:

1. To describe how your military service has been instrumental in developing your educational plans.
2. To indicate if you are entitled to educational benefits as a result of your own military service or the service-connected death or disability of a parent or spouse.
3. To indicate if you are affiliated with the military, such as but not limited to the spouse or dependent of someone who is on active duty or a current participant in an ROTC-type program.