

# PERSONAL STATEMENT GUIDE FOR FRESHMAN APPLICANTS

UNIVERSITY  
OF  
CALIFORNIA

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## Worksheet: Get started on the personal statement

This worksheet is designed to help freshman applicants start the writing process for the personal statement.

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### Prompt #1

Describe the world you come from—for example, your family, community or school—and tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations.

*Things to consider before responding to prompt #1:*

- What are the opportunities and/or challenges you find in your community?
- What role do you play in your family, and how has that influenced your decisions in and out of school?
- Do you identify with one or more cultures? Can you speak more than one language? What has that allowed you to do in life?
- What is a typical day or week in your life, and how do you manage to accomplish everything?
- What is your school like? Are you in a magnet school, academy or other specialized program? Describe the program and why you enrolled.
- How are you challenging yourself in school to prepare for college? Is attending college common for students at your school?
- If you hold a leadership role: Are you a leader in your school, community or family? What does that role mean to you? How did you personally grow from this experience?
- Do you have a major or career in mind? What is it and why are you interested in it? Are there any courses and/or extracurricular activities you have completed to get you started in this area?

### Prompt #2

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?

*Things to consider before responding to prompt #2:*

- What do you consider one of your strengths?
- What activities, awards or honors do you wish to discuss?
- Make a list of four things that describe you (e.g. a leader, first in my family to go to college, athletic, started a club, own my own business, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Now ask a friend or family member to do the same thing:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Did anything overlap? Can you see areas where you want to share more information? If so, consider using this topic to respond to prompt #2.

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### What about “Additional Comments?”

After you complete the two prompts, you will see a third section called “Additional Comments.” This is an optional section and **should not be used as a continuation of your personal statement**. Instead, you should use this section to:

- Provide additional clarification or expand on an honor, award or activity.
- Share information regarding a nontraditional school environment or unusual circumstances

- Describe anything else that you HAVE NOT had the opportunity to include elsewhere in your application.

**Ready, set...apply!** The UC application is available online at [universityofcalifornia.edu/apply](https://universityofcalifornia.edu/apply).