Preparing a Personal Statement

1. Get started by considering the questions below, and be sure to answer any other required questions listed in the application materials:
   - What are your specific goals for graduate study?
   - How have you been prepared academically?
   - What experience has helped you prepare?
   - What are your goals beyond graduate study?

2. Explain why you are uniquely suited to be an asset to their program:
   - Show how the program you are applying to fits your background and interests
   - Graduate schools are interested in your motivation, your intellectual skills, and your suitability
   - Start with a vivid story or narrative using concrete examples and striking details about your life experience
   - Convey confidence by transforming blemishes into positives

3. Tailor each personal statement to the school you are sending it to:
   - Demonstrate your knowledge of the field and institution by mentioning faculty and their work (programs, journals, institutes, etc).

4. Proofread and review
   - Neatness, accurate spelling and correct grammar are important
   - Ask your academic advisor, mentor and/or Career Services to critique and edit

Requesting Letters of Recommendation

- Make requests courteously and early
- Allow ample time for them to complete letters
- Provide faculty with your personal statement, transcript and resume
- Write thank-you notes
- Be sure to notify them when you are accepted

Website resources

- [http://www.gradschools.com/](http://www.gradschools.com/) (can search by subject, specialty, format & location)
- [http://www.petersons.com/graduate-schools.aspx](http://www.petersons.com/graduate-schools.aspx)