Applying to graduate/professional school involves many steps, often including the creation of a personal statement. Many of us get “stuck” as we start this document and feel like we are getting nowhere. Don’t worry, there is now an on-line workshop available to you, “Personal Statements for Health Programs,” (brought to you by CSB/SJU Career Services and the U of M) that will help you through the entire process. The program consists of eight steps and provides a structured format that asks thought-provoking questions. This will help you create a statement that not only is unique to you, but shows your passion for the graduate program.

The steps include:
1. Research the profession and programs you’re applying to
2. Conduct a self-assessment
3. Read the directions for the personal statement essay
4. Develop your theme
5. Create an outline
6. Write a draft
7. Revise
8. Customize for specific schools (if applicable).

Once you complete a draft, contact the staff in the Writing Center and/or Career Services for a critique and feedback. At some point, also share a copy of your draft with your faculty advisor or pre-professional advisor for additional feedback.

Even though this program is designed for students in health professional fields, it could be used as a tool to create a personal statement for most graduate programs. The course also provides many personal statement samples; sometimes seeing an example is what you need to spark the fire of your own statement.

I used this program to help me prepare my personal statement for optometry school. It forced me to think about all the experiences that have led me to consider optometry as a career option. It also assured me that the professional path I have chosen is the right fit for me.

For those of you thinking about medical school, there is also an on-line workshop, “Planning for Medical School” available to assist you in the application process.

To access these helpful tools, go to: [http://www.csbsju.edu/Career/Students.htm](http://www.csbsju.edu/Career/Students.htm) - click on “Online Workshops-Health Graduate Programs” located in the box on the right side.

Career Services & the Writing Centers are also sponsoring “Creating Personal Essays” workshops to help you get started! Come to one of the following:
- Monday, Sept. 20, 4:30 p.m., ASB 222, CSB
- Tuesday, Oct. 12, 4:30 p.m., Gorecki 120, CSB
- Tuesday, Oct. 26, 4:30 p.m., Gorecki 120, CSB – especially for pre-law

Good luck with your personal statement!