

Guidelines for Writing Your Statement of Purpose

What is a statement of purpose?

All applications to our graduate programs must include a statement of purpose from the applicant. A statement of purpose is a personal statement that gives the selection committee a sense of who you are, helps them decide if you are a good fit for the program (and vice versa), and gives them insight into your potential to succeed in a graduate program. If your statement of purpose doesn't provide the necessary information, the selection committee may not be able to accept you into the graduate program you've applied for, even if other elements of your application (CV, transcripts, letters of reference) are strong. Therefore, it's important to spend some time writing an effective statement of purpose.

What should your statement of purpose include?

Your statement of purpose should provide the following information:

- A brief statement about who you are – e.g., relevant background, current employment
- An explanation of why you're applying – What sparked your desire to pursue graduate studies? Why UNB's Faculty of Education in particular? Why the specific degree and concentration for which you're applying? Feel free to share both personal and professional reasons for your interest in the program and be as specific as possible.
- An explanation of why you're a good candidate for the program – Describe relevant experience, both professional and academic. Don't just reiterate what's in your CV. Rather, highlight points (positions, volunteer work, awards, publications, etc.), making it clear how they relate to the specific program you're applying for. Honestly address any gaps or issues in your undergraduate academic record.
- An indication of what you want to do in the future – How will the program help you achieve your immediate and long-term goals, both personal and professional? How will you use what you learn to grow and to contribute to your field of study?

How should the statement of purpose be written?

Your statement of purpose should provide a coherent narrative about you. It should be written in strong, clear language, and it should certainly be error free. Concision is also important: a good length to aim for is about 500 words (two double-spaced pages). Keep in mind that, in addition to providing information about you, your statement of purpose gives insight into your writing abilities.