

# Admissions Essay Tip Sheet

*Presented by the Graduate Peer Advisors (GPA)*

## **General Suggestions**

1. Make sure that you are properly answering the essay questions and adhering to the directions.
2. The use of passive voice can create awkward sentences or make your writing a bit flat. Utilize active voice as much as possible. For example:

*Passive:* The Yankees fan was bitten by the rabid dog.

*Active:* The rabid dog bit the Yankees fan.

3. Get feedback on your essays and don't be afraid to ask for criticism. It can be difficult to objectively edit your own essays, particularly because you've read them over so many times that you might not notice mistakes or areas that need improvement. Have professors, co-workers, family, or friends whose opinions you trust read your essays, and make sure you give them copies of the essay prompts. Ask them for creative, grammatical, and structural suggestions. However, avoid getting too many opinions. An excess of voices and styles may cloud the process for you, so stick to two or three people at most. Keep in mind that GPAs from the Goldman School are more than happy to read essays and give feedback.
4. Include a resume with your application. This allows you greater freedom in writing your Statement of Purpose, because you can focus on one or a handful of important experiences rather than feel compelled to squeeze in everything you've done.

## **Statement of Purpose**

1. The Admissions Committee is looking for you to connect your background, important professional and/or academic experiences, and your goals in conveying why you'd like to be a part of the Goldman School. This does not mean writing a chronological account of your life's experiences or an autobiography. Instead, consider why you want this degree, why you want to attend the Goldman School, and how your past experiences have led you towards this goal.
2. The Committee is interested in hearing what you want to do after completing a master's program. Where do you want this degree to take you? The Committee is not asking you to discuss a particular job for a particular organization, but to comment on your career goals as they relate to your specific policy interests.

3. Some other things to think about as you craft your Statement of Purpose:

-What is compelling or unique about you as a candidate, and how does this tie into your motivations for applying to the Goldman School? In other words, do not be apprehensive about selling yourself as someone the program would benefit from having as a student.

- Be thoughtful in what you write. What have your experiences, professionally or academically, shown or taught you? What inspires or drives you?