

McNair Scholars Program Central Michigan University

ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE: JUNE 5 **PERSONAL STATEMENT AND CV I**

McNair “boot camp” has allowed each of you to begin work on your personal statement and CV. You each obviously have a draft in hand – that is a great first step! I would like to emphasize that this is the first step in the process and that you should maintain a mindset of progressing through multiple versions that will ultimately result in a finely polished and highly effective personal statement (submitted via the “action plan”). The end result is what I like to call the **“SHAZAM”** moment. It’s basically when you think you have nailed it!

For this version of your personal statement, the expectation is that you introduce/address the “main elements” highlighted during camp. This includes:

- intriguing opening
- statement of goals and why this field
- explanation of research and research interests
- demonstrated knowledge of the field (this means making it sound **ACADEMIC and SCHOLARLY!**)
- emphasis on strengths and experiences that make you a strong candidate
- why here – potential faculty advisors (this means tailoring it to one of your schools of interest)

Assignment Part 1: Complete the first draft version of your personal statement. You should consider this to be your “base statement” from which you will then tailor for each of the schools you ultimately apply to. In general, you should shoot for two-pages, single-spaced with one inch margins – about 1000 word count. You will find that different institutions have different specifications – be sure to follow the directions.

Assignment Part 2: Once you have written your “base statement,” explore sample personal statements in the Asher book and find one in your field. Write a one-page critique of the sample – comparing and contrasting it with your “base statement.” Note its strengths and weaknesses in relation to this version of your own statement. Note the number and “title” of the personal statement you reviewed in the heading your critique.

Assignment Part 3: Complete the first draft version of your CV. The expectation is that you have a good foundational CV established that has consistent formatting and effective content. Include all of the things you think are relevant and then fine-tune, and perhaps tailor, these items in future versions.