

McNair Scholars Program Central Michigan University

CAMP ASSIGNMENT DUE: MAY 26 **PERSONAL STATEMENT PREP**

In the following preliminary writing exercise, take your time to answer all of the questions to the best of your ability and with generous detail. Try not to judge your thoughts, but allow them to flow. Be honest about yourself and your intentions. Write as much as necessary. This will form the basis of your personal statement and provide numerous options for its ultimate content.

- 1 – Write down any unusual things about yourself.
- 2 – Pinpoint intellectual influences in your life:
 - What writers/articles have influenced your development of thought?
 - Who were your favorite professors and why?
 - What is the best paper you've written and why?
 - What is the single most important concept you learned in college?
- 3 – What are some encouraging words that have been said to you?
- 4 – Describe the first moment you thought of pursuing a particular direction in graduate study.
- 5 – Describe the path leading to your career choice:
 - Indicate how your interests have evolved and identify specific turning points.
 - What work experiences have solidified your thinking about graduate education?
 - What else has influenced your career direction? (volunteering, travel, family)
- 6 – Explicitly define your career goal:
 - What are your reasons for pursuing this path? What do you hope to gain and contribute?
- 7 – Consider your academic background:
 - How have you prepared yourself to succeed in graduate school?
 - What body of relevant knowledge will you take with you?
 - What study or lab skills have you honed?
 - What personal attributes make you likely to succeed in your career?
- 8 – What is your biggest accomplishment to date? Make a list of things you are proud of.
- 9 – What research have you completed? Describe each project and your level of participation in detail.
- 10 – What are your greatest strengths (demonstrating drive and perseverance)?
 - What do you do with your leisure time? Do you have any hobbies?
 - What can you tell someone that would lead them to believe they would enjoy your company?
- 11 – Be specific about your long-term goals:
 - What are your post-graduate school plans? How will graduate education facilitate these plans?
 - What are your five and ten year goals? Will you pursue further education?
- 12 – Have you had to overcome adversity to get where you are today?