

Statement of Purpose – Counseling



Purpose: The statement of purpose is an essay clarifying the candidate’s expectations from graduate work, which also serves as an evaluation of the candidate’s ability to communicate effectively in written form.

Completion: Prior to admission to graduate programs in the School of Education and Psychology.

Instructions: This essay must be typed and double-spaced. Please address the following questions.

Note: Clearly identify each question in your essay by letter or title. The answers should be comprehensive enough for the evaluation committee to have a good understanding of your experience in these areas.

- A) Why is Southern Adventist University’s MS in Counseling program a good fit for you? How does the program align with your career goals?
- B) How would people who know you well describe your interpersonal style. Please be specific.
- C) Describe your family dynamics and how that environment has shaped who you are and how you have functioned in the world.
- D) In broad strokes tell us about your life experiences. How have those experiences shaped your thinking and your world view? How do you see these experiences particularly equipping you to be effective as a counselor?
- E) At SAU we value diversity and social justice and believe that counselors must have the ability to transcend race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, spiritual traditions, etc and respond to the real needs of clients without prejudice, discrimination and marginalization. Demonstrate how you have been flexible in responding to and meeting the needs of people who have a value system, spiritual perspective or culture different from yourself.
- F) Counselor wellness and psychological fitness are crucial to effective counseling. Discuss your current practice of self-care or wellness and how you believe this practice might be useful to you in a demanding graduate program and in the counseling profession.
- G) What are your strengths and weaknesses? How will each contribute to your chosen profession or hinder your effectiveness? How will you address the hindrances to effectiveness while in our program?

Your essay will be evaluated using the rubric on the back.

Statement of Purpose – Counseling

Writer's Name: _____

Program: _____

Date: _____

	Unacceptable (1)	Developing (2)	Proficient (3)	Exceptional (4)	Enter Score
Focus and Support	Evidence provided is not relevant and/or is not explained.	Certain pieces of evidence are relevant and contains an explanation that show how evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence is specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how evidence supports the author's position.	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each supports the author's position.	① ② ③ ④
Understanding of Audience	It is not clear who the author is writing for.	Demonstrates some understanding of the potential reader.	Demonstrates a general understanding of the potential reader and generally uses vocabulary and arguments appropriate for the audience.	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the potential reader and consistently uses appropriate vocabulary and arguments.	① ② ③ ④
Motivation	The introduction is not interesting and is not relevant to the topic.	The introduction catches reader attention, but it is weak, rambling or inappropriate for the audience.	The introduction catches reader attention, but it could be a stronger statement, relevant quotation, statistic, or question addressed to the reader.	The introduction catches reader attention. This could be a strong statement, a relevant quotation, statistic, or question addressed to the reader.	① ② ③ ④
Conventions or Mechanics	Most sentences are not well-constructed or varied. Author makes frequent errors that distract the reader from the content.	Most sentences are well constructed, but there is no variation in structure. Author makes occasional errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Most sentences are well-constructed and there is some varied sentence structure in the essay. Author makes very few errors in grammar and spelling that distract the reader from the content.	All sentences are well-constructed with varied structure. Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distracts the reader from the content.	① ② ③ ④
Organization and Clarity	No clearly defined thesis or topic that previews what will be discussed.	The thesis outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.	The thesis clearly outlines the direction of the essay and communicates the themes or principal concept clearly and effectively, providing relevant supporting detail.	The thesis clearly outlines the direction of the essay, outlines the main points to be discussed, and sets the tone of the essay	① ② ③ ④
	<8pts	8 – 12 pts	13 – 17 pts	18 – 20 pts	

Evaluator's Name _____

Evaluator's Signature _____

Please return completed form to the SEP Graduate Coordinator.