

## Suggestions for Composing a Statement of Purpose

1. Your statement of purpose is your only chance to speak directly to the committee that will be reviewing your application. The Statement of Purpose is about you and your aspirations. Use any style or format that you are comfortable with. You should be pleased with what you submit. But please remember that the selection committee doesn't get to meet you face-to-face. Your Statement of Purpose will be their only chance to "meet" you, and they ultimately decide who will study abroad. Below are a few suggestions for writing your Statement of Purpose.
2. Begin by identifying yourself, your home campus, your major and your year in school. Specify the program (city and country) you are applying for.
3. Devote a paragraph to your academic pursuits and progress at Cal Poly Pomona, pointing out favorite courses that have contributed to your career goals.
4. Address the GPA if it's lower than what is required. Tell them why it's low. For example, if you got off to a poor start in college, explain why. Perhaps you can point out that you've matured and that your grades have improved. Did you have a hard time adjusting to university life? Do you work full-time while going to school? Did you change your major? Were you or a family member ill, and did that contribute to poor grades one or two quarters? The selection committee will notice a low GPA, so don't hide from it.
5. One paragraph should outline your career and/or graduate school goals. Identify how you will benefit personally from an international experience.
6. Write a paragraph explaining why the particular International Program you have applied for is ideal for you, your major, and your career/graduate school preparation. Identify specific courses, labs, projects, etc. in the program you are applying for that appeal to you most and explain why. (Make it clear that this specific experience will be perfect for you.)
7. One paragraph should concentrate on the society of the country you are applying for. Demonstrate your understanding of the culture and the people. Explain how you are already preparing yourself to adapt to and enjoy the people and their environment. Are you taking foreign language classes? Have you made friends with people who are from the country you are applying to visit?
8. Conclude with a few sentences that express your genuine enthusiasm about the opportunity to study abroad.
9. Go lightly on the vacation/sightseeing aspects of the experience and your possible desire to "find your roots" or "trace your family tree". Working is generally illegal while studying abroad and, therefore, it shouldn't be mentioned either.
10. The following tips will make your paper more enjoyable for the statewide committee to read. Please remember that they become exhausted from reading hundreds of these papers. Your extra effort will be noticed and very appreciated!
  - Proofread your work. Misspelled words are NOT acceptable!
  - Do not use white-out. You should submit a clean, neat paper.
  - Do not submit a handwritten Statement of Purpose. (Type it or use a word processor.)
  - Ask a friend or family member to proofread your paper also.
  - Follow Directions! Include all information that is requested. Limit your Statement or Purpose to the length specified in the instructions.

**GOOD LUCK!**