

My Personal Plan for Learning and Serving*

Name _____ Date _____
 Current Major(s) (pre-Major interest) _____
 Phone _____ E-mail address _____

CONTEXT and PURPOSE: This Personal Plan is a dynamic, living document to guide learning and service. As part of an ongoing process of reflection, it can and should be reviewed and revised periodically.

A student's dreams for what they wish to learn and contribute are typically larger than the Department(s) or School in which they are registered. Academic and career advising may fail to aid students in seeing their particular gifts and to what ends they can be directed. The University's mission is better served when students are engaged in service that promotes learning, and in learning that contributes to what matters to people locally and globally.

The aims of this ongoing process are to: 1) Support students in their discernment about what matters to them, and in planning for how to enhance their abilities and use them in serving others; 2) Aid teachers and advisors in having a better understanding of a student's personal mission, interests, assets, and aims for learning and service; and 3) Assure an environment that promotes learning and service consistent with what matters to students and those they serve.

INSTRUCTIONS: To complete this Personal Plan takes approximately 50 minutes, or longer, depending on the student. You may use this guide for personal reflection (e.g., to complete and discuss later with an advisor or parent) or as part of a group process (e.g., in a class or student orientation; completing and discussing with a partner or whole group). To complete the Plan, we recommend that you begin by reflecting on "Your Vision" or dreams for making a difference (Section A. #1). It is often easier to develop "Your Mission" (A. #2) after you identify your interests (B. #1-3), and the assets and experiences you bring and skills you need for this work (C. #1-4). Please communicate "Your Mission" (A. #2) and service-learning interests to someone who really cares about you (e.g., friend, family member, trusted advisor) (D. #1). You know you are on the right path when your choice feels right to you, and to those who care about you, and when you have the opportunity (D. #2). After you have considered these issues, summarize your overall plan for learning and service (Section E.).

A. YOUR PERSONAL VISION AND MISSION

1. YOUR VISION (What are your dreams for making a difference?)

[Using brief phrases, please indicate what things would look like if what matters to you was actually brought about. Examples include: "All children have caring adults in their lives" or "We live in a world of cultural understanding and harmony."]

2. YOUR MISSION (What will you do and why?)

[Using one sentence, please state your personal mission, including what you will do and why. An example is: “My mission is to help young people become healthy and safe (the why) by creating supportive schools and communities” (the what).]

B. DISCERNMENT OF INTERESTS

1. GROUPS TO WHICH YOU HOPE TO CONTRIBUTE (What groups are particularly important to you? Why do they matter to you?):

[Please indicate ALL those groups that you most hope to benefit through your work and service. For each group noted, state WHY they matter to you. Please be specific. Some examples of groups include: infants and children, adolescents and youth, adults, older adults; people with disabilities; those of a particular gender; those experiencing a particular concern; racial, ethnic, or cultural groups; and those living in poverty.]

2. ISSUES THAT MATTER TO YOU (What problems or goals are particularly important to you? What do they matter to you?):

[Please indicate those issues that you particularly care about. For each issue noted, state WHY it is important to you. Please be specific. Some examples of issues include: access to resources and technology; aging and independent living; caring and respectful relationships among people; civic engagement and community responsibility; child health and development; creativity, culture, and the arts; cultural understanding, harmony, and diversity; disabilities and independent living; education and literacy; environmental protection and sustainable development; violence and safety; physical and mental health care; health promotion (e.g., physical activity, nutrition) and disease prevention (e.g., HIV, diabetes); historic and cultural preservation; homelessness, housing and adequate shelter; human rights and equality (e.g., discrimination, protection, universal education); economic development and jobs; immigrants and refugees; international development and relations; peace and justice; poverty and income inequality; urban design and transportation; and youth development.]

3. SETTINGS AND ROLES FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION (Through what settings and context do you see yourself contributing? In what roles? Why these settings and roles?):

[Please indicate the setting(s) (e.g., school, government) and context (e.g., rural community) through which you hope to contribute. Also note the particular roles (e.g., teacher, advocate) through which you see yourself contributing, as well as WHY this setting and role. Please be specific. Some example settings include: advocacy and human rights organizations, arts and cultural organizations, business and workplace, child and youth organizations, community organizations, criminal justice and law, faith communities and religious organizations, government, health organizations, human service organizations, media, non-governmental organizations, schools, and universities and research institutions. Some example contexts include: urban or rural communities; poverty communities; and locally, nationally, or internationally.]

C. ASSETS, EXPERIENCES, AND LEARNING NEEDS

1. ASSETS AND SKILLS YOU BRING TO THE WORK (What do you do well? How will you use these assets?):

[Please indicate all those things you do particularly well. For those skills noted, tell a story to illustrate how you can use these assets to contribute to groups and issues that matter to you. Some example assets include: analyzing problems and situations; building relationships; collaborating with others; communicating effectively, including with those from different groups; construction and design; creative or artistic talent; foreign language proficiency; leading and facilitating groups; listening to and understanding people; mentoring and being a friend; motivating others; negotiating and resolving conflicts; organizing people and persuading others; planning projects and events; public speaking; research and evaluation; supporting and caring for others; tutoring and teaching; working independently; and writing (personal and professional).]

2. EXPERIENCES YOU BRING TO THIS WORK (What experiences do you bring to this work? How do they help prepare you for future learning and service?)

[Please indicate what experiences and opportunities you have had that have prepared you for what is ahead. For those experiences noted, tell a story to illustrate how they prepare you to contribute to groups and issues that matter to you. Some example experiences include: having direct experience with an issue (e.g., caring for a mother with diabetes; having a health condition or disability); cross-cultural interaction, travel, and study abroad; work and practical experience; and public service or mission work.]

3. EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND SKILLS YOU NEED TO LEARN (What educational goals are particularly important to you? What skills do you need to learn to further them?) :

[Please indicate the general educational goals that matter most to you. For each goal, indicate the particular knowledge and skills that you hope to learn to help you achieve these goals. The six general educational goals for the University are to: a) Enhance skills and knowledge needed to research, organize, and apply new information; b) Acquire knowledge in the fine arts, the humanities, and the social and natural sciences and integrate that knowledge across disciplines; c) Improve core skills of reading, writing, and mathematics and enhance communication by clear, effective use of language; d) Understand and appreciate the development, culture, and diversity of the United States and of other societies and nations; e) Become aware of contemporary issues in society, technology, and the natural world and appreciate their complexity of cause and consequences; and f) Practice an ethic of self-discipline, social responsibility, and citizenship on a local, national, and international level.]

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4. SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR LEARNING AND SERVING:

[Briefly, please note how you need to prepare to make a contribution. Be specific about what you need: a) To understand, b) To do, and c) To produce.]

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D. COMMUNICATION AND SUMMARY REFLECTION

1. SHARE YOUR MISSION WITH A FRIEND, FAMILY MEMBER, OR ADVISOR:

[Talk about your Mission (Section A. #2) and goals with someone who cares about you—this might be a family member, friend, trusted advisor. Explain to them: a) Why this? (i.e., How this mission and choice benefits you and those you hope to serve?); b) Why me? (i.e., What assets and talents you bring?), and c) Why now? (How there is the opportunity to do this?) Ask how this sounds to them, and listen to what they have to say about your goals.]

2. SUMMARY REFLECTION AND DISCERNMENT:

[Ask three questions to discern whether your mission and plan fits you and your situation: 1) Does this proposed mission/ work/ service feel right to me? (and why); 2) Does it seem right to others who know and care about me? (and why); and 3) Do I have the opportunity? (any why). Reflect on your mission and goals: a) What surprised you?; b) What was affirmed for you?; and c) What are some areas for adjustment in your proposed path?]

E. YOUR OVERALL PLAN FOR LEARNING AND SERVING:

[CONSIDER: To make a difference on what matters to you, what will you need to learn and how will you learn it? How will you apply what you learn to make a contribution? What evidence will lead you to say what you learned/did was a success?]

(Some examples of how you could learn what you need to know: Reading; Courses; Practicum opportunities; Online resources and/or learning communities; Connecting with others doing the work; Mentoring from an advisor)

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN (to understand; to do; to produce)	How you will LEARN IT (Doing what? By When)	How you WILL APPLY YOUR LEARNING IN SERVICE TO OTHERS (Doing what? By When)	EVIDENCE OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION (e.g., specific change, improvement, product; community satisfaction) (By When)