

We highly encourage our applicants to think about how each of their essays will provide the reviewing committee and potential advisor(s) with information relevant to the admissions process. The information provided in your essays should allow the committee to evaluate several characteristics, including research experience, drive, maturity, teamwork, communication skills, and other personal qualities. Our hope is that applicants will also use the essays as an opportunity to highlight why they are interested in pursuing graduate education both in general and specifically in the Graduate Program in Biological Sciences at MU.

Please give considerable time and thought to writing the two essays. The committee evaluates a number of characteristics in order to assess a candidate's ability to benefit from and contribute to our graduate program. The essays help the Graduate Admissions Committee to recognize each applicant's values, motivation, and perspectives, in addition to obtaining an appreciation of the applicant's previous research experience(s).

**Essay 1:** Please discuss your previous research experience and how it has influenced the topic(s) you are interested in pursuing for your graduate education.

**For Essay 1, you must first complete the table that includes** information related to your research experience. Please do so for up to three of your most meaningful research experiences, which can include ongoing research. Relevant previous research experiences might include a single long-term experience, multiple different experiences with different mentors, or course-based experiences. Please include the experiences you feel are most relevant to preparing you for graduate study. As part of your response, include the name of your mentor, institution and duration of your participation/effort (in months). The table is in addition to the essay and should not be included in the length.

In addition, write an essay about one or more of these experiences. Be sure to discuss the main objective(s) of each project and your contributions to achieving the objective(s). Describe your motivation to participate in each project and what you learned from your research experiences. Finally, drawing on your described experiences, discuss potential topics (i.e., questions) in Biology that intrigue you and that you are likely to pursue as part of your graduate education.

[Essay 1 Template](#)

**Essay 2:** Please discuss why you are interested in pursuing a graduate education.

**For Essay 2,** draw from life and academic experiences (beyond the research experiences described in Essay 1) to write an essay discussing your interest in pursuing a graduate education. As part of this essay, please discuss how graduate education would help you achieve your ideal job. Explain why you believe that the Division of Biological Sciences at MU is a good fit for your research interests and career goals.

No template is provided for Essay 2

Applicants are requested to upload each essay as either a PDF or Word document. Each essay must be less than two pages (12pt, Times New Roman, 1" margins).