

# SOJC Petition: Statement of Intent Guide

Working on your Statement of Intent for your Petition for Admission to the School of Journalism and Communication (SOJC)? SOJC Student Services and the TAEC have collaborated on this brief overview of content priorities and helpful writing strategies to guide you in this process.

## Statement of Intent: What to Look For

- Do you articulate well-researched career goals?
- Do you petition for only ONE major?
- Are you specific about strategies for success?
- Does your statement have clear organization and flow?

### Articulate well-researched career goals.

Discuss your career goals and how your desired degree will help you achieve them. To be well-informed, do your research on the industry and the type of positions that interest you. This information will help you develop a more accurate picture of, for instance, the distinctions between in-house and agency advertising work, or between a print journalist and a TV reporter.

What does someone with your dream job title really do every day? What skills and experience does the position require? How could your proposed SOJC major help you get there?

Here are some resources you might use to do your research:

- Examine job postings in your desired field using LinkedIn and other job boards.
- Talk with SOJC faculty and industry professionals to help you be more informed about career options and positions of interest to you.
- Refresh your memory of material from the J100 Media Professions course.
- Explore the "[What Can I Do With This Major?](#)" tool and the US Dept. of Labor's [O\\*NET database](#).

### Petition for only ONE major.

Make sure you're only petitioning for one major: advertising, journalism, media studies, or public relations. This helps ensure your petition gets to the right committee to assess your work. Petitioning for a certain major does not preclude you from taking courses on other topics. **Note:** You can change to a different SOJC major or add an additional SOJC major later if you are successfully admitted to the SOJC.

### Be specific about strategies for success going forward.

Make sure to be specific not only about the struggles you've faced, but also about the resources you'll be using to overcome main obstacles going forward. These resources are often related to academics, but could also be tied to mental health, wellbeing, finances, etc. - don't feel you have to leave these aspects out just because they aren't related to specific classes.

Use specific examples to demonstrate awareness of the areas you need to address to succeed AND specific resources, strategies, and/or support systems you're using to do so. For example:

Vague: "I am now using a planner to help."

Specific: "After meeting with a TAEC Study Skills specialist, I now use a planner to help me manage my workload in fast-paced classes. For example, in my J201 class, I..."

Vague: "I got support for my mental health and am now doing better."

Specific: "I am currently working with a mental health counselor and have seen an improvement in my grades, such as receiving all Bs last quarter."

# Organization and Flow: Writing Strategies

For guidance in organizing/structuring your statement of intent, look back to the prompt:

- Introduce yourself.
- Explain why you want to major in advertising, journalism, media studies, or public relations.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the major and the industry, and describe how this major choice fits with your career goals and aspirations.
- Provide an explanation for your academic challenges and outline the strategies and adjustments you've made to overcome them.
- Put your name and ID number at the top right-hand corner of the first page.
- Do not exceed two double-spaced pages in 12-point font, with one-inch margins on all sides.

Two pages double-spaced, 12 point font is usually about 4-6 paragraphs, depending on the length of your paragraphs. Keeping this in mind will help you organize your response, outline the point(s) you're going to cover in each paragraph, and make sure you don't go over the limit.

Here are two different examples of how a petitioning student might outline their submission:

<p>P1: Introduce Myself (Briefly: Year, Major, Career Goals)</p> <p>P2: Explain/expand why I want to major in X. (Show that I understand the major &amp; industry)</p> <p>P3: Career Goals / Aspirations (Show how this major fits with them)</p> <p>P4: Academic Challenges</p> <p>P5: Strategies/Adjustments</p>	<p>P1: Introduce Myself (Briefly: Year, Major, Career Goals)</p> <p>P2: Explain major choice and connect to specific career goals. (Show that I understand the major &amp; industry)</p> <p>P3: Academic Challenge + Solutions 1</p> <p>P4: Academic Challenge + Solutions 2</p>
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Remember, these are **just examples**. Since the SOJC petition is a chance to showcase YOUR writing skills, each student will approach it a little differently. What's most important is that you clearly answer each of the main bullet points required by the prompt.

## Flow and Proofreading Tips

- Clear **topic sentences** are essential to an essay's flow. Try highlighting just the first line of each paragraph: if this is all a reader saw, could they still follow your structure?
- Use **transition words** & phrases wisely when changing from one paragraph or one idea to the next. Two helpful resources on transitional phrases: [UNC Writing Center](#) and [Purdue](#).
- Don't rush. Leave enough time to carefully proofread your submission.
- Print out your writing and/or read out loud to catch minor errors.
- Consult the TAEC's [Proofreading Basics](#) handout for more strategies.

Finally, be sure to **work with an SOJC advisor** and/or the TAEC on your petition; try to review and revise it well in advance of the deadline.