

WRITING AN ARTIST STATEMENT

Length

Try to keep your statement to one page. It's fine if the statement is only a paragraph.

Topics You Could Include

Materials and techniques
Themes or issues explored
Inspirations
Subject matter

Getting Started

If you're stuck it's often useful to ask a friend or colleague to look at the series of work about which you're writing. Ask them to talk about the work with you: their reactions to it, what you were thinking when you made it, how you got started on the series, what you like best about it, etc. Take notes. That discussion can help you look at the work with fresh eyes and get you started on the document.

What to Avoid

It's important to sound intelligent, but make sure your sentences don't get so convoluted and filled with jargon that they're difficult for others to understand.

Don't try to bite off too much. Cover one idea with one sentence and one topic with one paragraph.

An excess of qualifying language such as "I aspire," or "I'm trying" in regards to your efforts—too much of it weakens emerging artists who are trying to establish themselves.

Example: *"I'm hoping to paint powerful landscapes."* or worse, *"I attempt to sculpt the human figure."*

The way it is used on the opposite side of this page is an example of the correct way to use "I hope."

What to Do

Be clear and concise. Write several drafts. Go through each one and delete everything that's unclear or unnecessary. Rewrite until you have the best verbal representation of your work possible. You can bring it to the FAA Career Services Office for help (contact Michele: mplante@illinois.edu).

Proofread

Have your classmates and professors read your statement. You'll get a range of feedback, and that can be very useful.

Use the Artist Statement

In shows
To promote yourself to art dealers
To help art dealers and gallery owners sell your work
In grant applications