

**Write a short essay (one to one and a half pages, single spaced) that addresses the following: (1) What are your short-term and long-term career objectives? (2) How have your educational and professional experiences shaped your career objectives? (3) How would this program contribute to your ability to achieve your career goals? (4) Explain, if applicable, other considerations that have contributed to your decision to apply for admission to this program. The goal statement is used to assist in determining if the applicant's goals are consistent with those of the program, and to assess the clarity and coherence of the applicant's writing.**

## Statement of Professional Goals Melissa Mattingly

I first became interested in higher education and student affairs very early in my undergraduate career. As one of the first in my extended family to attain a higher education, I feel very strongly about the importance of higher education. I immediately realized the transformative nature of higher education and was eager to help other students enter into higher education. I started working within the structure of Michigan State University to recruit talented students by volunteering to give campus tours, host students overnight and sit on panels to answer questions. During my sophomore year at MSU, I started working as a student assistant at the Honors College and also enrolled in EAD 872, Legal Issues in Higher Education. Working at the Honors College gave me insight into the vast array of services offered to high achieving students and the incredible work it took to recruit them. I was also able to observe the role of the Director and Assistant Director of Honors College, quickly realizing I loved the tasks and responsibilities of their jobs. Through my enrollment in EAD 872, I was able to challenge myself with a graduate course in my second undergraduate year at MSU and learn and collaborate with Educational Administration students and professionals.

My undergraduate goals began to move from a planned path of law school to a career in higher education. In the spring of 2004, after graduation from MSU, I began applying to entry-level student affairs and admission counselor positions. I was fortunate to be hired by the Honors College at Michigan State University as the Admissions Counselor. I have been in this position since September of 2004, learning much along the way. In my position as Admissions Counselor, I work with high school students and their parents on a daily basis. I communicate through email, phone and in person. I also plan and execute large-scale events within the Honors College and also with campus partners such as Office of Admissions, James Madison College, Lyman Briggs College and College of Engineering. In reflecting on my time as Admissions Counselor at the Honors College, I realize that I most enjoy my personal interactions with families. Working with high school students and their parents to provide them with the necessary information to make the great decision of where to attend college is challenging, interesting and fulfilling. Thinking of new and different ways of conveying the Honors College message and goals and constantly learning from the students and families make my position dynamic and challenging.

Throughout my time as Honors College Admissions Counselor, I have continuously realized how much more I have to learn. To move forward in the admissions field, I believe advanced study in Educational Administration, particularly Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education is necessary. I enrolled in EAD 870, Foundations of Postsecondary Education in spring 2007 to learn if the HALE masters program might be right for me. I greatly enjoyed Professor Reitumetse Mabokela's class. I found it challenging; I thought deeply about the history of higher education, wrote a research paper on the history of honors programs in American higher education, and enjoyed working with my diverse set of classmates. I am planning on enrolling in EAD 801, Leadership in Higher Education with Professor MaryLee Davis in spring 2008 and another EAD class yet to be decided in summer 2008. As a short-term career objective, I wish to expand my responsibilities and improve my performance of duties in my current

position. The field of admissions has strong bases in experience and technical training but serious thought and analysis in graduate coursework will undoubtedly help me to be a better Admissions Counselor. I will be able to bring a different perspective than many other admissions professionals. In the long-term, I am interested in pursuing higher levels of responsibility in the admissions field. Understanding the historical and social issues in higher education will lead me to a better understanding of what I am asking of high school students and what we should be offering them. I also realize that I could do much more in my current position and move forward in the admission field with more competence in research methods. Finally, I am interested in learning more about working with high achieving students. In my position as Admission Counselor at the Honors College, I interact with such students on a daily basis. Such students bring along a unique set of opportunities and challenges for a university. I would like to explore the best way to serve high achieving students in a university setting. I am excited about the prospect of becoming a part of the HALE masters program; working with a group of diverse and serious classmates and learning from the talented, passionate and involved faculty.