

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

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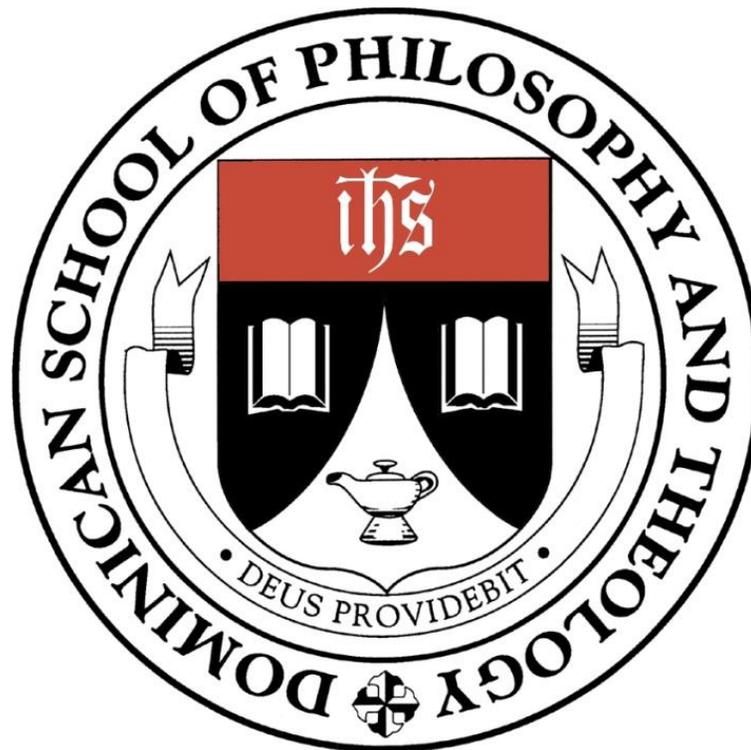
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The *Statement of Purpose* is a very important part of the application process, and should not be taken lightly. It is used by the Admissions Committee to determine your preparedness as well as how your interests align with the specific resources available from our faculty. It is also used to assign a faculty advisor once an applicant has been accepted.

GUIDELINES:

- It should be free of spelling and grammatical errors
- It should not exceed two typed pages (about 500 words); in most cases, one page is better
- It should articulate clearly and concisely your goals, areas of interest, and the reasons you think DSPT is a good fit for your proposed program of study
- It should articulate your areas of interest as specifically as you are able to outline them, and something about your career goals (if known)
- It should be free of off-topic monologues, digressions, and awkward expressions
- It is a good idea to demonstrate that you have reviewed the DSPT website, especially the faculty pages, and that you have identified one or more faculty members with whom you might like to work if admitted
- It should demonstrate that you understand the mission and resources of DSPT
- The Admissions Office is happy to review drafts or offer advice as needed. Contact us at admissions@dspt.edu.

TRANSCRIPTS/ GPA REQUIREMENT

- Transcripts must be sealed copies, stamped by the Registrar, showing the award of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution
- Transcripts should be sent directly to the DSPT Admissions Office from the issuing institution, but sealed and stamped copies may be accepted directly from the applicant. *Unofficial or unsealed copies are not acceptable.*
- Applicants who have not yet finished with their undergraduate program must have a second, final copy sent after graduation
- DSPT ordinarily requires a **minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 for MA applicants and 2.3 for MDiv applicants.** Those who do not meet these minimum standards are still encouraged to apply and may attach a separate sheet to their application, explaining why their GPA is below the expected standard.

ACADEMIC WRITING SAMPLE

- The Academic Writing Sample should be an example of the applicant's best work as it is weighed heavily by the Admissions Committee
- It should be a research paper, preferably on a philosophical or theological topic
- It should not exceed 20 pages in length in most cases
- It should demonstrate the ability of the applicant to formulate a clear hypothesis (thesis), correctly use bibliographical materials and footnotes (both primary and secondary sources), and draw relevant conclusions
- It should be free of spelling and grammatical errors
- In consultation with the MTS Faculty Coordinator, MTS applicants must submit a sample of professional work which demonstrates a capacity for sound project planning.

GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION (GRE) SCORES

- **Our GRE code number is 0585;** GRE scores must be official and must be no older than 5 years from the date of application
- *For tests taken up to July 31, 2011:*
 - Minimum Verbal score of at least 550
 - Analytical Writing score of at least 4.5 (out of a possible 6)
- *For tests taken on or after August 1, 2011:*
 - Minimum Verbal score of at least 156
 - Analytical Writing score of at least 4.5 (out of a possible 6)
- Since the Admissions Committee looks at an applicant's entire record, those with lower scores are still encouraged to apply.
- Information concerning possible exemption from the GRE requirement can be found below.
- For more information about the GRE, or to schedule a test date, please visit www.gre.org.

TOEFL/IELTS (International Applicants)

- In place of the GRE, international applicants whose native language is not English must submit satisfactory scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or its equivalent (such as the IELTS)
- Our TOEFL code number is 4724
- TOEFL Minimum Score: 68 for the new computer based TOEFL test
- IELTS Minimum Score: TOEFL equivalent of at least 6.0-6.5

POLICY FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE GRE REQUIREMENT

Normally, applicants to a DSPT program must submit scores from the GRE at the time of application. Under certain exceptional situations, an applicant may petition for a waiver of this requirement. The petition is submitted to the Academic Dean who, if needed, will forward the petition to the Admissions Committee for review. Such a waiver would be granted under the following conditions:

- Applicants who have a research doctorate (Ph.D., Th.D., S.T.D.) from an accredited institution are automatically granted a waiver and need not file a petition
- Other applicants who meet all of the following criteria:
 - have completed a minimum of four academic courses taken for a letter grade at DSPT; at least two of these courses must be at the 2000-level or above.
 - have a minimum GPA in the above courses of 3.50;
- Applicants who meet these criteria must submit a written petition plus the following materials:
 - a DSPT transcript which shows the criteria listed above
 - a research paper at least 10 pages in length which has received a minimum grade of B+; the paper may come from either a DSPT or GTU course. This may be the same paper which is used for the application.
- The School is under no obligation to grant the petition, and all determinations are final.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- **Online applicants** must be aware that *email requests for letters will not be sent to recommenders until the online application is actually submitted*, so this should be done as early as possible to ensure that recommenders have sufficient time to complete them before the application deadline
- **Paper letters** should be sent directly to the Admissions Office and have the recommender's name signed across the envelope seal. Letters must be accompanied by the Letter of Recommendation form.
- The applicant may choose whether or not to waive access to the recommendation, but we strongly suggest that you do so
- Most DSPT programs require three (3) academic letters of recommendation, with the following exceptions:
 - **Master of Divinity (MDiv)**
 - WDP Applicants are not required to submit letters of recommendation
 - Applicants from other religious communities or Dioceses must submit a letter from their Provincial, Bishop, or Congregational leader
 - **Master of Theological Studies (MTS)**
 - 1 letter must come from someone with direct supervisory knowledge of the applicant in a professional setting
 - **Certificate of Theological Studies (CTS)**
 - 2 letters of recommendation, preferably from academic sources, but one (1) of them can be from a pastoral source
 - **Special Student Status**
 - 1 letter of recommendation, either academic or pastoral.

If you have any questions about choosing recommenders, please contact the Admissions Office at (510) 883-2073, or by email at admissions@dspt.edu.