

Articulating Your Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Because Evergreen lets you choose your programs and courses, it requires you to reflect on and take ownership of your educational decisions. Although you can choose an emphasis* (or decide on a bachelor of science degree** both of which require you to complete a certain amount of credits), you do not need to declare one. One way to showcase your education without referring to an emphasis is to concentrate on your knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Employers, graduate schools, and organizations often analyze an applicant's knowledge, skills, and abilities and compare these to the position or school requirements. Sorting specific requirements into these categories can be challenging because there is some overlap. It may be helpful to think about abilities as the integration of knowledge and skills. For example, the ability to manage a farm comes from an integration of the knowledge of crops, soils, and irrigation with the skills of seeding plants, transplanting, weeding, and harvesting.

Here is one way to outline the writing process:

1. Gather your transcripts, evaluations, and any other overview records of your educational path.
2. Find a position description or a graduate school degree plan and pre-requisites. Write down the requirements. For help, contact Advising or the Career Development Center in LIB 2153.
3. Create a table with three columns (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities). List the requirements needed in the appropriate column. The U.S. Dept. of Labor's www.onetonline.org site lists occupational KSAs.
4. Go through your table and circle all the KSAs that you currently have and put a box around the ones that you still need.

Mapping your KSAs to your education

5. For each circled element in your KSA table, jot down some notes about where in your educational path you learned and refined it.
6. Look at all the circled KSAs in your table and assign relative weight or importance to them in terms of how they have influenced your choices, path and where you are at right now.

Writing your Academic Statement at any stage in your education

You can begin this evolutionary framework showing how your evolving worldview or KSAs informed your choices at any time. A skills-based approach can outline the sorts of projects that you now feel prepared to undertake and then how your education has provided you with the needed KSAs.

7. Begin with an introductory paragraph that gives a little background, illustrated with a personal perspective that serves to engage your reader. Then describe your academic path in a way that will be continue to be useful to you in the future.

***Area of Emphasis:** Earning 45 or more quarter credits in a field would allow you to call it your area of emphasis, and 32 quarter credits in a field could be considered a minor area of emphasis. Your area of emphasis is not listed on your transcript, but you are allowed to refer to it on resumes, applications, and your Academic Statement. If you have questions about declaring an area of emphasis, visit Academic Advising in LIB 2153 or call (360) 867-6312 for an appointment.

****Bachelor of Science Requirements:** At least 72 of the 180 earned credits must be in math, science, or computer science. At least 48 of those 72 credits must be upper division math, science, or computer science