

# How to Write a Program Mission Statement

## Mission Statement of the Program

The *Program Mission Statement* is a concise statement of the general values and principles which guide the curriculum. It sets a tone and a philosophical position from which follow a program's goals and objectives. The Program Mission Statement should define the broad purposes the program is aiming to achieve, describe the community the program is designed to serve, and state the values and guiding principles which define its standards.

Program Mission Statements must also be consistent with the principles of purpose set forth in the University's mission and goals statements. Accrediting bodies expect that Program Mission Statements are in harmony with mission statements of the institution, school/college, and/or department. Therefore, a good starting point for any program mission statement is to consider how the program mission supports or complements the University, school/college, and department missions and strategic goals.

## A Program Mission Statement

- Is a broad statement of *what the program or unit is, what it does, and for whom it does it*
- Is a clear description of the *purpose* of the program or unit and the learning environment
- Reflects how the program contributes to the education and careers of students graduating from the program or how the unit supports its customers
- May reflect how the teaching and research efforts are used to enhance student learning
- Is *aligned* with department, college, and university missions
- Should be distinctive for the program or unit

## Components of a Program Mission Statement

- **Primary functions** or activities of the program or unit – most important functions, operations, outcomes, and/or offerings of the program or unit
- **Purpose** of the program or unit – primary reasons *why* you perform your major activities or operations
- **Stakeholders** – groups or individuals that participate in the program and those that will benefit from the program or unit

## Attributes of a well written Mission Statement:

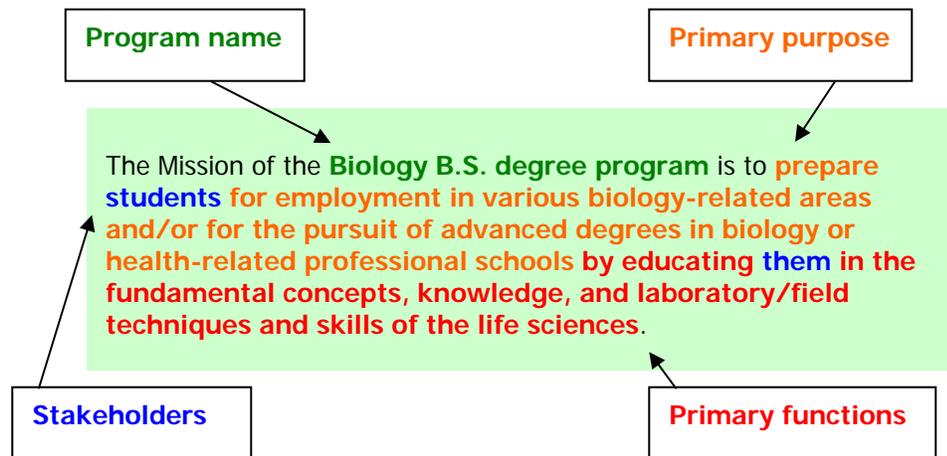
- The statement leads with the educational purpose distinctive to the degree and field of study.
- The statement identifies the signature feature of the program.
- The statement defines clarity of purpose and sticks in your mind after one reading.
- The statement explicitly promotes the alignment of the program with system, campus, college and department missions.
- An expanded statement of purpose explicitly states vision and values that are realistic and achievable, and is based on expressed understanding of students served and interests of other important stakeholders.

## Structure of a Program Mission Statement

"The mission of (**name of your program or unit**) is to (**your primary purpose**) by providing (**your primary functions or activities**) to (**your stakeholders**)." (**Additional clarifying statements**)

(Note: the order of the pieces of the mission statement may vary from the above structure.)

## Program Mission Statement Example



Another similar simple format:

**The \_\_\_\_\_ (organization) will \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.**

This tells *who* the organization is, *what* it intends to do, *for whom* it intends to do it, and *by what means (how)* it intends to do it.

### **Checklist for a Mission Statement**

- Is the statement clear and concise?
- Is it distinctive and memorable?
- Does it clearly state the purpose of the program?
- Does it indicate the primary function or activities of the program?
- Does it indicate who the stakeholders are?
- Does it support the mission of the department, college, and university?
- Does it reflect the program's priorities and values?

Based on material from the University of Central Florida: "UCF Academic Program Assessment Handbook", 2005 and material from the University of San Diego.