

A person stands on a grassy hill at night, looking up at a bright light in the sky. The scene is dark, with the light source creating a strong glow and lens flare. The person is a small silhouette in the foreground, and the hills in the background are also silhouetted.

DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

FOR LAW SCHOOL ADMISSION

➤ Welcome to Bowen

The world is a rich tapestry of people that embraces a vast array of backgrounds, experiences, and ideas. Diversity is not a checkbox on the application. It is the exchange students experience at the law school that helps foster growth within us all. As you think about your diversity statement, consider what makes you unique and how you can enrich the community around you.

Are you from a traditionally underrepresented or underprivileged group? Did you have a unique upbringing? Did you grow up in a commune? Were you raised by a single parent? Do you remember standing in line at a WIC center as a child? Are you LGBTQ and have a coming out story you would like to share? Have you served in the armed forces? Have you served time behind bars? Do you have international experiences that broadened your perspective? Do you break the mold of what others might expect of someone with your background? How did these experiences affect who you are today and who you hope to become tomorrow?

Whatever it is that makes you unique, I encourage you to share your journey with the Admissions Committee so that they may be better able to understand the person behind the numbers.

Visit our [website](#) to learn more.

Sincerely,

Matthew V. Kerns, Esq.
Assistant Dean of
Admissions, Scholarships, &
Enrollment Data





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➤ Value of Diversity Statements

– Personal Statement v Diversity Statement

- Diversity statements are often optional essays that are included to highlight some aspect of the applicant that is not addressed elsewhere in the application. Its purpose is to give the Admissions Committee a more holistic view of the applicant and humanize the application package.
- The diversity statement is not another personal statement. It is unique unto itself.
- Critically evaluate whether your diversity statement strengthens your application package or is just another piece of paper.
- The best statements leave the reader wanting to engage the author further and carry on the conversation.

– No Diversity Statement Opportunity

- If the application instructions only allow a personal statement as the venue for the Admissions Committee to learn more about you, incorporate a theme or element of diversity within the essay.
- If a personal statement includes a prompt try incorporating themes within the general topic to strengthen an overall essay and create a memorable candidate.

– Value Added

- Diversity statements are increasingly becoming standard components of both academic admissions and employment applications.
- The perspective you take for developing a diversity statement can be as diverse as the statement itself.
- Students and professors alike strive to achieve dynamic and engaging learning and teaching environments. This setting is created when new ideas and perspectives are represented.
- Provide opportunities to highlight maturity and personal growth.
- Evaluate what aspect of you is not yet represented in your application package.
- Consider what you bring to the table to enrich the law school experience.

➤ Forms of Diversity

– Diverse Forms of Diversity

- The traditional umbrella of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity now encompasses a much broader spectrum.
- Religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity are becoming more recognized in institutions' diversity and non-discrimination statements.
- Military service, learning or physical disabilities, and mental illness are underrepresented in law school as well.
- Diversity is not limited to groups. It extends to individual experiences - first generation college graduate, unusual upbringing or childhood neighborhood, foster child, single parent, the list of possibilities is nearly endless.

– But I'm not diverse!

- Sometimes recognizing the diversity in yourself requires a step back and a personal inventory.
- Consider unique aspects of your character.
- Do you break the mold of what others might expect of someone with your background?
- Did you overcome obstacles unlike anyone in your peer group?
- Do you possess a special talent people do not see every day.
- Whatever topic you choose, be thoughtful.

➤ Tips, Tricks, and Ideas

– School Requirements

- Research specific prompts or instructions.
- Law school diversity statements may require a broad or narrow focus.
- Follow any length or formatting requirements.

– Formatting

- If length and formatting requirements are not provided the best practice for diversity statements is one to one and a half pages double spaced.
- Diversity statements are traditionally shorter than a personal statement.

– Redundancy

- Personal statements, diversity statements, resumes, and any other documents created for an application package should complement one another while also providing new information about the applicant.
- The idea is to create a complete picture, not reinforce the same ideas through multiple documents.

– Tone

- The most successful diversity statements are reflective and show growth from experience.
- Avoid tones which may be interpreted as resentful, self-pity, or angry.

➤ Dos and Don'ts

– Do

- Research prompt and formatting requirements for each school application
- Be yourself, be truthful, be open
- Reveal personal growth
- Be confident
- Use tasteful humor, when/if appropriate
- Discuss positive aspects or lessons learned
- Stay within word/page length
- Use plain English
- Get help. Discuss possible topics and direction with your pre-law advisor. Go with ideas, leave with a plan.

– Don't

- Use a diversity statement as a soapbox
- Focus on “what if,” “should have,” or “would have”
- Be redundant by repeating information from any other application material
- Write in third person
- Make things up
- Be cliché
- Forget the importance of a conclusion summarizing lessons learned or personal growth

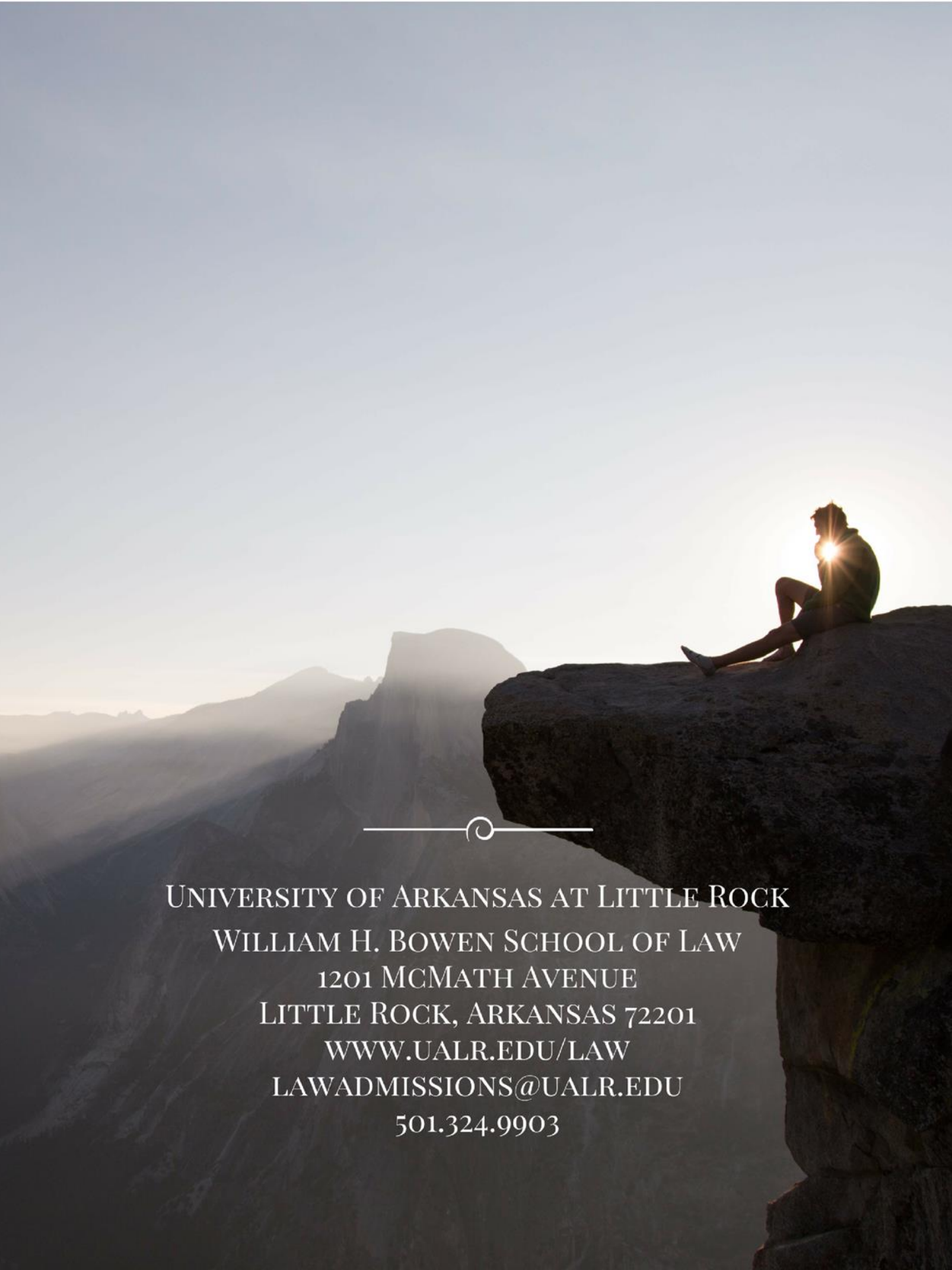
➤ Resources

– Examples of Diversity Statements

- <http://www.powerscore.com/lSAT/law-school-admissions/content/free-law-school-admissions-essay-examples.pdf>
- <http://www.deloggio.com/essays%20&%20addenda/div%20sample%201.html>
- <http://www.deloggio.com/essays%20&%20addenda/div%20sample%202.html>
- <http://www.deloggio.com/essays & addenda/div sample 3.html>

– Grammar/Style Guides

- [*The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation: An Easy-to-Use Guide with Clear Rules, Real-World Examples, and Reproducible Quizzes 11th Edition*](#) by Jane Straus, Lester Kaufman, Tom Stern
- [*The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition*](#) by William Strunk, Jr.
- [*The Little Red Writing Book*](#) by Brandon Royal
- [*The Only Grammar Book You'll Ever Need: A One-Stop Source for Every Writing Assignment*](#) by Home Comforts



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK
WILLIAM H. BOWEN SCHOOL OF LAW
1201 MCMATH AVENUE
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201
WWW.UALR.EDU/LAW
LAWADMISSIONS@UALR.EDU
501.324.9903