PERSONAL STATEMENT
This portion of your application is extremely important, and we urge you to take care in its preparation. The persons reviewing your application will be assisted in their decisions by a brief and well-written statement from you (no more than two pages in length) which should include the following:

- Various influences that have been important in your intellectual development
- Your academic and professional objectives in applying to the MLS program

The document should be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, one-inch margins and should include your full name, title of the document and page number on each page of the document.

WRITING SAMPLE
In addition to the Personal Statement, you are asked to submit a writing sample that demonstrates your ability to think and write critically. The writing sample should:

- Demonstrate a coherent and concise argument through well-organized paragraphs;
- Provide support for the assertions made;
- Lead to a logical, meaningful and clearly stated conclusion;
- When applicable, properly credit all ideas and quotes taken from other sources.

The writing sample must not be edited by anyone other than the applicant prior to submission. You may use resources such as texts, encyclopedias or the internet but all sources must be fully credited.

Choose ONE topic from the three options listed. The writing sample must be at least four to five pages in length and should include citations for all references as appropriate. The document should be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Your full name, title of the work and page number should appear on each page of the document.

Humanities: Niccolò Machiavelli in his famous work “The Qualities of the Prince” is known for his cynical advice on princely leadership. Describe Machiavelli’s recommendations to the Prince. Next, imagine that you have been elected President of the United States. You find yourself in a harsh, adversarial political relationship struggling for the success of your political agenda. Describe the pros and cons of adopting the Machiavellian philosophy.

Social Sciences: Shortly after the 2018 election, President Donald Trump endorsed a bipartisan criminal-justice reform bill, a bill that emerged from the work of a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators over the preceding summer. The context of this bill includes the alarming facts that 1) the U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the Western world, 2) despite a minor decrease in recent years, there are still more than 2 million persons in our state and federal prisons, and 3) according to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics in 2013 black males accounted for 37% of the total male prison population, white males 32%, and Hispanic males 22%. In light of these points, argue the pros and cons of either 1) one or more theories about how the U.S. came to have this high rate of incarceration, including the high rate of incarceration of blacks, or 2) whether this bill or some other bill (specify its basics) would do more to improve the situation.

Natural Sciences: Natural disasters, or potential disasters, have a way of catching the public’s attention and causing more thinking about scientific questions than is typical. One such potential disaster is a major volcanic event at what is described as one of the last remaining large, nearly intact ecosystems in the northern temperate zone of the Earth, the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. How could such a thing happen? How bad could it be? Has it ever happened before? How likely is it?