

Statement of Purpose

As a young woman expecting a bachelor's degree in applied psychology from XXX University, one of the most prestigious colleges in China, I am applying for your doctoral degree in social psychology. Among so many drivers that led me to this decision, my strong inclination toward the science of the mind, my determination of assisting people with their problems, which I have found to be highly self-satisfying, and my dedication to a research career and teaching psychology all justify my readiness and competitiveness for this Ph.D. program.

Born in a rural area called ***, I have been away from my home since the age of eleven, pursuing opportunities of academic exploration. Joining a boarding school in junior high, I learned to be on my own and adapt to my surroundings with more flexibility. When all my peers were staying with their families during holidays, I could only immerse all my homesickness into letters to my parents. My close contact with the school library during those days opened a new door to my future as I read extensively in literature, history, and art. My wide exposure helped me a great deal, as I could better gain others' perspectives and view issues from multiple angles.

One day in my second year of high school, I came across one book that completely changed my entire life—the Chinese version of Sigmund Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, in which I read a profile of the unconscious. Inspired by the book, I started to listen to people empathetically, observed their behavior attentively, and analyzed their minds more from the perspective of psychology. Gradually, I realized that studying peoples' minds and analyzing their behavior was more than fascinating to me. That is why I chose psychology as the major for my undergraduate program.

All my four years during college, I have aimed to shape myself into a top student, not only academically, but also in almost every aspect. My diligence and good time-management skills made me the top student, and I earned scholarships for the past three consecutive years. My exceptional writing skills and attentiveness to details have turned me into a passionate learner and researcher. Being an assistant to many scholars and professors at my university, I have participated in many projects, including the leadership of the group counseling on self-exploration sponsored by the dean of our department and the experimental designer of the project titled "Research on people's responsiveness to the violation of intimate space."

During the summer of 2009, I worked as an intern with two Germans from the University of Cologne on the program "Training of Competence for Parents with Children Suffering from Social Dysfunction (especially with AD/HD)." I was responsible for information collection and for advising parents regarding how to communicate with children plagued with a social dysfunction. Through my attendance in the seminars hosted by the German experts and my own thorough

literature review, I have learned how to be a trainer for parents with children suffering from social dysfunctions. Since the training mainly applied cognitive-behavior methods and role-playing, I had the opportunity to practice these two methods in reality. During the report meeting, in which we invited deans of pediatrics from several main hospitals of YYY (A city name), I presented my opinions concerning the cultural differences between China and Germany on the work of AD/HD. My eloquence won high praises, and I gained a clear picture of how psychological theories work in better relationships among all the parties related.

Besides this, I am also an earnest volunteer in my community. From Year to Year, I worked for more than 100 hours in the Clinical Psychology Department of Coalmine Hospital, the first hospital to establish a psychology department in ZZZ Province. Through my close observations of the patients, I sensed the implications of how their interactions with people around them might influence their mental world. My involvement with some people suffering from intense codependency fostered my particular interest in relationships between people, whether between families, lovers, friends, or even strangers. Therefore, I determined to join Professor Margaret Clark's team in my doctoral program, which will put me in a much better position to make people understand and deal with relationships better.

Despite the fact that I have no systematic research experiences in relationships yet due to the absence of scholars specializing in this field in my university, I believe my strong background in applied psychology and my previous experience participating in relevant research projects will place me in a strategic position in my future studies and research. After graduation, my ultimate goal is to obtain a teaching position at a university because I firmly believe that a job combining educating people and researching can bring all my potential into full play and make me a more effective servant to my community.

Yeats, a famous poet, once said, "Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire." Studying at Yale definitely requires 100 percent of my commitment, wisdom, and perseverance. With its emphasis on the pursuit of "Lux et Veritas," Yale offers the kind of education I need and certainly fires my desire for truth. To pursue a fuller life for myself and for others, I am on my way. The only question is: Would you grant me the privilege of becoming better polished at Yale?