The ETL Statement of Purpose

Your Statement of Purpose for pursuing a graduate degree or certificate with the ETL program at GWU should persuade faculty that your past experiences will provide the foundation for success in graduate school. The Statement will also be reviewed as an example of your ability to communicate effectively. The following sections should therefore be included in your Statement:

Part 1: Introduce yourself, your interests and motivations
Tell us what you’re interested in, and perhaps, what sparked your desire to apply for graduate school. This should be short and to the point; it is not an autobiography.

Part 2: Summarize your undergraduate and/or previous graduate experiences
Describe any important papers or thesis projects you may have completed, or anything scholarly beyond your curricular requirements. Discuss any struggles you may have experienced, and what steps you took to overcome those challenges. Also include if there was something important that happened to you that affected your grades (such as poverty, illness, or excessive work) and may help the faculty view your academic experiences in the appropriate context.

Part 3: Summarize your work experiences
Describe your work experience, especially related to education, technology, leadership, distance learning, training, or media development (if applicable). Include what you’ve been doing: company or non-profit, your work/design team, responsibilities, what you have learned, and relevant trainings you have completed or facilitated. You can also indicate here how this will help you focus your graduate studies.

Part 4: Elaborate on your academic interests
Here, indicate why you wish to enroll in the ETL program. Provide enough detail to convince the faculty that you understand the scope of the ETL program course offerings and how graduate school will help you meet your academic and professional goals. Describe any specific areas of interest. Review the ETL website for information about courses, the professors, and their research. Are there professors whose research interests parallel yours? Are there particular courses you are looking forward to taking?

Part 5: Describe your professional aspirations
In this final section elaborate on how completing a degree or certificate with the ETL program will contribute to your long-term goals and ambitions (personal, professional, academic, etc.).