Graduate School
Preparing and Applying

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Is Graduate School Right For You?

- Is your desire for deep knowledge of a field unsatisfied?
- Is graduate work required for the career you have chosen?
- Are you thinking more of the road not taken?
- Is your career stalled?
Issues to Confront

- Academic Issues
  - Academic preparation
  - Matching the program with career goals
- Personal Issues
  - Financial planning
  - Time management
  - Relationships
Academic Qualifications

- Have I taken the right undergraduate courses?
  - Find out what courses are expected
- Are my grades good enough?
  - Most graduate programs require a 3.0 GPA

- What if the answer is no to these questions?
  - Use the Graduate Non-degree Program
Match Program to Career Goals

- **Graduate programs demand**
  - Deep knowledge base ("steward of the discipline")
  - Developing professionalism
  - Life-long-learning

- **Careers demand**
  - Knowledge and skills to apply to problems
  - Professional behavior
  - Creativity and flexibility
  - Leadership skills
### What Type of Degree Do I Need?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic doctoral</th>
<th>Traditional masters</th>
<th>Professional masters</th>
<th>Traditional professional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>MS, MA</td>
<td>MS, MA, MPH, MHA</td>
<td>MD, DDS, JD, DPT, MSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research-based</td>
<td>Research-based</td>
<td>Practice-based cross-disciplinary</td>
<td>Practice-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 7 years</td>
<td>2 to 3 years</td>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major research project with dissertation</td>
<td>Research with thesis or capstone</td>
<td>Research project or capstone</td>
<td>Clinical practitioner training</td>
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</table>
Can I Afford Graduate School?

- What is the true cost?
  - Tuition and required fees
  - Housing costs/living expenses
  - Loss of current income
  - Undergraduate loans: will they be deferred?

- What financial help can I get?
  - Tuition waivers
  - Stipend
  - AIs
  - Loans
Do I Have Time for Graduate School?

- Time demands of graduate school
  - Actual class time
  - Research/study time
  - Full time vs part time
- Time demands of life situation
  - Commute time
  - Child care
Who will help me get through the emotional demands of graduate school?

- Parents
- Spouse
- Friends
- Children
- Fellow students
Keys to a Successful Application

- Applicant’s academic preparation matches program
- Applicant’s career goals match program
- Applicant has a plan for success
- Application shows signs of careful preparation and planning
The Graduate School Application

- Application form
- Academic record
  - Transcripts of all undergraduate work
- Admissions test scores
  - GRE, MCAT, LSAT, DAT, GMAT, ...
- Letters of recommendation
- Personal statement
- Admissions interview
Online Applications

- Each one is unique
  - Preview the ones for schools you are most interested in

- Gather your information before you start
  - It is frustrating to stop and start because you have to look for a piece of information

- Read the instructions
  - Help with the application is usually somewhere on the page, if you look carefully
Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

- What is it?
  - Verbal reasoning
    - “...measures your ability to understand what you read and ... apply your reasoning skills.”
  - Quantitative reasoning
    - Emphasis on data interpretation
  - Analytical writing
    - Sustain a well-focused, coherent discussion

- Does every program require it?
  - No; confirm with your program

- How do I prepare?
  - You have been preparing all along
  - GRE website offers free practice materials
  - Commercial or local prep courses
Letters of Recommendation

- **Who should write them?**
  - People who know your academic qualifications

- **What do you need to give to the writers to help them write the letter you need?**
  - A copy of your transcript
  - A resume
  - Make certain the writer knows your career goals
What is a Personal Statement?

- Also called other things
  - Letter of intent
  - Statement of purpose
  - Autobiographical statement
  - Personal narrative

- How do I know what “they” want?
  - Look for guidelines specific to program
Admissions Interview

- Project professionalism
- Be prepared to explain your goals
- Show knowledge of that program
- Have a list of questions
- Bring a copy of your resume to leave