

Tips to Prepare for and Apply to Graduate School

Obtaining Information About Programs

Books

- Many disciplines publish a book that lists all graduate programs in North America and can be referenced by state and subject area (e.g., Graduate Study in Psychology, published by the American Psychological Association).

Journals

- Search the literature for journal articles pertaining to the area that you are most interested in. Note the names of the authors who are publishing in this area and the names of the universities with which they are affiliated.
- Determine whether these universities offer the type of graduate degree that interests you.
- If a professor is doing what you would like to do and there is an appropriate graduate program at that university, send that person a brief e-mail expressing your interests and asking whether they are looking for a graduate student to work with them.
- If you can establish a strong link with a particular professor, you may have bought your ticket into graduate school.

Conferences

- Many professional conferences offer the opportunity to visit with representatives from graduate programs, particularly the national and regional meetings of your professional association.
- If you will be attending a conference, determine whether any of the presenters are affiliated with a university that you are considering for graduate school. Attend their presentation. Introduce yourself and ask a few of those intelligent questions that you had prepared in advance! That person just might be a member of the committee that reviews graduate applications.

Current Professors

- Each professor in your academic department will be familiar with at least several graduate programs. Pick their brains for information and recommendations.
- Talk with your career advisor.

Academic Department

- Many academic departments collect information and resources regarding graduate school.

Professionals

- Seek out professionals that are currently working near where you live. Ask them where they went to graduate school and whether they have any

recommendations.

Other Students

- Join the relevant student organizations at your school.
- Get to know some senior majors who are applying to graduate school.

Internet

- Nearly all graduate programs now have information on the internet.
- You can often learn about the faculty from their department website.
- Some graduate programs have their applications at their website.