

GRADUATE SCHOOL APPLICATION TIMETABLE

Thinking about going to graduate school? It is important to start early in deciding whether or not you want to go and where you would like to apply as the process can be long and time-consuming. You should begin the application process no later than the summer before your senior year of college or at least a year before you start graduate school. Keep in mind that all times indicated below are approximate, and you will need to check deadlines for specific programs since they vary from institution to institution.

Junior Year/Summer Before Senior Year

- Start browsing through guides to graduate programs and deciding where you would like to apply.
- Contact graduate schools directly to request catalogs. Check out the schools' web sites. Determine test requirements, application deadlines, and test dates.
- Talk with faculty members and career counselor to discuss programs.
- Sign up for required graduate admissions tests. Consult study guides to help you learn how to answer the questions and what to expect. Take practice tests.
- Obtain information and registration materials for tests from the Office of Career Development in Hubbard Hall.
- Begin budgeting for the application process. It can become costly.
- Start a checklist of schools/programs that you wish to apply to, the application requirements, test requirements, fees, special requirements (e.g. portfolios) and deadlines.
- Take GS395 Preparing for Graduate and Professional School. This course is taught once a year.

September/October

- Review your checklist of schools/programs, application requirements, test requirements, fees, and deadlines.
- Take or retake required graduate admissions tests if you have not done so already. (e.g. GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT)
- Write a draft of your personal statement. Ask the Office of Career Development and a faculty member to read your essays and provide feedback. Take their advice!
- Research financial aid sources, fellowships, and assistantships.
- Begin figuring out possible budgets based on financial aid, costs of school, and cost of living.
- Request letters of recommendation from faculty members. Provide faculty with a copy of your transcript, each program's recommendation form, and your statement of purpose. Ask him or her if there is anything else that you can provide to help them.
- Work on completing application forms.

November/December

- Order official transcript from the Registration Center (783-2400). Ask if the office can send a transcript with your fall term grades in time to meet the program deadlines. Many schools will require you to have them sent directly to their school.
- Finalize your personal statement and respond to the questions asked on the application.
- Mail applications. Even if deadlines are later, it is good to get applications in early. Keep copies of everything you send!
- Apply for assistantships, fellowships, and grants.

January/March

- Contact schools about the possibility of visiting and scheduling an interview.
- Mail applications if you have not done so already.
- Prepare for campus interviews if required.
- If you are taking out student loans, fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or the GAPSFA (Graduate and Professional School Financial Aid). You need to find out which one the schools require. You need to have a copy of your federal income tax returns to fill out the information.

April

- Discuss acceptances, rejections, and other career options with a faculty member or a counselor at Career Services.
- Notify the program of your acceptance.
- Notify the programs that you are declining.
- Write thank you notes to everyone who assisted you in your search- tell them of your decision.
- Make a budget and housing arrangements.
- Have an alternate plan if graduate school admission is postponed.