Is Graduate School in Your Future?
## Timeline for applying to graduate school during senior year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>SEPT.</th>
<th>OCT.</th>
<th>NOV.</th>
<th>DEC.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applying for</strong></td>
<td><strong>AUG.</strong></td>
<td><strong>SEPT.</strong></td>
<td><strong>OCT.</strong></td>
<td><strong>NOV.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Semester</strong> (not always available)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Gather Information on Graduate Programs

- **Information Sources Include:**
  - Faculty
  - Peers
  - *Peterson’s Guide to Graduate/Professional Study*
  - DISCOVER - career guidance system
  - Reference Literature prepared by prof. field

### Collect Application Materials

- **Online Resources**
  - Begin asking for letters of recommendation
  - Investigate national scholarships

### Process Information & Secure Documents

- **Pick up bulletin and register for required entrance test:**
  - GRE, GMAT, LSAT (Career Services)
  - MCAT, DCAT (Biology Dept.)

### Send in Applications & Follow Up

- **Search for private sources of graduate school funding**
  - Danforth, Fulbright, Ford, Carnegie Mellon, etc.

---

**Note:** These dates are extrapolated from the deadline (Feb. or Nov.) for receiving applications as most commonly stated by graduate schools. There are exceptions, but to be safe, consider Aug./Sept. as the latest possible date for starting search.

---

**Internet Resources**

*Peterson’s Guides to Graduate and Professional School: www.petersons.com*
*Graduate School Rankings: www.usnews.com*
*Admissions Testing Information: www.ets.org*
*Online Funding/Scholarship Search: www.cashe.com*
Is Graduate School For You?

- Are you reasonably sure of your career goals, or is there a strong possibility that you could change your mind after a taste of the working world?
- Would related work experience help you clarify ambiguous career goals?
- How much will your job and salary prospects be enhanced by a graduate degree?
- Is an advanced degree a prerequisite to your chosen career?
Is Graduate School For You?

- What are the direct and indirect costs of graduate school?
- Is there a possibility that a future employer might pay for you to attend graduate school?
- Do you have a strong GPA? Would work experience enhance your application credentials by offsetting mediocre grades or test scores?
- Would you have difficulty readjusting to student life after a break?
Synthetic worklife earnings estimates by highest level of educational attainment
(in millions of 1999 dollars)

- Some high school, no diploma: $1.0
- High school diploma or equivalent: 1.2
- Some college, no degree: 1.5
- Associate degree: 1.6
- Bachelor's degree: 2.1
- Master's degree: 2.5
- Professional degree: 4.4
- Doctoral degree: 3.4
Choosing a School

- Admission
- Programs Offered
- Program Structure
- Faculty
- Reputation
- Cost
- Physical Facilities
- Geographic Location
- Library
- Size
- Diversity of Students
Searching For Graduate Schools

USING DISCOVER
Instructions

Each tab above represents a section of DISCOVER. Click a tab, then click a link on the bar below the tab.

To review the path you selected, click on "My Path" above.

Path for Robert Casper:
Find occupations that fit me

Your Steps:
Learn about self and occupations
✓ Interest Inventory
✓ Abilities Inventory
✓ Values Inventory
Use Results to

Welcome to DISCOVER!

- Use the "Get Started" button for help finding your way through DISCOVER.
- Use the tabs on the menu above if you know which section(s) you want to use.
- Use the "DISCOVER Tour" button below for a guided tour.

Instructions are on the left of every page.
The Application Process

- Request Information
- Apply Early
- Complete Application Package

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Form</th>
<th>Financial Aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Essay</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Fees</td>
<td>Test Scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript &amp; Grades</td>
<td>Personal Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Admissions Testing

Graduate Record Examinations (GRE)
Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT)
Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)
Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

Other tests:
- Miller Analogies Test
- Dental Admission Test
- Optometry Admission Test
- Pharmacy College Admission Test
- Veterinary Aptitude Test
- Test of English as a Foreign Language
Test Preparation

- Review study questions in the test registration bulletin.

- Purchase a test preparation book from the test registration bulletin or your local bookstore i.e., Barron’s Guides.

- Purchase interactive study software through the testing company or at your local software store.
Test Preparation

- Use the GRE or GMAT test prep software available in Career Services.
- Enroll in the Kaplan TestDrive. Program offered through Career Services.
Test Drive Graduate Tests

Free - No Charge - No Kidding!
Practice taking Graduate School Entrance Exams - GRE-GMAT-LSAT-MCAT

Attend TESTDRIVE by Kaplan Educational
Monday, October 26, 2009
6 - 9 pm    Lanigan 102A

(limited seating! Advance sign-up for this program is required)
"Testdrive," will provide you with an opportunity to take a practice GRE-GMAT-LSAT-MCAT under simulated conditions, and have it scored at the program....before you take the real thing!

To reserve a seat, call the COMPASS at: 312-3142 by 4 pm Thursday, October 22nd.
Recommendations

Guidelines to give you an edge

- Choose professors who know you well.
- Choose employers who can highlight work related skills.
- Determine who will be your best advocates.
- Discuss the content & expectations of the letter.
- Provide writer with a copy of your resume.
Recommendations

- Don’t use references from friends, relatives, or people who do not know you well.

- Give your references all of the necessary forms, addresses and stamped envelopes.

- Give your references at least a month in which to write the reference and ask them to meet a deadline.
Points to keep in mind when writing your admission essay:

- Make your aim clear, succinct & enthusiastic
- Demonstrate focus & depth in your thinking
- Answer the question
- Write an interesting essay
Application Essay

- Making an outline vs. writing spontaneously
- Have someone to critique your essay
- Keep your essay positive
- Type your essay
- Neatness, spelling and grammar are important
What the Admissions Committees are trying to evaluate:

- Writing ability
- Educational background
- Major areas of interest or study
- Reasons for graduate education
- Immediate and long-term goals
- Level of maturity
- Your unique contribution to the institution
FINANCIAL AID

- **FELLOWSHIPS**: granted by individual universities based on merit. Do not need, usually cover tuition & expenses.

- **ASSISTANTSHIPS**: stipend and tuition waivers in exchange for services, teaching or research.

- **GRANTS**: sum of money awarded to a university or individual in exchange for work, research & scholarly publications.

- **LOANS**: Direct Stafford Subsidized Loans, Direct Stafford Unsubsidized Loans, Perkins Loans and State Loans
FINANCIAL AID

- When to Apply: after January 1 of the year in which you are applying for aid; the deadline is May 1st.
- Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA): standard form for federal loan.

- www.finaid.com - links to financial aid sites
- www.ed.gov/Prog_info/SFA/StudentGuide - dept. of education
- www.fdncenter.org - clearinghouse on grants & foundations
- www.fastweb.com - searchable index of private scholarships, grants and loans
- Federal Student Aid Information Center - 800 433-3243