

GRADUATE SCHOOL TIMELINE



Questions to Consider

- What is my motivation for pursuing a graduate degree?
- Should I go to graduate school as soon as I graduate, or after working in my field for some time?
- What is the best graduate degree for my professional goals?
- Can I afford graduate school? What are my options to pay for it?

Online Resources to Research Grad Schools

www.petersons.com

www.gradschools.com

www.graduateguide.com

FRESHMAN YEAR

- Ask your professors what types of graduate degrees professionals in your field pursue.
- Use www.onetonline.org to determine if a graduate degree is needed to achieve your career goals.
- Look for opportunities to job shadow professionals in your chosen field; start imagining yourself in their roles.
- Stay open to the idea of attending graduate school, but do not feel pressure to decide whether or not you will pursue a graduate degree.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

Fall Semester

- Talk to your professors about opportunities to research with them or assist them in their professional projects.

Spring Semester

- Decide what fields interest you, then start looking for programs and schools that match. Talk to your advisor about what classes you need for those programs.
- Start working on a curriculum vitae (C.V.) to keep track of significant research projects, jobs, and courses.
- Look for internship and volunteer opportunities for the summer. The closer you can get to your ideal career field, the better!

JUNIOR YEAR

Fall Semester

- Join professional organizations in your field and start staying up-to-date with current issues and trends in your field.

Spring Semester

- Research financial aid options at each institution, including: grants, loans, fellowships, and assistantships.
- Research each school's application process, including: required testing (GRE, MCAT, GMAT, LSAT, etc.), writing samples, letters of reference, application fees.
- Schedule and take entrance exams now to give you time to retake them and focus on applications.

SENIOR YEAR

Summer Break

- Intern, volunteer, observe, and shadow professionals in your field as much as possible.
- Take any remaining entrance exams and reschedule exams with low scores.

Fall Semester

- Collect transcripts from all post-secondary educational institutions.
- Line up references and provide them with all the information they need to write a complete reference.
- Schedule entrance exams if you weren't satisfied with your first set of scores.
- Visit your top two or three schools.

SUBMIT APPLICATIONS! Be aware that many programs have an application fee and a December or January deadline.

**DO YOUR HOMEWORK.
BE PREPARED.
ASK QUESTIONS.**

Spring Semester

- Apply for assistantships or fellowships
- Acceptance letters begin to arrive.
- Talk through plans with a trusted faculty member or career consultant.
- Fill out FAFSA for financial aid.
- Once you make your decision, notify the school of your acceptance.
- Research housing options.