Tips and Strategies for Entering Graduate School

Searching for a Graduate School:

- Begin your search early
- Start with online search engines such as GraduateSchools.com and The Princeton Review
- If you are wanting to live in a specific area, contact and visit colleges/universities in that area

Once you have a list of possibilities, narrow your choices by doing the following:

- Call the admissions counselor to ask questions that are important to you (housing, location of university, safety, etc.)
- Contact the department to ask program specific questions
- Exclude programs from your list that do not offer what you are looking for or do not meet your expectations
- Visit each campus on your new list (and remove any from the list that do not meet your expectations)
- Apply to universities still on your list (you should apply to more than one program to increase your likelihood of admission to a program)

Basics of the GRE:

- Cost: $140
- Register at ETS
- Computerized exam offered every week
- Analytical Writing: 2 essays, 30 minutes for one essay and 45 minutes for the other (score 0 to 6)
- Quantitative: 28 multiple choice questions, 45 minutes (score 200 to 800)
- Verbal: 30 multiple choice questions, 30 minutes (score 200 to 800)

The Quantitative Section:

- Tests high school level math
- Solve problems using math concepts
- Understand basic arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and data analysis
- Use quantitative reasoning

The Verbal Section:

- Sentence completion questions, analogies, antonyms, and reading comprehension questions
- Draw conclusions based on an analysis of written materials
- Recognize relationships between concepts and words
- Analyze relationships between different parts of sentences
- Vocabulary (study list can be found at Test Prep Review)

Studying for the GRE:

- Take a study course from Princeton Review or Kaplan Testing Centers (1-800-KAP-TEST)
- Take an online practice exam at Test Prep Review

Tips for Writing Your Essay Statement:

- Essay statement may also be called: Objectives of Graduate Study, Statement of Purpose, or Personal Background
- Spend time thinking about your immediate and long-term goals
- Start with making notes of goals and achievements
• Be honest; focus on who you are, what you have accomplished, and what you hope to achieve in the future
• Combine the notes into a professional paper (use correct grammar and spelling)
• Walk away from it; return in a day or two; read again and revise
• For samples go to EssayEdge

Financial Aid:

• Ask about Graduate Assistantship Positions and Fellowships
• Student Loans
  • Borrow up to $18,500/year
  • Complete FAFSA
• Search for private scholarships
  • FastWeb
  • If a fee is required, it's not a real scholarship

Deadline Dates

• Admission deadlines are typically in mid-Spring (such as March 15th)
• If you are considering Fall 2008 for entering Graduate School
  • Apply Now
  • Schedule your GRE; submit scores by the university's deadline date

What's Next?

• Submit application
• Prepare for GRE
• Request transcripts
• Ask professors or employers for recommendation letters
• Work on Essay Statement
• Attend Open Houses