CONSIDERING GRAD SCHOOL?

Career Goals: Do you have defined career goals? Is grad school required to meet those goals?
Experience: Have you completed an internship or worked in your chosen field?
Employability: Does having a graduate degree affect employability in the occupation you desire?
Preparation: Have you met all of the prerequisites required (GPA, major, courses taken, etc.)? Are you ready for another 1-5 years of school, homework, deadlines, etc.?
Cost: Can you afford the academic and personal expenses of another degree, including deferring a full-time income for another 1-5 years?

FINDING THE RIGHT PROGRAM FOR YOU

Research: Petersons.com & Gradschools.com
Considerations:
- Majors and concentrations available
- Size of the school
- Location of the school
- Cost of the program
- Assistantships or fellowships available
- Duration of the program
- Faculty:Student ratio
- Faculty background/expertise/research
- Experiential learning opportunities
- Placement rate of graduates

APPLYING TO GRAD SCHOOL

Application forms: follow directions exactly
Resume/CV: get your resume reviewed by Career Services
Letters of recommendation:
- Will need 2 to 3 letters
- Ask faculty members, advisors, employers, etc.
- Inform each writer about the specific grad school program
- Give each writer your resume
- Remind each writer of your experience with them
- Give them ample time to write the letter
- Give specific directions on where to send the letter
- Confidential vs. Non-confidential

Entrance Exams: GRE, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT
Official Academic Transcript(s): Request one from each institution you have attended (if required). To request Ithaca College transcript use HomerConnect or contact Registrar’s Office.

Personal statement/statement of purpose: If no instructions are given, write about your career goals, how that program will help you meet those goals, your enthusiasm/interest in the field you have chosen, and why you’re a good fit for their program. Click here for our Personal Statements guide! Have the essay reviewed by faculty, advisors, Career Services, etc.

FINANCING GRAD SCHOOL

Fellowships, grants and scholarships: check http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/#graduate
Assistantships:
- Work for the college in exchange for tuition assistance, room, board, and/or a stipend
- Typically a separate application process for these
- If you cannot find info on each college’s website, inquire about assistantships through admissions

Work Study: some colleges have work study funding for graduate students
Taking out a loan
APPLYING FOR GRAD SCHOOL TIMELINE

JUNIOR YEAR, FALL & SPRING:

- Try to define your career goals and determine if grad school is required or beneficial in helping to meet those goals
- Research interest areas, institutions, and degree programs
- Get to know your professors and advisor
  - They are a great source of career-related information
  - You may need to ask them for a letter of recommendation later
- Register and prepare for appropriate graduate admission test
  - You may choose to take your exam during the spring of your junior year through the fall of your senior year
  - Note that some exams are only offered certain times each year
- Investigate scholarships, assistantships, fellowships, and grants
- Speak with alumni, faculty, parents, and friends about their graduate experiences

SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR:

- Request applications and financial aid materials
- Visit institutions of interest if possible to narrow your list of schools
- Check application deadlines and rolling admission policies
- Study sample test questions for the appropriate entrance exam, enroll in a test prep course if needed
- Register for a summer or fall graduate admission test
- Begin writing your application essay (personal statement)
- For medical, dental, osteopathy, podiatry, or law school, you may need to register for the national application, or data assembly service most programs use

SENIOR YEAR, FALL:

- Obtain letters of recommendation
- Take graduate admission test (if you have not already done so)
- Send in completed application(s)
- Have transcripts and letters of recommendation mailed
- Confirm that graduate programs have received all application materials
- Apply for assistantships, fellowships, grants, etc.
- Register for Graduate and Professional School Financial Aid Service (GPSFAS) if required
- Consider visiting select institutions during winter break

SENIOR YEAR, SPRING:

- Check with all institutions before the deadline to make sure your file is complete
- Keep track of acceptances, waiting list placements, and rejections
- Visit institutions that accept you (if you haven’t already)
- Evaluate all offers of admission and financial aid before making final decision
- Send deposit to institution of your choice
- Notify other institutions that accepted you of your decision so that they may admit students on their waiting list
- Send thank-you notes to people who wrote your recommendation letters, informing them of your success
- Upon graduation, forward an updated transcript to the institution you will attend in the fall