

GRAD SCHOOL GUIDE & TIMELINE

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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?

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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

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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.

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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
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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
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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
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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