

# GRADUATE SCHOOL PLANNING

## Is Graduate School for You?

### Things to Consider:

- How genuinely interested are you in this field?
- How will a graduate degree improve your career prospects?
- Will graduate school help to advance your career?
- How will you pay for it?
- How is being a graduate student different from being an undergrad?
- How well have you performed academically as an undergrad?

## Websites

### UCR Grad School Resources

- [careers.ucr.edu](https://careers.ucr.edu) / [se.ucr.edu/hpac/overview](https://se.ucr.edu/hpac/overview)  
[arc.ucr.edu](https://arc.ucr.edu) / [graduate.ucr.edu/programs](https://graduate.ucr.edu/programs)

### General Grad School Information (Lists Areas Of Study)

- [gradschools.com](https://gradschools.com) / [petersons.com](https://petersons.com)

### Rankings

- [usnews.com/best-graduate-schools](https://usnews.com/best-graduate-schools)
- [washingtonmonthly.com/2020college-guide](https://washingtonmonthly.com/2020college-guide)

## Factors to Consider When Choosing a Program

- Academic Support
- Cohort Model
- Connections to Industry Representatives
- Curriculum
- Diversity
- Faculty
- Financial Considerations/Funding
- Geographic Location
- Graduate Assistantship Opportunities
- Internships/Externships
- Joint Degree
- Online Versus In-Person Classroom Environment
- Part-Time/Full-Time Programs
- Personal Factors
- Placement
- Preparation for Industry License
- Ranking
- Reputation
- Size of School
- Special Programs
- Student Organizations
- Student Services
- Surrounding Community

There are many factors to consider when choosing the right graduate program:

## Preparing for Admission

### SOME items to consider:

- Application Deadlines
- Applications to the Program and to the University (if required)
- Co-Curricular Activities
- Coursework Preparation
- Curriculum Vitae or Resume
- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Letters of Recommendation
- Personal Statement
- Research Experience
- Standardized Test Score
- Supplemental Information
- Transcripts

If you have questions, directly contact the department of interest.

There are several things to keep in mind when preparing to apply to a graduate school. Be sure to check EACH program for its application requirements and procedures, as these may DIFFER from program to program.

## The Graduate School Interview – Are You Prepared?

Not all graduate school programs require you to attend an interview. However, preparation is key to a successful graduate school interview. Meet with a career counselor for more information on specific fields and for a mock interview.

### General Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself. (Describe your academic background, relevant experiences, and why you want to go to grad school.)
2. How did you choose UCR and your major? (Explain your decision to select that major/college.)
3. Why this university? (Again, explain your decision-making process.)
4. What courses and activities have you engaged in to prepare yourself for graduate school?
5. How will you fund your graduate education? (Consider how much time you'll have to study.)
6. What do you know about our graduate program? (Demonstrate that you want this program.)
7. What area of specialty do you have? (Highlight courses and experiences.)
8. Why graduate school? Why not get practical experience first?
9. How would your recommenders describe your strengths and/or weaknesses?
10. Describe how you overcame a challenging time during your academic work at UCR.
11. What questions do you have for us? (Prepare thoughtful questions for the interviewer.)

## Types of Interviews



Group



Individual



Phone



Video

## Suggested Timeline

### Winter/Spring Quarter – Junior Year

- Start researching/visiting schools.
- Begin writing your personal statement.
- Identify those who would be willing to write letters of recommendation, such as faculty, staff, and supervisors.
- Gain co-curricular experience to diversify your application.
- Open a letter of recommendation file on Interfolio (interfolio.com).
- Register/take appropriate entrance exams, such as GRE, MCAT, GMAT, and LSAT.
- Register with appropriate services, such as the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) (for law school applicants) and AMCAS (for medical school applicants).
- Application periods typically start on June 1, but can vary from year to year.

### Summer – Junior Year

- Research/visit schools.
- Work on your personal statement and make an appointment with the Academic Resource Center to have it reviewed.
- Identify those who would be willing to write letters of recommendation.
- Gain co-curricular experience to diversify your application.
- Begin requesting graduate school applications.
- Make a checklist and schedule for each application.
- Submit medical school applications (if applicable).

### Fall/Winter Quarter – Senior Year

- If you haven't already, register/take the appropriate entrance exams, such as the GRE, GMAT, and LSAT.
- Submit applications.
- Finish your personal statement and have it reviewed by a faculty member in your field and the Academic Resource Center.
- Collect letters of recommendation.
- Attend appropriate graduate school forums/events.
- Apply for awards.
- Submit financial aid applications.

### Spring Quarter – Senior Year

- Secure financing.
- Submit tuition/housing deposits upon acceptance to the school in which you've enrolled.

This information is accurate and reliable as of the date of publication, but may change without notice. Please contact the Career Center for the most up-to-date information. (09/20)