RESEARCH YOUR PROSPECTIVE FIELD

- Talk with: Professors, graduate students, or other UCI staff
- Meet with: People working in that industry or studying in that field
- Check out: The Occupational Outlook Handbook in the Career Center Library or visit www.bls.gov/oco
- Identify: prospective schools and seek information on their programs. Check out the Peterson’s Guide to Graduate and Professional Schools in the Career Center Library or online at www.petersons.com

EVALUATE THE VARIOUS GRADUATE PROGRAMS BASED ON:

- Department: Certain institutions are known for particular programs. Check out the Gourman Report or U.S. News Best Graduate Schools in the Career Center library
- Faculty: Research the reputation and areas of specialization of the faculty
- Program: Each school has a different curriculum and philosophy. Make sure they meet your educational goals
- Facilities: Find out about the libraries, laboratories, and research facilities. What is the depth of the library collection in your particular field of interest?
- Size: There are advantages and disadvantages to both small and large universities.
- Placement: Where do graduates go after completing the program?
- Degree requirements: List all requirements such as residency, unit requirements, language requirements, examinations, candidacy, dissertation, or thesis.

PREPARE FOR THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS:

- Complete your bachelor’s degree
- Aim for a minimum of 3.0 GPA – Some schools average your last 2 years of school, or the courses in your field of concentration.
- 2-3 letters of recommendation – Choose individuals who know you academically and/or professionally and will give you the best recommendation. The job title or status of that person does not matter; however, at least one reference should be a professor. Before asking for a recommendation, meet with your reference to discuss your career goals and inform them about the program(s).
- Statement of purpose – State why you are most qualified to be in that particular program. This is a qualitative way to show your eligibility, not quantitative like GRE scores, transcripts, and grades.
- Admissions tests – In most cases, the Graduate Records Exam (GRE) will be required. Check with each school to identify the appropriate exam.

FINANCE YOUR EDUCATION

- Fellowships: Given to students with the expectation that they will maintain and achieve good standing.
- Loans: Check with the financial aid department of the schools to which you are applying about loan possibilities. Loans must be repaid.
- Assistantships: You receive a stipend for which you perform services related to your field.
- Grants: Like fellowships, these are gifts to graduate students that do not have to be repaid. They are often awarded based upon need and/or special qualifications.
- Work study: This type of financial aid assists graduate students by providing job opportunities within the institution or in a public or non-profit agency for up to 20 hours per week.

Resources Available in the Career Center Library:

- Preparation: GRE, LSAT, GMAT, MCAT, etc.
- ABA Guide to ABA approved Law Schools
- MBA Programs
- U.S. News - Best Graduate Schools
- Paying for Graduate School
- APA Guide to Graduate Study in Psychology
- Kaplan Admissions Advisor: Business School, Graduate School, and Medical School
- Peterson’s Guide to Graduate and Professional Schools
- Graduate Admissions Essays

For More Help: Attend a Selecting and Applying to Grad School Workshop

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