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 by visiting www.bls.gov/ooh/
- Identify prospective schools and seek information on their programs. Check out the Peterson's Guide to Graduate and Professional Schools online at www.petersons.com

Evaluate the Various Graduate Programs

- Department
  - Certain institutions are known for particular programs. Check out the U.S. News & World Report Best Graduate Schools online or at the Career Center.
- 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, and thesis or dissertation.

Prepare for the Admissions Process

- Complete your bachelor's degree
- Aim for a minimum 3.0 GPA
  - Some schools average your last two 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 usually 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 the 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.
- Application
  - Read instructions carefully and meet all requirements and deadlines.

Finance your Education

- Fellowships
  - Given to students with the expectation that they will maintain and achieve good standing.
- Loans
  - Explore school, private, and government options. Repayment of loans can vary.
- 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.
- 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 a week.

Resources available at the Career Center

- Preparation for GRE, LSAT, CBEST, DAT, etc.
- ABA Guide to ABA Approved Law Schools
- MBA programs
- U.S. News & World Report - Best Graduate Schools
- APA Guide to Graduate Study in Psychology