Timetable for Applying to Graduate School
Modified article by Tara Kuther, Ph.D., About.com Guide

**Junior Year (fall or spring): Identify schools and gather applications**
- Explore your area(s) of interest by talking with your faculty to learn about programs and make contacts.
- View programs posted on your CareerLink account under Graduate/Professional Schools (Employer Category)
- Develop your list of prospective schools, and pick a professor or two from each that mirror your interests.
- Search for admission events or special events (i.e. Graduate Research Symposia) to attend.
- Gather *graduate program* brochures and narrow your choices.
- Take a free practice test. Your score will help you determine how much preparation you'll need. **Study/prep.**

**Summer (Senior Year): Take test and prepare resume or CV and drafts of personal statement**
- Take the necessary *standardized tests* for admissions. The **GRE, MCAT, GMAT, LSAT, or DAT**
- Visit schools and programs
- Carefully examine each of the *program applications*. Note any questions or essay topics.
- Consider which faculty members to ask for *letters of recommendation*. Don’t wait until the last minute.
- Prepare your resume or CV to give to faculty (visit Academic & Career Planning for assistance)
- Write SEVERAL drafts of your personal statements (Essays, Statement of Purpose, etc.). Ask ACP to review.

**September/October: Appointments with faculty for recommendations (earlier the better)**
- Check and record the due date for each application. Create an Excel spreadsheet to organize all deadlines!
- Ask your faculty member or a career counselor to read your essays and provide feedback. Take their advice!
- Ask faculty for *letters of recommendation* early in the semester. Provide faculty with a copy of your transcript, each program’s recommendation form, and your statement of purpose. It may also be helpful if you provide the professors with *sample recommendation letters* and your resume. Ask if there's anything else that you can provide.
- Contact students and faculty at your prospective schools.
- Research sources of *financial aid* and note the deadlines on your Excel spreadsheet.

**October/November: Final essay and apply for financial aid**
- Arrange for your official *transcript* to be sent to each program to which you apply.
- Finalize your *essays and statement of purpose*. Seek input from others (faculty, Learning Center, etc.).
- Apply for fellowships and other sources of *financial aid*, as applicable.

**November/December: Complete your packet and mail!**
- Complete the *application* forms for each program. Scan the form into your computer or use a typewriter for a neat and clean application form. Reread your *essays and statement of purpose*. Spell check!
- Mail your applications and relax!
- Most schools send a postcard upon receipt of each application. Keep track of these (spreadsheet). If you don't receive a postcard or letter, contact the admissions office by email or phone to confirm receipt.

**January/February: Prepare for interviews and visits**
- Depending on your field, start planning for the *admissions interviews*. What questions will you ask? Prepare answers to common questions. Practice through a Mock Interview at Academic & Career Planning.
- Fill out the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application. You'll need your tax forms to do this.
- Set up appointments to visit potential schools (talk with students and faculty).

**March/April**
- Visit schools to which you've been accepted.
- Discuss *acceptances* and *rejections* with your faculty member or a career counselor.
- Notify the program of your *acceptance* or *decline*.