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 Symposiums) 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.

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