

# Graduate School Search & Application



The decision to attend graduate school, pursue a fellowship or seek additional certifications can be beneficial for your career for many reasons. Additional credentials can increase the job options available to you, improve your earning potential, and enable you to become an expert in your field. When deciding if these paths are right for you, work with your faculty advisor, the Career Center, and utilize external resources to research the best options for you. If you have reached the point that you think you would like to undertake graduate studies or fellowships, review this page for helpful information and resources!

## Finding the Right Program

The most significant part of the graduate school process is finding the right program for you. One that aligns with your career plans suits your academic interests and matches your preferences for cost, location, and culture.

Utilize the resources below during your research and decision-making process.

### **Princeton Review Graduate School Search**


The [Princeton Review Graduate School Search](#) has been the destination for college and graduate school-bound students to make their dreams a reality. Online and in-person tutoring and test prep from top-notch educators and more than 150 books that provide anything from test prep help to college admissions advice.

### **GradSchools.com**

This site has a wealth of helpful information, from the ability to browse graduate schools by location and major to the ability to investigate certification programs, masters programs, Ph.D. programs, and online options. GradSchools.com also has information about scholarships, financial aid, and helpful articles about the application process.

## Networking

One element of the graduate school application process that can be particularly beneficial is networking! Discuss your plans with your peers, your professors, your academic advisor, and utilize any connections you may have at your school's interest. Be ready to articulate your strengths, why your school and program of choice are right for you, what you plan to do post-graduation, and how you will put your education to good use. Advocate for yourself and market your skills so your connections feel comfortable and prepared to assist you! Schedule informational interviews with graduates of your program/school, connect with potential peers and colleagues via [LinkedIn](#) and seek as much information as possible during your application process.



# Timeline

One of the most important things to manage well during your graduate school application process is the timeline. If you are interested in getting financial aid or funding, you will need to submit your application by November (for enrollment in the fall of the following year). The latest deadline for application submissions is typically in March for enrollment in the following fall semester. You will need to ensure you know the scores you will need to apply (GRE, LSAT, etc.), so plan appropriately to have your scores by your application deadlines.

## Application Materials

### Letters of Recommendation

Letters of Recommendation are specific letters sent to a selection committee highlighting your particular qualifications and abilities for a position or program, written on your behalf by a contact. Remember these tips regarding letters of recommendation:

- **Develop relationships** with your professors and faculty in your major, so you will know who to ask when the time comes.
- **Stay connected** to contacts throughout your college years – those within your major, division, and industry.
- **Provide specific instructions** when asking for a letter of recommendation to ensure the process is as easy as possible for the person recommending you.
- **Give an appropriate amount of time** for your contact to write and submit the letter (3 weeks minimum)!

### Statement of Purpose

The statement of purpose can often be the most impactful part of your application. Take advantage of this opportunity to make a positive and lasting impression:

- **Write a story, not simply a statement:** paint the picture of why you want to attend your specific program, how that fits into your passion and life goals, and how the program will enable you positively impact and contribute to your field.
- **Use professional, formal language that remains conversational:** correct grammar and avoid slang, abbreviations, or casual language. But you DO want to communicate a personal, meaningful message – so be genuine and tell your story.
- **Research and do your homework:** gain as much insight as you can about the program, the culture of the school, the faculty that will be a part of your studies, and the history of the institution, noting major research or accomplishments.
- **Proofread and edit - then edit again:** submitting a statement of purpose that is free from grammatical errors and is sharp, concise, and logical is extremely important. Don't get excluded for simple or minor errors that can have a significant impact!

## Career Center Support

The Career Center offers support to students and alumni through each of the steps involved in the graduate school application and preparation process. Schedule an appointment with Career Center staff today at <https://maryvillecollege.joinhandshake.com/appointments>.