SOS Presents:

How To Get Into Graduate School

Presented by:
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Agenda

• The Graduate School Experience
• Finding A Graduate School
• The Application Process
• Typical Application Timeline
• Funding Opportunities
• Q & A Panel with Guest Speakers
The Graduate School Experience

How is graduate school different from undergrad?

• Many more seminar-type courses, especially at the advanced level

• More papers, projects, presentations, but fewer tests

• More researched-oriented

• Increased specialization - narrowing of subject matter studied
The Graduate School Experience

How is graduate school different from undergrad?

• Much more independent work - self-discipline a necessity

• Less short-term feedback about how you're doing academically

• Increased pressure to maintain high grades - generally B or higher

• Increased competition from talented students
The Graduate School Experience

Also consider the following options:

• Direct entry Ph.D.

• Thesis-based vs course-based

• Length of program
Finding A Graduate School

Internet Searches
• Use a variety of key words
• Careful! Results rely on frequency matches, not program quality

Advisors, Mentors, Current Graduate Students
• Great resource for graduate program information

Professional Associations
• Conferences: great for networking, learning about type of research at prospective schools
• Journals: who is doing cutting-edge research?
Why should you start looking soon?

To Find Out Important Information:

Required Classes:
• Some programs require undergraduate courses as prerequisites

Tests and Cut-off Scores:
• Some programs require a test (e.g. GRE, GMAT)
• Cut-off scores narrow down applicant pool for interviews
Typical Application Materials

• Application Form

• Letters of Recommendation (usually two)

• Personal Statement

• Transcripts

• Standardized Test Scores (GRE, GMAT)

• Writing and Portfolio Samples
The Personal Statement

• Be specific in your goals and intentions

• Write a separate letter for each school
  o Schools may have different essay instructions; follow them carefully!
  o Mention specific details of the school’s program
The Personal Statement

Typical essay requirements:

• General Essay: background, future plans, your reasons for choosing that school, et cetera

• Research Essay:
  - your specific research interests
  - questions you have thought about
  - why you are interested in these questions
  - what articles you have read to spark your interest
The Personal Statement
This is your chance to sell yourself.

• Take your time. Write it well.
  o Convince the school they want you as a graduate student
  o You may already be ranked before your interview!
The Personal Statement
This is your chance to sell yourself.

• Ask a professor for feedback.
  o They know the process; they’ve been there!
  o They may sit on admission committees
    ▪ Will know what details to include for success
Letters of Recommendation

A STRONG letter should:

• Be from a professor who knows you outside of class:
  o Research practicum, honours thesis, faculty club supervisor, et cetera

• Say more than just about your grades:
  o Problem-solving skills
  o Teamwork
  o Your character
Letters of Recommendation

Provide for each professor:

1. Envelopes typed with addresses for each school

2. Each school’s **required forms** (fill out all information)

3. **Instructions** from each school (seal and sign, mail or return to student)

4. **Specific information** to include (about you, the applicant)

5. **Deadlines** (for returning to you or mailing—NOT the application deadline!)
Sending Applications

• Mail applications should arrive TWO WEEKS before the deadline

• Write a CV, transcripts etc. to include all your experience and awards

• Double and triple check your packages to make sure they’re complete

• Call and confirm receipt of your application one week before the deadline

http://futurestudents.yorku.ca/graduate/steps-apply/
Expenses
Plan ahead and consider the following costs:

• Transcripts - http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/transcripts

• Test score reports
  o e.g. GRE: free to send to four schools, ~$13 for each additional

• Application fees
  o Vary by school, often $25 and up
Typical Application Timeline

• **August - September**
  - Start browsing through programs guides, web sites and university catalogs
  - Meet with faculty members you know to discuss personal statement and possible programs
  - Start asking for letters of recommendation

• **October**
  - Determine which programs to which you’ll apply
  - Establish your timeline based on deadlines
  - Start writing your personal statement
Typical Application Timeline

- **November**
  - Complete application forms and order transcripts
  - Provide your recommending professors with letter of recommendation forms and information

- **December - January**
  - Mail applications (even if early; better safe than sorry)
  - Don’t forget to follow up on receipt of your applications!
Funding Opportunities

Internal: from the graduate school

External:

• OGS
• Tri-Council
• Others (HSF Master’s, etc.)
• OSAP
# Ontario Graduate Scholarship Program (OGS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year:</th>
<th>2016-2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who It’s For:</td>
<td>Graduate students at masters or doctoral level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Aid:</td>
<td>$5,000 per term up to a maximum of $15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>When to apply:</td>
<td>Applications available in October</td>
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</tbody>
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Tri-Council Awards

• One application per year to one granting agency (NSERC, SSHRC, or CIHR).
• All three offer Canada Graduate Scholarships (CGS) to top-ranked applicants at each level (master’s and doctoral)

• Eligibility:
  o GPA of at least 80% (8.0 or A-) in each of last two years
  o Grades not rounded up
Heart and Stroke Foundation Master’s Studentship Award

- Value: $36,000
- Deadline: Set by home department
- Eligibility:
  - Canadian citizen or permanent resident
  - Full-time research in cardiovascular or cerebrovascular studies
  - Minimum grade of 80% or A- last two years of studies
FUNDING INFO

http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/current-students/student-finances/funding-awards/

http://apps.gradstudies.dal.ca/external/?filter=cs

Q & A

Guest Speaker Panel:

• **Karl Davidson:** Completing masters at the University of Guelph in Physics
  - Past PASS leader with Bethune SOS

• **Ella Pesah:** First year of Masters in health Studies at York University
  - Past Student Ambassador Coordinator with SOS

• **Reema Rahman:** Msc candidate at York university in biomedical engineering/physiology
  - Peer mentor
For More Information:
http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/
http://www.bethune.yorku.ca/sos