HOW TO GET INTO GRADUATE SCHOOL

BETHUNE COLLEGE & YORK UNIVERSITY

Presented by: Jenny Tang and Mandy Huynh

Student Ombuds Services (SOS)  
bethune.yorku.ca/sos
Core information is based on materials from Karl Davidson and Maansi Malhotra (2015).
Agenda

- The Graduate School Experience
- Finding A Graduate School
- Application Process
- Typical Application Timeline
- Funding Opportunities
- Guest speakers
- Q & A
The Graduate School Experience

Undergrad vs. Grad
Graduate School Experience

- 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
Graduate School Experience

- 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
3 OPTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Direct Entry Ph.D
- Thesis Based vs. Course Based
- Length of the Program
Finding a Graduate School

5Ws + H
### Where to Look?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet Searches</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Professional Associations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Use a variety of key words</td>
<td>➢ Mentors</td>
<td>➢ Websites</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Look at school’s website</td>
<td>➢ Current Graduate Students</td>
<td>➢ Conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Search for both specific and broad program names</td>
<td>➢ Advisors</td>
<td>➢ Journals</td>
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To Find Out Important Information:

1) Required Classes
   ▶ Some programs require undergraduate courses as prerequisites

2) Tests and Cut-Off Scores
   ▶ Some programs require a test (e.g. GRE, GMAT)
   ▶ Cut-off scores narrow down applicant pool for interviews
The Application Process

Preparation is Key
What You Need To Get

▸ Application Form
▸ Letter of recommendations (2-3)
▸ Personal Statement
▸ Transcript
▸ Standardized Test Scores
▸ Writing and Portfolio Samples
Be specific in your goals and intentions

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

Typical Essay Requirements
- General Essay: Background, future plans, why this school etc.

- Research Essay:
  - Specific research interest
  - Questions in research field
  - Why these questions?
  - Articles you read that spark interest
This is your chance to *sell yourself*.

Take your time. Write it well.

- Convince the school they want you as a graduate student
- You may already be ranked before your interview!
They Have Been There!
They May Even Be on the Committees!

ASK A PROFESSOR FOR FEEDBACK!
A STRONG LETTER Should:

▸ Come from a professor outside of class

▸ Letters show your:
  - Problem-Solving Skills
  - How well you collaborate
  - Your character
Provide 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 your applications

- Mail applications should arrive TWO WEEKS before the deadline
- Write a CV (curriculum vitae) to include all your experience and awards
- Double and triple check your packages to make sure they’re completed
- Call and confirm receipt of your application ONE WEEK before the deadline
EXPENSES

{ TRANSCRIPT | TEST SCORES | APPLICATION FEES }
Application Timeline

Do Not Procrastinate!
**Aug → Sept**

- Browse programs, do basic research
- Meet with faculty members to discuss possible programs
- Start asking for LOR

**Oct**

- Determine which programs you will apply to
- Establish a timeline based on deadlines
- Start working on your personal statement
**TIMELINE**

**Nov**
- Complete Application forms
- Order Transcript
- Provide professors with LOR forms

**Dec → Jan**
- Mail Applications (even if early)
- Follow up with the schools on receiving the package
Funding Opportunities

Internal - Graduate School
External - OGS, OSAP, Tri-Council, Others
Academic Year: 2017 - 2018

Who It’s For:
Graduate Students at Master’s or Doctoral level

Amount:
$5000 per term for 2 or 3 consecutive terms

When to Start Applying:
October

Application Deadlines:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1r4cF4VkMhSgKcgXa2nZYEDd6-FJ-8gaBDmU07oj0KqY/edit#gid=0
(2017/2018)
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:
  - GPA of at least 80% (8.0 or A-) in each of last two years
  - Grades not rounded up
• Value: $ 36,000

• Deadline: Set by Home Department

• Eligibility:
  o Canadian Citizen
  o Full Time Research in Cardiovascular or cerebrovascular studies
  o Minimum grade of 80% or A- in last 2 years of studies
For More Information...


http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/


http://www.bethune.yorku.ca/sos
Break Time

Please help yourself to refreshment!
We will resume in 5 minutes.
Guest Speakers

Amanda Liczner
Department Of Biology
PhD, Restoration Ecology

Lekan Balogun
Department Of Geography
PhD, Climate Science

Christy Costanian
MSc Epidemiology
PhD candidate Epidemiology
Thanks for listening!
Any questions?