

Graduate School

Why graduate school?

Open up a wider range of job opportunities

Increase earning potential

Improve valuable research, writing, and analytical skills, which are desirable in both academia and the job market

Opportunity to work closely with professors who are experts in your field of interest

Obtain necessary credential (MA, MFA, JD, PhD) for your professional goals

What options are there in terms of graduate programs?

Master of Arts (MA) programs in Communication

Master in Fine Arts (MFA) in Film/Media Studies

Law School

Doctoral (PhD) programs in Communication

Interdisciplinary Programs

A note about Communication programs:

They vary from school to school. Some are big, some are small. Some focus on rhetorical studies, some focus on quantitative methods, while others have a focus in media/critical studies. Some offer financial aid, some don't. Some are terminal masters programs; some have PhD programs as well. Consider your current and future interests (both academic and professionally) and find one that is a good match.

Application Process

Junior Year:

Talk to your academic advisor or a faculty member in your department about various graduate programs.

Gather information on graduate program admission tests and register for appropriate dates.

Senior Year:

Research graduate programs, request application materials.

Take the appropriate graduate admission tests if you did not take them in the spring or summer.

Talk with potential references and give them a copy of your résumé so they can highlight your strengths.

Begin working with application materials early. Plan to complete your graduate school admission file by December. Law school applications should be made in the fall of the senior year through LSDAS.

Prepare your personal statement and writing samples.

Finances

During your research, pay close attention to the financial aid, assistantships, and employment opportunities at the institutions to which you are applying. In general, law school financial aid is hard to come by. Assistantship and financial aid availability varies by graduate program. Often smaller, private schools find some form of aid for all of the students they admit; while large, public schools have very competitive assistantship/fellowship opportunities that you can apply for.

Things to consider when comparing programs:

How well you will get to know the faculty.

Size of classes

How much the program will simply put you in an undergraduate class for graduate credit or give you graduate (seminar style) classes.

How much you will learn from fellow graduate students.

What the graduate community is like

What the job placement or placement in higher degree programs is like for each program.

How you like the locale--the town, state, and institution.

How much debt you will incur.

How pleased you will be to have a degree from the institution.

Great Resources:

Professors- exhaust their knowledge of academia.

Current students- know a lot about their programs; talk with them to get an insider's perspective.

World wide web- you can find out a lot of information about a program simply by browsing their website.

On campus visits- check out the place for yourself, meet students, faculty, and tour the campus and surrounding city

What do schools look for?
What can I do to improve
my application?

Some schools admit students on a point system where GPA and test scores count for a certain number of points towards acceptance. Similarly, some schools have minimum requirements for these factors.

Other schools consider applications on a holistic basis and review a student's GPA, test scores, resume, writing samples/ statement of purpose, letters of recommendation, and reputation of undergraduate institution as a whole in making admission decisions.

What can you do?

START EARLY

Prepare early for admission tests (GRE, LSAT). Find out when and where they are given, invest in study guides, and practice, practice, practice.

GRE - <http://www.ets.org/gre>

LSAT- <http://www.lsatsat.org>

Give your professors plenty of time and information so they can write a meaningful recommendation letter. Be clear about deadlines and provide all of the necessary forms and stamped envelopes that they may need.

Include a well-written writing sample/ statement of purpose. Be sure to include quality pieces that are representative of your best writing. Follow directions about length and avoid any grammatical or spelling errors.



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After



Wake Forest...

THINKING ABOUT
GRADUATE SCHOOL?



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Something

Extraordinary !