

Graduate School RESOURCE GUIDE



► Types of Degrees

MASTER'S DEGREE:

Usually takes one to two years to complete. Often, internships or fieldwork are included in degree requirements.

RESEARCH MASTER'S DEGREE:

May involve writing a thesis or taking a comprehensive examination in addition to coursework. Usually takes two years to complete.

PROFESSIONAL AND DOCTORAL DEGREES:

At the doctoral level, there are professional degrees and research degrees. The most common professional degrees are MD for medical or the JD for law. The research doctoral degree (PhD) involves coursework and research training, while the final component usually involves original research and reporting on the research through a dissertation

► Graduate School Research

Use the following sites to begin researching schools that offer the program you are interested in. From there, continue your research on the university program's website.

Find information about the program length, curriculum, required research, internship or practicum experiences and program admissions requirements. You will also want to learn about the faculty and outcomes for students who have graduated from the program.

- www.gradschools.com
- www.princetonreview.com/grad-school
- www.petersons.com/graduate-schools.aspx

► Basis for Admission

- Undergraduate GPA and admissions test scores
- Recommendation letters from professors, advisors or supervisors
- Personal Statement and Statement of Purpose
- Internships, work experience and/or prior research experience or experiential
- Related life experiences, such as travel, volunteer work, and hobbies

► Standardized Testing

- GRE (Graduate Record Exam)—Sciences, Humanities, Human Services, Psychology, Education, Public Health, and some business programs
- GMAT (Graduate Management Admissions Test)—Accounting, Finance, and other Business programs
- LSAT (Law School Admissions Test)—All law and various legal studies programs
- MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test)—Medical school
- DAT (Dental Admissions Test)—Dental school

► Typical Application Materials

- Test Scores
- Undergraduate Academic Transcripts
- Recommendation letters from professors, advisors or supervisors
- Personal Statement or Statement of Purpose
- Resume or CV
- Writing Sample

► Application Timeline

Your timeline will depend on the application deadline. Here is a sample timeline that can help you stay organized.

AT LEAST SIX MONTHS BEFORE:

- Determine a list of schools to send applications to and understand application requirements for each school
- Begin studying for any required standardized test (GRE, etc.) or enroll in a prep course

FOUR MONTHS BEFORE:

- Request letters of recommendation from professors, advisors or supervisors (see program information for recommendation letter requirements)
- Write draft of personal statement and/or statement of purpose and take it to a writing tutor or professor for feedback. Keep in mind that each program may have slightly different personal statement requirements. You should devote significant time to your statement and write multiple drafts.

THREE MONTHS BEFORE:

- Continue editing your personal statement and/or statement of purpose
- Update your resume/CV and bring it to the Career Services and Advising center for feedback
- Take the required graduate school test

ONE MONTH BEFORE:

- Request official transcript from the university registrar's office of each college you attended
- Make final edits to personal statement and resume/CV. Proofread them again.

AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE THE DEADLINE:

- Submit all application materials!

► Questions for the Admissions Offices

ADMISSIONS QUESTIONS

- Am I required to do an interview?
- How heavily are test scores weighted?
- How many students are typically admitted into the program? How many total applicants?
- What is the top thing faculty look for in application materials in a competitive candidate?
- Does this program prefer to admit applicants with work experience rather than applicants right out of college?
- When will final decisions be made? When will candidates be notified?

FUNDING QUESTIONS

- Are graduate assistantships available? If so, how are students compensated (stipend, scholarship money, etc.)?
- What scholarship opportunities are available for graduate students in this program? Do they have separate applications? When are the deadlines?
- Does the school offer need-based grants?

OTHER

- Is graduate housing offered?
- Are there required field or practicum hours needed to complete the program? Will the school help with finding field placements?
- Where are graduates from this program working?



For more information, contact
Career Services and Advising Center
Hammond Hall, Room 318
978-665-3151
careercenter@fitchburgstate.edu