Graduate School Workshop

Dave Kokandy
Career Specialist

ASHLAND UNIVERSITY
CAREER SERVICES CENTER
Coming Soon...

Northeast Ohio Graduate School Fair-a-Van

Thursday, October 6, 2011
11:00 AM-1:00 PM
HCSCC Conference Rooms and Piano Lounge

Come for the whole time or in between classes
Meet with over 30 graduate schools
Network with professional staff and professors
Sign up today in the Career Services office for your professional nametag!

http://www.ashland.edu/events/2011-10-06/current-students/northeast-ohio-graduate-school-fair-van
Is a graduate degree for you?
Academic/Research-Based Programs:
- Advanced programs of study focused on a particular academic discipline. Usually culminates in M.A./M.S. or Ph.D.

Professional/Instrumental Programs:
- Advanced programs of study with an instrumental focus, usually tailored to the licensure requirements or workplace needs of a specific profession. More varied.

Levels of postgraduate study:
- **Masters**: terminal or incremental
- **Specialist**: professional certification and licensing
- **Doctorate**: highest level
WARNING.

- Do not go to graduate school because you don’t know what else to do.
- Do NOT go to graduate school because you don’t know what else to do.
- Seriously. Studies have shown that graduate students are more likely to complete their program with clarity of purpose: concrete career goals & job depends on attaining the degree.
Is graduate school right for you? Consider the following....

- What are my career interests and goals?
- Is a graduate degree necessary?
- Am I delaying my post-graduate job search?
- Should I work first?
- Can I afford it? How will I finance it?
- Do you meet the minimum requirements (GPA, Test Scores, Coursework...)
- Am I willing to invest the time, energy, and opportunity cost?
How to prepare:

- Talk to faculty and professionals
- Attend Information Fairs/Graduate Fairs
- Keep your grades up
- Get involved in your discipline (research) or on campus and in the community (prof)
- Make an appointment w/ a Career Specialist
- Target your academic work and extra-curriculars to meet the requirements of your prospective graduate field
Career Exploration

- Short- and Long-Term Goals
- Degree-Required Job Opportunities?
- Seek guidance from professional associations
- Other Resources:
  - Eagle Exploration
  - Occupational Outlook Handbook
  - SOAR Program
  - www.ashland.edu/career
Begin to research programs that available in your field. Online Resources Include:

- [www.gradschools.com](http://www.gradschools.com)
- [www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)
- [www.gradprofiles.com](http://www.gradprofiles.com)
- [www.kaplan.com](http://www.kaplan.com)

- Professional Association Websites

Resources in Career Resource Room Library:

- Peterson’s Guides and Princeton Review Guides
- Graduate School Viewbooks
Explore graduate school entrance exams

- Are they required in your discipline?
- When are the results due?

Study and Prepare for Exams

- Study on your own – books, websites, software
  - Links on Career Services page
- Courses really just walk you through a book

Alphabet Soup!

GRE GMAT LSAT MCAT MAT OAT PCAT DAT TOEFL
Research Your Program

- Reputation in the field
- Faculty and research interests
- Research and grants
- Curriculum & coursework, tracks, specialties
- Professional development
- Success of graduates
- Financial aid opportunities
- Assistantship/Fellowship opportunities
Getting In

- Entrance Requirements
- Application Procedures
- Deadlines for Admission / GA / Financial Aid
Research the Institution

- Culture & Environment
- Facilities
- Size of School
- Size of Program
- Geographic Location
- Community
- Campus Amenities
- Cost of Attendance
Application Materials

- Official Report of Exam Scores
- Official Undergraduate Transcripts
- Resume or CV
- Letters of Recommendation or References
- Personal Statement/Statement of Interest
- Application Forms
- Application Fees
- Portfolio and/or Work Samples
- Interview and/or Audition
Graduate School Resumes

**Education**
- Highlight Academic Prowess, Honors, GPA
- Achievements & Research in the major
- Relevant or required coursework

**Experience**
- Related Experience
- Research Experience
- Technical Experience
- Other Work Experience

**Professional Preparation**
- Skills
- Professional Affiliations

**Leadership**
- Activities
- Community Service
Most schools will ask for 3-5
From academic and/or work setting
Reference Forms, Letters of Recommendation, or Contact Information
Ask early & give plenty of notice
Supply detailed directions
Provide a resume & pre-addressed envelopes
Keep references up to date w/applications, priorities, and be sure to thank them
Statement of Interest/Personal Statement

- Questions could be...
  - Open Ended (eg. How will degree fit in prof goals?)
  - Specific Research Questions
  - Personal Anecdotes (eg. A time you led a group)
  - Statement of Goals, Values, or Ethics
- Tell a story and demonstrate your experience
- Be specific, detailed, and professional
- Create a strong opening statement
- Proof, edit, and seek input on your statement
- Tailor the statement to each school/question
Preparing for Interviews

- Assess yourself
- Reflect and Practice
- Research the program, the institution, the faculty (your potential advisors!) and their research interests
- Stay up to date in your field
- Develop questions to ask the interviewers
- Plan your travel in advance
- Dress Professionally
During the Interview

- First Impressions (First 10 Second Rule)
- Verbal & Nonverbal Communication
- Express your interest in the program/field
- Provide examples how your education and experience fit their mission and qualifications
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the program
- Don’t forget the closing statements
- Send thank you cards
Financing your degree

- Assess your financial situation
- Compare aid between programs/schools
  - Separate application for some schools
- Fellowships
- Graduate Assistantships
  - Research Assistant – generally for research degrees
  - Teaching Assistant – potentially any degree
  - Administrative or Housing Assistantships
- Federal and/or state financial aid: ...likely loans
- Private loans
1. Preparation (24+ months prior to start date)
2. Initial Investigation (15-24 months)
3. Further Research & Initial Action (12-15 months)
4. Application (9-12 months)
5. Follow Up (6-9 months)
Questions?

The Grad Student Brain

Super-Ego

Mommy/Daddy Issues

THESIS

Super-Duper Ego

HMPH.

Why aren't you working?

Ego

READ

DATA

Work

EAT

WORK SOME MORE

Internet

FREE FOOD

PUBLISH

Sleep

HAPPY HOUR

WRITE

Money

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