



## Graduate School Checklist & Timeline

**Make a list of what you're looking for in a graduate program and what you'd like to do with a masters or doctoral degree.**

- Look at general information about graduate school online:

<http://www.princetonreview.com>

<http://www.gradview.com>

<http://www.gradschools.com>

**Create a list of potential schools/programs.**

- Look at graduate school databases online:

<http://www.collegejournal.com/toolkit/findgradschool.html>

<http://www.gradschools.com/>

<http://www.petersons.com/>

- Look at graduate school options abroad:

<http://international.gradschools.com/>

**Questions to consider.**

- Are you confident enough in your decision to make the necessary commitment in time, effort, and resources?
- Will this advanced degree lead you to where you want to be professionally or personally?
- How will attending graduate school affect your family, relationships, or responsibilities?
- How will you finance it and do the programs you are considering require or recommend related or prior experience?
- Will location be a factor or will courses be offered online?

**Research and compare your options.**

- Time commitment (e.g. 2 year program vs. 4 year program)
- Part-time vs. full-time programs
- Private vs. public institutions
- Entrance requirements
- Program approaches/specializations
- Faculty and teaching methods
- Program reputation
- Placement success of program graduates
- Tuition costs and financial aid available/assistantships
- Housing/living expenses

**Use your research to choose 5-10 program possibilities, and narrow your list.**

- Consult with your professors NEIU Alumni, and professionals in the field to discuss program highlights and their experiences in graduate school.

- Plan campus visits, and schedule meetings with program faculty members or current students who can answer your questions.
- Determine which programs you plan to apply to, and begin the application process.

**Spring of your Junior Year:**

- Schedule date to take the GRE and/or other specific tests, and request that your scores be electronically sent to each school where you are applying.

**August/September (Fall of Your Senior Year):**

- Request application information or research application processes online (be sure to note deadlines for applying and addresses where supplemental materials should be sent).

**October/November:**

- Submit applications and application fees for each school by its published deadline.
- Request copies of your transcript from the Registration Office (it is usually best to have them sent directly to the addresses where supplemental materials should be sent).
- Approach faculty members, employers, etc. to write recommendation letters. Remember to provide them with any required recommendation forms, your resume and the deadline for submission.
- Compose personal statements or essays for each institution and have your statement/essay revised by a faculty member or a career advisor.
- Revise your resume and submit with supplemental information.

**December:**

- Request scholarship/fellowship/assistantship information from each school where you applied.

**January/February:**

- Complete the FAFSA Online and submit all completed scholarship application forms.
- Prepare for any admission/assistantship(s) interviews
- Attend any preview days/assistantship interview sessions/faculty interview sessions for each institution.

**March/April/May:**

- Follow-up on institutions that you have not heard from and make your final decision.
- Submit commitment forms and/or fees to the institution you have chosen, and register for classes.
- Send thank-you notes to people who wrote your recommendation letters, informing them of your success.