

Timeline for Applying to Graduate School (Ph.D/Th.D)

While this is an approximate outline, it offers the key steps in applying to a graduate program.

You should start planning the summer before your final year in college/master's programs or at least a year before you wish to start graduate school.

June/July

- Explore the websites (and catalogs) of graduate programs that interest you
- Become familiar with the teaching and research interests of the faculty at the schools to which you will apply
- Begin drafting an academic statement of purpose (personal statement)

August/September

- Meet with faculty mentors you know and talk about your plans
- Have a faculty mentor read your purpose statement
- Ask faculty for letters of reference who know your academic work
- Explore standardized test dates (GRE)

October

- Take required standardized tests
- Make the final decisions on which graduate programs you will apply to
- Note deadlines for all graduate programs
- Contact the Director of Graduate Studies of your intention to apply
- Order transcripts from all post secondary institutions you attended
- Explore fellowships for financial support (internal and external sources)

November

- Complete all applications and photocopy all forms for your files
- Give faculty recommenders all information needed (specific school forms, your resume)

December/January

- Mail applications/ send online applications

February

- Contact Directors of Graduate Studies for campus visits if desired

March/April

- Await contact (phone call; email; mailing) from schools regarding admission (weigh your options and make a final decision where you will enroll; talk with the director of graduate studies for clarification if needed)
- Read ALL materials received from the institution and complete all forms well before the due date for enrollment at the institution you have chosen
- Contact ALL institutions to which you received admission of your enrollment choice; even those institutions you will not attend
- Send thank you notes to all recommenders and those mentors who may have assisted you in the application process

Source:

Adapted from Graduate School and You; a publication of the Council of Graduate Schools