The University of Texas at El Paso

How to Apply to Graduate School

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Why are you interested in Grad School?

- Knowledge
  - Master’s degree
  - Doctoral degree
- Work Requirement
- Return on investment
Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment

Unemployment rate in 2014 (%)

- Doctoral degree: 2.1%
- Professional degree: 1.9%
- Master's degree: 2.8%
- Bachelor's degree: 3.5%
- Associate's degree: 4.5%
- Some college, no degree: 6.0%
- High school diploma: 6.0%
- Less than a high school diploma: 9.0%
- All workers: 5%

Median weekly earnings in 2014 ($)

- Doctoral degree: $1,591
- Professional degree: $1,639
- Master's degree: $1,326
- Bachelor's degree: $1,101
- Associate's degree: $792
- Some college, no degree: $741
- High school diploma: $668
- Less than a high school diploma: $488
- All workers: $839

The Application Process

• Your formal introduction to the committee who will be making a decision about your admission into the program.

• Specific formats and required pieces of documentation

• Online systems
Grade Point Average

• It *will* be considered, so make it as strong as possible

• If there are gaps or inconsistencies, be prepared to explain those.

• If it is not above the minimum requirement, consider additional coursework.
Standardized Test Scores

- GRE, GMAT, MAT, PCAT and many others
- Not necessarily be predictive of graduate school success, but reflect your potential as a critical thinker.
- Compare your performance to other students who are also applying to the same programs.
- Learn how to take the tests!!
Statement of Purpose

• Telling your story – what is motivating you?
• Explaining any inconsistencies
• Outlining professional goals
• Typically not more than two pages
• Cohesive, well-constructed
Letters of Recommendation

• **Strong** letters from faculty who can speak favorably about your potential as a grad student

• Supervisors/Employers

• People working in the field who are familiar with your habits and potential

• **Not** family friends, or people who you know socially
Experiences

- Educational background
- Employment history
- Volunteer work
- Observation/shadow contacts
- Familiarity with the profession
Interview – things to remember

• They want to know about you.
• Be engaged in the process.
• First impressions are a big deal.
• Be prepared to ask questions of them.
• Say thank you!
Interview – practice questions

1. What motivated you to pursue a graduate degree in this field?

2. Why should we choose you for a position in this cohort?

3. How do you deal with stressful situations?

4. Are you prepared for the financial and time commitments to complete the degree?

5. What is your experience with research?

6. Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten years?
Take Home Message

• You have the ability to shape your application into a competitive document
• Consider your assets and attributes
• **Start EARLY!!**
• Don’t miss any deadlines
• Ask questions if you are unsure
Questions?

Email the Graduate School at: gradoutreach@utep.edu

call us at (915) 747-5491

Or visit us at
Mike Loya Academic Services Building,
Room 223

Thank you!