ARC Graduate School Workshop

Getting a Graduate Degree in the Biological Sciences

Useful Resources

What is graduate school? Is it right for you? **(Eugene Nothnagel)**

Graduate school requires significant commitments of time (2-5+years) and resources ($$$). The decision to go to graduate school should not be taken lightly. If you are considering going to graduate school, but aren't quite sure, these resources might help you to decide if graduate school is right for you.

http://careers.ucr.edu/gradSchoolPortal/Pages/GraduateSchoolandProfessionalPrograms.aspx

http://www.phds.org/career-resources

What are distinctions between Masters and PhD programs? **(Hailey Choi)**

A Masters degree and a PhD differ vastly in the amount of time you will spend obtaining your degree, the amount of money it will cost, how finances can be handled, and, most importantly, whether your goal is to learn important skills to further your career (Masters) or to direct your own research (PhD). There are more options when it comes to pursuing a Masters degree, you can opt to do a course-based Masters, Research/thesis-based Master, or an online Master program.

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/whats-difference-between-masters-doctoral-degree-shelldreams-overseas

https://www.gradschools.com/get-informed/before-you-apply/choosing-graduate-program/masters-vs-phd

https://www.topuniversities.com/blog/types-masters-degrees

What kinds of jobs might you get after earning a Masters or Ph.D. degree? **(Morris Maduro)**

MS degrees in the Biological Sciences are useful for jobs requiring a specific set of skills, such as research assistant in a pharmaceutical company or university research lab. A PhD is for those who will apply their training to new problems, and/or teach in a high school or college. In industry, PhDs lead teams to solve problems such as finding new cancer drugs. In a university, PhDs run research laboratories and/or teach. Research can be in basic or applied biology. Other jobs for MS and PhD degrees in Biology include science writing, landscape management, sales, and bioinformatics specialists.

https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/biology-phd-jobs

http://www.gradschoolhub.com/faqs/types-jobs-masters-biology/

What kinds of Masters degrees can be a good plan B in case your plan A, professional doctorate school, does not work? **(Eugene Nothnagel)**

Your plan A is to be a MD. A good plan B, in case plan A fails, is to earn a Masters degree in a medical/health field. Peterson's Guide at http://www.petersons.com/ helps find your plan B. From the drop down menus select "Schools & Programs" and then "Graduate". In the search field enter "MS medical science" (474 hits), "MS public health" (481 hits), "MS health science" (1932 hits), "MS dentistry" (160 hits), "MS oral biology" (31 hits), "MS optometry" (49 hits), "MS pharmacy" (170 hits), "MS pharmaceutical science" (127 hits), or "MS veterinary medicine" (67 hits).

What are the components and the timeline you need to follow to fulfill the requirements for applying to graduate school? **(Teresa Bohner)**

Transcripts, GRE, GRE subject test (depending on the program), letters of recommendation, essays.

Note: Every field is slightly different; you should research your specific field.

Two or more years before you plan to enter: Work in a lab, build relationships with faculty.

Summer 1 year before you plan to enter or earlier: Take GRE (scores are valid for 5 years).

Summer 1 year before you plan to enter: Look for programs and faculty that fit your research interests; contact faculty with whom you are interested in working (depending of the field). What key topics should you ask about to find out if this is the right program/faculty fit for you?

Fall before you plan to enter: Apply for admission to the programs that interest you! Make sure you give your letter writers at least a month notice to write your letters, and provide them with your CV.

January-March before you plan to enter: Prepare for invited interviews and/or admission visits (every program does this differently). What questions should you ask, and what things you should watch for, during interviews?

The Graduate School Experience (Courtney Collins)

What are the different roles you will have during your time as a graduate student?

Rotations, classes, seminars-first 1-2 years.

Develop dissertation objectives/ research plan; qualifying exams-2nd/3rd year-advance to candidacy.

Teaching, research (lab work, field work, greenhouse, data management, analysis, manuscript writing), outreach, grant writing, conferences, mentoring undergraduates, campus involvement, networking, career development-throughout PhD.