

# Applying to Graduate School

# Supporting Principles

Be:

- Honest
- Relevant
- Comprehensive
- Concise
- Punctual

# General Considerations

- Do your research beforehand!
- Submit at least 4 applications
- Follow the admissions cycle
- Choose your major very carefully. Changing programs/concentrations is difficult
- Be prepared to explain everything in your application if asked
- Application materials are never returned to the student
- Communication may be with the Admissions Office, Graduate School, Department or a mixture of all the above
- Email is standard for updates, online applications and recommendations

# Narrowing Your Choices

- **What to study** – major & specialization
- **How to study** – methodology, campus/online, internships, research
- **Funding** – cost, scholarship restrictions
- **Where to study** – school reputation, demographics, legacy, travel home

**Try to find some 'good fit' schools**

# Final School List

Try to find at least:

- 2 'reach'
- 2 'achievable'
- 2 'safety'

Don't forget:

- Deadlines and start terms
- State schools often have a limit to non-state students (eg 12% in Colorado). A program might close earlier than the published deadline.

# Standard Application Information

- Your full legal name and date of birth, as on your passport
- Home (foreign) address, mailing (US) address, personal email and US phone numbers
- Post-secondary education data and transcripts
- Honors, awards, and affiliations
- Employment history
- Names and email addresses of your recommenders
- Other important background information

# Standard Application Pieces

- Transcripts for your previous degree(s)
- Letters of recommendation
- CV/Resume
- Essays
- *English Language Proficiency\**
- *Standardized test scores: GRE/GMAT etc\**
- Interview
- Other exercises, samples or requirements

*\*Conditional decisions are sometimes offered while these pieces are en route*

# The Admissions Process

- “Admissions Committees” look at all complete applications
- A set of criteria are determined for the program and applications are scored against the criteria.
  - International applicants usually have to show language proficiency unless they are native English speakers
- Relationships make a difference at the graduate school level!
- Process may be ‘rolling’ after a set date, or may be deadline-driven
- Criteria can change year to year
- Deferral of admission may not always be offered



# Problems and Opportunities

- Make sure your classes are clearly identified
  - Have course descriptions / syllabi as a backup
- Think from an Admissions Committee angle
- How many classes in your major? (US average 12-15 courses)
- Problems in your transcript can become an advantage
- Essays and recommendations can help fix 'problems' in your transcript

# After Admission

- The power is now in YOUR hands!
  - Universities want high *yield* – if they've admitted you, they want you to come
- This is the time to ask all your questions about graduation rates, career connections, PhD program admission, etc.
- Ask for resources and referrals – other international students, alumni, faculty
- Check out the city and the community
- Events such as *Open Houses* or *Preview Weekends* may be offered
- Confirmation deadlines may be in place. Be careful – observe them or the offer can be revoked

# Good Resources

- [gradschools.com](http://gradschools.com)
- [petersons.com/graduate-schools.aspx](http://petersons.com/graduate-schools.aspx)
- [princetonreview.com/graduate-school.aspx](http://princetonreview.com/graduate-school.aspx) (login *spring@spring.edu* password *spring*)
- [zinch.com](http://zinch.com)
- [collegeconfidential.com](http://collegeconfidential.com)

# We can help!

- Handouts are at the front desk and on the lobby computer:
  - “How to apply to \_\_\_\_\_ university”
  - General application advice
  - Research university information
- See Kate or Karen with questions