

# Are You Considering Graduate School?

**Identify Your Career Goals**  
Do you need a graduate degree?

**Low GPA**  
If your GPA <3.0, consider taking grad classes as a non-degree seeking or post baccalaureate student to raise your GPA. Or, check with the graduate program to see if they would be willing to conditionally admit you.

**Needed**  
Is this a realistic goal for you?  
Most grad programs require a GPA of 3.0 or higher.



**Not Needed**  
If only an undergraduate degree is required on most of the interesting job ads that you review, you may not need a graduate degree.

**Identify Graduate Degree Type**

**Graduate Certificate (non-thesis)**  
Course-based program  
About 1.5 years to complete

Identify colleges or universities

Apply for admission

Submit documentation

**Masters (non-thesis)**  
Project-based program  
About 2-3 years to complete

Identify colleges or universities

Apply for admission

Submit documentation

Identify or be assigned to a faculty advisor

**Masters (thesis)**  
Original research-based program  
About 3 years to complete

Identify potential faculty advisors

Be accepted by an advisor

Apply for admission

Submit documentation

**Doctorate (thesis)**  
Original research-based program  
About 4-8 years to complete  
(May require a master's first)

Identify potential faculty advisors

Be accepted by an advisor

Apply for admission

Submit documentation

# Where to go

**Identify the colleges and universities that offer the degree you are interested in. Consider the following points when choosing your top three degree programs:**

- Research the institutions, departments, degree programs, and living situations.
- Determine if you meet the admissions requirements.
- If you are planning to do original research (thesis) are there faculty that you can work with?

# Questions?

**Contact the graduate program coordinator at the institution that you are interested in.**

# What to do

**Good writing skills are essential for graduate school. If you have been out of college for awhile, you may want to consider brushing up on your skills (writing, math, statistics, etc.). Also, many graduate degree programs require entrance exams like the GRE.**

# GI Bill

**Are planning to use the GI Bill to pay for your graduate degree? If so, apply for your educational benefits through the US Dept. of Veterans Affairs.**

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>



# Who to talk to

**If you want to do original research (thesis), then you will need to choose a faculty person to be your advisor. It is important that you do your homework about potential faculty advisors. Be prepared to answer these questions for when you interview with them:**

- What is it about this faculty's current or past research that particularly interests you?
- Why do you want to work in his or her lab?
- What are your ideas for funding your graduate degree?

**Decide on your top potential faculty advisors at each college or university. Then contact them to find out the following information:**

- Do their research projects that you are interested in have an opening for you?
- Or, would they be interested in starting a research project based on your interests?
- Do they have funding options for you or do you need to provide your own?
- Are they taking on new advisees and will they agree to take you on?