

Checklist for Grad School Application Process:

This is *only* a **sample** timeline if you plan to pursue graduate school immediately following your undergraduate work. This is *not* the only way to “do graduate school” and many individuals find that working for several years *before* graduate school may be the best way to clarify their graduate plans.

Junior Year – Spring:

- Research programs and request information.
- Aim for a minimum of 6 programs to which you will apply:
 - o 2 “reach” schools; 2 “strong possibility” schools; 2 “safe” schools.
- Register and prepare for appropriate graduate entrance exams, both general and subject test, as required by individual programs.
- Go over an unofficial copy of your transcript, checking for any errors.
- Investigate national scholarships and grants and their deadlines.
- Create preliminary list for letters of recommendation.

Junior Year – Summer:

- Take graduate entrance exams and submit results to your chosen schools.
- Request updated application materials from your chosen schools.
- Write your personal essay(s) and get it critiqued at the PSU Career Center.
- Double check application deadlines and rolling admissions policies at your chosen schools. (many medical-related and law schools have separate national application processes as well)
- Visit institutions you are most interested in (if possible).

Senior Year – Fall:

- Complete applications, personal essays, and other information requested by graduate programs. Make your own deadlines of 4-6 weeks earlier than the actual deadlines. (keep copies of all application materials).
- Request official copies of your undergraduate transcripts from the registrar's office to be sent to graduate programs.
- Ask professors and employers to write letters of recommendation. Carefully follow instructions given by each graduate program.
- Confirm that grad school application materials, recommendations, and test scores have been received by the deadlines. Do this well before the actual deadlines, in case you need to resend information, track down letters of reference, etc.
- Note application deadlines for each program/school's graduate assistant/research assistant/fellowship positions. These are often *different* than the actual grad school application deadlines.
- Apply for national scholarships and grants, follow individual deadlines.

Senior Year – Winter:

- Complete the Federal Financial Aid form (FAFSA.gov) even if you don't want or don't think you'll qualify for federal aid.
- Relax and wait to hear from the school(s).

Senior Year – Spring:

- Visit institutions that accept you, and continue your decision process.
- Send a deposit to your institution of choice.
- Notify other institutions that accepted you of your decision.
- Send thank you notes to your references/recommendations, informing them of your plans and your success!