

2 Years Before Applying

GRADUATE SCHOOL TIMELINE

SUMMER

REFLECTION

Consider your options and reflect on your goals (why do you want to attend grad school? Do you NEED a degree in order to obtain the job you want?, etc.)

PROGRAM INTEREST

Start thinking about what type of program you might be interested in + familiarize yourself with application processes, expectations, and timelines for specific programs of interest.

FALL

ACADEMIC ADVISOR

Connect with an academic advisor in your study of interest; they will likely have information on the academic expectations for masters programs affiliated with your area of study.

CAREER COUNSELOR

Connect with a career counselor at our campus' career center; they can share insight into what masters program commonly align with your major. They can also offer insight into whether additional education is necessary for your career goals.

RESEARCH & INTERNSHIPS

Actively seek and engage in research and internship opportunities during the academic year and during the summer. You can start with opportunities on your campus.

WINTER

START PLANNING

Begin narrowing your list of schools. Start aligning your academic and professional development plans with program expectations. This includes thinking about how to strengthen your application - courses you're planning to take, clubs to join, people to connect with, professional experience to gain, etc.

SUMMER INTERNSHIP

Apply for summer internships that will provide you with career clarity, experience, networking opportunities, and will strengthen your application.

SPRING

PROFESSORS

Work on building relationships with professors, especially those that teach and do research in the field of study you're most interested in. You can gain valuable information, letter of recs, potentially leverage their network, exposure to resources, etc.

NETWORK

Network with peers, TAs, professors, and other professionals to learn about their career plans and journey.

STUDY PLAN

If the programs you're interested in require tests, start creating a study plan; consider online resources, school resources, study groups, tutors, prep courses, etc.

1 Year Before Applying

GRADUATE SCHOOL TIMELINE

SUMMER

PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION

Begin seriously searching programming and narrowing your list of schools you want to apply to.

CONFERENCE & INFO SESSIONS

If possible, attend conferences in your discipline, especially if they include session from prospective students such as grad school fairs, info sessions for specific programs, etc.

COSTS ESTIMATION

Consider costs of applications and tests, and make a plan for how you're going to pay for those expenses or if you're eligible for aid.

FALL

TESTS & PREP

If applications require a test like GRE, start making and implementing your study plan. Take practice tests, take the test at least once before the end of the year.

FINANCIAL AID

Start exploring financial aid resources - many programs have cost breakdown and financial suggestions for prospective students. Make note of any scholarship, grant, and fellowship application deadlines.

RESEARCH & INTERNSHIPS

Actively seek and engage in research and internship opportunities during the academic year and during the summer. You can start with opportunities on your campus

WINTER

NETWORK & PROFESSORS

Continue to network with peers, TAs, professors, and other professionals to learn about their approach, experience, and opportunities they've engaged in.

STUDY PLAN

Make an application plan - consider your academic schedule (aligning course requirements and graduation), test dates and fees, application deadlines, etc.

ACADENIC ADVISOR

Once you've narrowed type of programs you're applying to, meet with academic advisor to ensure you're taking all the necessary courses and still on pace to graduate. Be sure you're all set up next year.

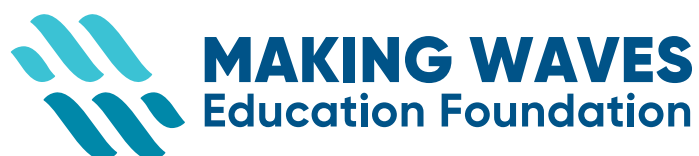
SPRING

LETTERS OF REC

Identify potential recommenders to write your letters of recommendation. Many applications ask for at least one of the letters of recommendation to do affiliated with your area of study. Continue building relationships with your professors.

TESTS

By this point, take the test at least once.



Application Year

GRADUATE SCHOOL TIMELINE

SUMMER

STUDY PLAN & TESTS

Put the study plan into action. Take required tests if haven't already, and retake if needed.

FUNDING INFO

Continue gathering funding information, gather info for scholarships, grants, fellowships, graduate student assistance-ships to apply to.

FINALIZE SCHOOLS

Make a final list of schools you plan to apply to. If you have a chance to visit prospective schools and/or meet with folks from the school, do it!

DRAFT STATEMENTS

Start drafting your statement of purpose (if you start now, you'll have more time to get it reviewed)

FALL

FINAL TESTS

Take required tests for the final times. FYI - you can take the GRE General Test once ever 21 days up to 5 times within any continuous rolling 12-month period - when selecting test dates ensure your scores will be reported in time for your app deadlines.

APPLICATION REVIEW & PREP

Connect with trusted advisors to have your application materials like statement of purpose reviewed ahead of submitting. Request letter of recommendation + send recommenders with a clear deadline. Request transcript from your undergraduate school.

PD & INFO SESSIONS

Continue engaging in professional development opportunities like research, internships, and seminars; keep attending info sessions for programs you're applying to.

WINTER

SUBMIT APPLICATION

Most applications are due in December or January for a Fall start date (FYI - some programs have rolling applications)

FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION

FAFSA and many scholarship and fellowship applications are usually due at this time.

ADMISSION INTERVIEWS

If the program you're applying to has admission interviews as part of the application process, be mindful of travel and timing if needed. Prepare for these interviews accordingly.

SPRING

PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

Most grad school admissions typically come out between February and April. Once receiving admission decisions, consider visiting the institutions and/or speaking to faculty and current students if you haven't already.

DECISION

Review the opportunities including program, faculty, financial aid, and opportunities beyond the program to help you make a decision. Lean on support system, and make a decision!

NOTIFICATIONS & THANK YOUS

Once you've made a decision, notify the other institutions you are still waiting to hear from of your plans. Send thank you letters to your recommendation writers and mentors, letting them know your plans.