

Thinking about graduate school

Why go to graduate school?

- ▶ **You want to know more** and be able to use that knowledge to help people, research, teach, make a great discovery... As a graduate or professional student, you become part of the process for advancing and creating knowledge in your field. Be prepared for changes—the expectations from faculty members are different than for undergrads and are far more demanding.
- ▶ **The career you want requires an advanced degree.** Clearly, if you want to be a doctor, a lawyer, or a faculty researcher, an advanced professional degree is required.

In order to advance in some fields—such as social work, public administration, education, and business—you may need to complete a professional master's program.

- ▶ **You want to make more money.** Having an advanced degree does not always translate to more money. Salaries for someone with an advanced degree vary by profession, job market, and location. Advanced degrees do not always mean better chances of finding a job, either. The key here is to do some solid research on your profession and the demand for people with advanced degrees.

- ▶ **Talk with current graduate students and faculty or professionals in your field.** Ask them why they chose graduate or professional school. How has it helped them in their careers and life goals? What advice would they give to a student thinking about graduate school?
- ▶ Attend our **new Graduate and Law School Fair** in October to meet and get information from recruiters representing schools and programs around the country. *Get more details on career events at CareerNetwork.msu.edu.*

How can I decide if grad school is right for me?

require a **personal statement** in which you describe yourself, your goals, and the reasons why you want to continue your studies in a particular program at that school. *See page 47 for more info on writing personal statements.*

- ▶ **Admissions requirements** will vary from program to program. Find out for each program:
 - preferred undergraduate majors or coursework, if any
 - GPA requirements
 - standardized tests (GRE, GMAT, etc.)
 - academic or work skills preferred
 - application deadlines.
- ▶ **Experience** is an asset in any graduate/professional school application. Grad schools like students who have undergrad research experience (*see venture.msu.edu for opportunities*). Some graduate and professional programs may require 1–5 years of work experience prior to applying.
- ▶ Graduate and professional school applications usually

- ▶ **Need some more guidance?** Make an appointment with your Career Consultant or Career Advisor to discuss your graduate or professional school search and application process.

- ▶ **More information.** You can find a list of factors to consider in choosing a graduate school, information on personal statements, and more at CareerNetwork.msu.edu under the “Exploring Options” tab.

if you're considering graduate school

The MSU website grad.msu.edu offers a variety of resources from how to apply to graduate school to how to fund your graduate education.

Other great sources for information on applying, funding, and/or locating programs:

- ▶ Search in Career Tools using “Grad School” filter: CareerNetwork.msu.edu/search
- ▶ Peterson's, at petersons.com, allows you to search for programs by type, degree offered, and location, and get info on financing your advanced degree, test preparation, and more.
- ▶ PhDs.org allows students to run customized rankings from the National Research Council. This site also includes articles about applying to graduate school.
- ▶ GradSchools.com offers articles about graduate education and tips about the graduate admissions process.
- ▶ “Diverse Issues in Higher Education” at DiverseEducation.com/top100 provides rankings of graduate programs in each discipline by minority student participation.
- ▶ Interfolio.com is a web-based service that can hold letters, evaluations, and unofficial transcripts for candidates applying to graduate/professional schools or seeking employment in the field of education; documents kept in your file will be sent out upon your request. Open a credential file by going to Interfolio's website and starting an account. Note that this is a fee-for-service resource. See Interfolio.com for pricing.

What do I have to do in order to apply?

